

September 2009 (Vol. 8, No. 8)

## October is National Disability Employment Awareness Month: *Expectation + Opportunity = Full Participation*

This year's theme for National Disability Employment Month (NEAM) captures the vital role that expectations play in our successes as individuals and as a society. We must ensure that both people with disabilities and their employers expect that they will fully participate in our workplaces.

Such an expectation alone, however, is not enough. They must also have opportunity. People with disabilities need access to a full range of employment choices to maximize their talents.

With both the expectation and opportunity, people with disabilities will become full participants in our economy.

"People with disabilities must be woven into our work culture. Already, we benefit from the incredible array of talent they bring to our workplaces. But we must raise the bar, we must create the inexorable expectation that people with disabilities will contribute in every way to our economic successes. Only by nurturing this expectation and providing people with disabilities with unlimited employment opportunities, can we all benefit from their talents." – Kathy Martinez, Assistant Secretary, Office of Disability Employment Policy (ODEP).

**To Order:** The NDEAM 2009 Poster is available in both English and Spanish. The posters are available in one size, 20" x 15," at no cost to you. The maximum order is 100 posters. Please enter your [online order](#) or you may also download a [PDF version](#) of the posters.

## Project SEARCH: A Successful Model for Employers to Employ People with Disabilities

Starting in August, the Department of Labor's (DOL) Frances Perkins Building began serving as a school house and workplace for up to a dozen DC high school seniors with cognitive disabilities participating in a unique program called Project SEARCH. The students will get hands-on workplace/skills-building experience, classroom sessions, and career counseling/placement services during the 9-month work/study program. Three 10-12 week work rotations in a variety of DOL offices, including ILAB, VETS, OFCCP, Job Corps and the Solicitor's Office, will provide the student participants with a broad view of opportunities at DOL, and the skills required to succeed in those positions. View the [Fact Sheet](#).

Project SEARCH was launched in 1996 and has more than 140 sites across the country, the UK, and Australia with both private and public employers. The Labor Department is the first federal participant. Project SEARCH is a significant step toward making the federal government a model employer and putting these students on the path to good jobs.

For more information about the Project SEARCH model, visit their [Web site](#) or contact them at [projectSEARCH@cchmc.org](mailto:projectSEARCH@cchmc.org) or 513-636-2516.

*\* In August 2009, the percentage of people with disabilities in the labor force was 22.2 compared with 71.2 for persons with no disability. The unemployment rate for those with disabilities was 16.9 percent, compared with 9.3 percent for persons with no disability, not seasonally adjusted.*

### DID YOU KNOW...?

**The National Council on Disability (NCD) is seeking** people with disabilities, individuals representing grassroots organizations and others to help shape disability policies and programs for the next decade. The deadline for submitting an [application](#) to attend the invitation-only summit is **October 15, 2009**.

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**The Multicultural Food-service & Hospitality Alliance (MFHA) and EARN hosted** their first joint webinar, *Accessing & Retaining Talent, Employing People with Disabilities*, on July 29, 2009. The webinar provides practical strategies employers have used to employ people with disabilities and highlights the success of Max's Positive Vibe Café, a restaurant in Richmond, VA, that employs a significant number of people with disabilities. Watch a [recorded version](#) of the webinar.

### THE DISABILITY EMPLOYMENT SITUATION

#### August 2009\*

[Percentage of people with disabilities in the labor force:](#)

**22.2 %**

[Unemployment rate of persons with a disability:](#)

**16.9 %**

[Commonly Used Terms](#)

## Attention Federal Employers: Perspectives on Employment of Persons with Disabilities Conference Open for Registration

Get an edge in recruiting, hiring and retaining qualified federal employees with disabilities. Attend the 28th Annual Perspectives on Employment of Persons with Disabilities Conference, December 9-11, 2009 at the Hyatt Regency in Bethesda, Maryland, to find the latest information on personnel policies and practices, developments in technology, legal updates, and resources that will help your agency achieve its goals. Through workshops, keynote speakers and a general session you will hear from key officials and experts knowledgeable in disability employment issues in the federal sector. Perspectives offers a unique opportunity to learn from and network with your federal colleagues from across the nation in an informal and comfortable setting. Federal HR and EEO specialists, hiring managers, and others who manage employment matters concerning persons with disabilities should attend the Perspectives Conference. [Register today.](#)

## Interagency Disability Educational Awareness Showcase Open for Registration

The Interagency Disability Educational Awareness Showcase (IDEAS) is the premier event focused on partnering industry and education with government to meet the requirements under Sections 504 and 508 of the Rehabilitation Act. The event will be free of charge for attendants.

Date: October 5 - 6, 2009

Time: 7:30AM - 2:30PM

Location: Marvin Center, George Washington University

IDEAS will consist of workshops presented by the General Services Administration (GSA), discussions, industry exhibits and the opportunity to network with peers implementing assistive technology.

Topics that will be discussed:

- Discover how Section 508 impacts your Enterprise Architecture
- Take away crucial Section 508 compliance information
- Learn how to prepare for upcoming Department of Justice (DoJ) Section 508 biennial survey
- Test drive new, compliant technology products and services
- Examine Section 508 implementation and best practices
- Network and learn from your government peers and private sector experts

Visit the IDEAS website for [more information](#) or to [register](#).

### GIVE US YOUR FEEDBACK

If you have an EARN success story, tell us about it. We would like to feature your story in this newsletter and on our Web site.

E-MAIL YOUR STORY TO:

[EARN@EARNWORKS.COM](mailto:EARN@EARNWORKS.COM)

### EMPLOYMENT RESOURCES

- [Disability.gov](#)
- [Office of Disability Employment Policy](#)
- [Job Accommodation Network](#)
- [Ticket to Work](#)
- [National Organization on Disability](#)

### INFORMATION YOU CAN USE

The DBTAC National Network of ADA Centers offers a free, [in-depth training on disability awareness](#). Training modules include: Understanding Disability, An Overview of the Americans with Disabilities Act, Reasonable Accommodation, and more.

### EARN SUPPORT

EARN is funded by the [U.S. Department of Labor Office of Disability Employment Policy](#).



**ODEP**

Office of Disability  
Employment Policy

*EARN offers employers free consultation for successful workplace integration of people with disabilities. To sign up with EARN and to learn more about EARN services, go to [www.earnworks.com](http://www.earnworks.com) or call us toll-free at:*

**1-866-EARN-NOW (1-866-327-6669, V/TTY)**