



Chicagoland Business Leadership Network Newsletter

June, 2009

“Hiring people with disabilities is not an act of charity, it’s good for business.”
Kevin Bradley, Director of Inclusion and Diversity, McDonald’s USA

disabilityworks ▶



Letter from the Managing Director



I think that most of you can relate to feeling crushed by the weight of your inbox every morning (or for those of you who Blackberry, the feeling is perpetual). Over my 9 month tenure, I have signed up for a cornucopia of newsletters and updates from a variety of disability, human resources, diversity and workforce organizations; perhaps some of the same as all of you. There are days when I have difficulty finding the time to scan them all, let alone really digging in and read them thoroughly. The good news is that it has been worth it! The information that I've been able to amass is significant, and I decided to cull the most important and relevant anecdotes, research, and resources and pass it along to you in the CBLN bi-monthly newsletter and

hopefully save you all a bit of time in tracking down the information on your own. If you have specific issues that you would like me to be on the lookout for, let me know.

Additionally, this issue marks the debut of the newsletter’s first guest column by J.J. Hanley, Founder of J.J.'s List. J.J.'s website is similar to Angie's List and Yelp.com in that it provides an online forum for persons with disabilities, their family members or advocates to review businesses and services. The website ties in perfectly with the oft neglected part of CBLN’s mission, “reaching out to people with disabilities as a customer base.” It’s an innovative opportunity for CBLN members seeking to market to the persons with disabilities and their support systems. If you are interested in making a contribution to future newsletters, send me your story.

Member Spotlight: Diversity Inc. Top 10!

In May, Diversity Inc. announced the Top 10 Companies for People with Disabilities, which included three CBLN member companies: **IBM, Ernst & Young, and Deloitte.**

Diversity Inc. stated, "What makes a company a great place to work for people with disabilities? An inclusive culture that values people and allows them to be open about who they are. A workplace that accommodates people's needs so they can maximize their talent and skills. A marketplace that reaches out to people with disabilities and values them as customers." Congratulations!

For more information on the Top 10's efforts which set them apart from the crowd, visit DiversityInc's website at: <http://www.diversityinc.com/public/5823.cfm>

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2009 New CBLN Members

The first half of 2009 has seen rapid growth to the CBLN roster. To date, CBLN numbers 126 members representing 83 distinct businesses. We look forward to seeing you all soon at upcoming trainings.

*New Business **New Affiliate

1. Judy Davis, Klatten Employment*
2. Joe Palumbo, A Personnel Commitment*
3. Jerry Baker, Chicago Botanic Garden*
4. Burt Blanchard, Council of Supply Chain Mgt Professionals*
5. Cie Armstead, American Bar Association*
6. Jeremy Mitchell, Canon Business Solutions*
7. Monica Moody, The Art Institute of Chicago*
8. Michelle Lee, Aon**
9. Usha Badrinathan, The Northern TrustCorp**
10. Jennifer Mecklenburg, Enterprise Rent-A-Car,*
11. Michele Boggness, Office Max**
12. Jennifer Radtke, CDW**
13. Beatrice Leonard, Van Dyke Communications*
14. Janice Sandowski, O'Hare Airport Transit System*
15. Eva Gonzalez, APP Pharma*
16. Marci Koblenz, Companies That Care*
17. Jocelyn Frane, Hewitt Associates**
18. Rita Coffey, EEOC Program Analyst*
19. Dionna Alexander, Johnson Controls*
20. Jeannette Kilo-Smith, Motorola**
21. Toni Carter, Motorola**
22. Sandeep Nain, sntialtech*
23. Carolyn Chivino, Manpower*
24. Genevieve Gordon, Falkor Group*
25. Nikki Scott, Chicago Children's Museum**
26. Tim Ramsey, Quaker Oats*
27. Dolores Hill, American Medical Association**
28. Janet Moffat, Perspectives, Ltd.*
29. Shannetta Wade, UPS**
30. Lisa Murphy, Bryan Cave, LLP**
31. Sean Treccia, KPMG**
32. Michelle Anderson, Berlin Industries**
33. Barbara Davidson, The Sea Glass Group*
34. Christine Harvey, Walgreens**
35. Marguerite Dawson, The Adler Planetarium*
36. Alberta Napolitano, Harris Bank**
37. Gail DeWalt, Harris Bank**
38. Ramesh Gulatee, Life Care Design Studio*
39. Carol Bullock, Zurich North America*
40. Sheryl von Westernhagen, Office Max**
41. Melissa Reishus, IBM*
42. Jenifer Struif, Office Max**
43. Sheina Kalinchak, Deloitte**
44. Betsey Alegria, Cabot Microelectronics*
45. Janice Roselle, Bowe Bell Howell**
46. Peter Williams, Chicago Children's Museum**
47. Lynne Walsh, Chicago Children's Museum **
48. Keith Lindberg (Welcome back!)
49. Kimberly Seeger
50. Lisa Jerome
51. Judy Matijevich (Welcome back!)

A Gentle Reminder

The CBLN is a forum where business representatives gather to discuss matters related to disability employment matters. Promotion or solicitation of services is discouraged in order to maintain the integrity of the meetings and overall organization.

Alphabet Soup: The ADA, EEOC, and ODEP

1. **ADA/EEOC: Applying Performance and Conduct Standards to Employees with Disabilities:** Even when the disability is not causing the performance or conduct problem, some employers still have questions about what action they can take in light of concerns about potential ADA violations. This publication discusses relevant ADA requirements, provides practical guidance, and offers examples to demonstrate the responsibilities of both employees and employers when performance and conduct issues arise. It also discusses the role of reasonable accommodation in preventing or addressing performance or conduct problems, including the relationship between reasonable accommodation and disciplinary action and the circumstances in which an accommodation may or may not have to be granted. To read the publication, including actual cases, visit EEOC's website, <http://www.eeoc.gov/facts/performance-conduct.html>

2. **ADA/EEOC: Wellness Programs, Health Risk Assessments and the ADA:** Recently, the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC), the agency responsible for enforcing the employment provisions of the ADA...issued an informal opinion letter to an employer stating that requiring employees to participate in a health risk assessment in order to be eligible for health insurance would violate the ADA. To read about implications for the HR professional, visit SHRM's website, <http://www.shrm.org/hrdisciplines/benefits/Articles/Pages/EEOCwellness.aspx> or to read the EEOC letter, visit EEOC's website, http://www.eeoc.gov/foia/letters/2009/ada_disability_medexam_healthrisk.html

3. **ODEP** has released [Diversifying Your Workforce, A Four-Step Reference Guide to Recruiting, Hiring & Retaining Employees with Disabilities](http://www.dol.gov/odep/documents/Flip%20Guide_FINAL_3%2030_508%20compliant2.pdf), a comprehensive and easy-to-understand guide for employers looking to recruit, hire and retain employees with disabilities. http://www.dol.gov/odep/documents/Flip%20Guide_FINAL_3%2030_508%20compliant2.pdf

CBLN Social Network News



After a few false starts with other online forums, LinkedIn has been selected as the C B L N social networking tool. The Chicagoland Business Leadership Network group has been created for all members to connect. Please seek out the group, and share your stories and questions with the CBLN community! CBLN members can be one another's best resource for successfully navigating the world of employing and marketing to persons with disabilities.

Trainings: Quarterly Meetings & Web-Based

Quarterly Meeting

Once again, the CBLN and disabilityworks extend a big "thank you" to **Deloitte**, especially Carrie Grady and sponsoring Partner, Kent Klaus for hosting our May 20th Quarterly Training Luncheon, "Reasonable Accommodations Under the ADA".

Everything You Wanted to Know About Disabilities but were Afraid to Ask, CBLN's next Quarterly Training Luncheon, will be held on **July 16th** at the **Chicagoland Chamber offices**. A panel composed of several **CBLN members** who are experienced in hiring and accommodating people with disabilities, as well as attorney Alan Goldstein have been assembled to guide members in a lively discussion and take your questions. Confidentiality will be ensured. No question will be considered out-of-bounds, or discriminatory and submitting questions in advance is encouraged. Registration closes Friday, July 10 at 5:00 p.m.

Web-Based Trainings (CEUs available)

Just a reminder to continue to check the **Events Calendar** on the CBLN website for our upcoming DBTAC Webinars and Audio Conferences **hosted at the Chamber**. Upcoming trainings include:

June 16, 2009: Prepare for the Unexpected: Emergency Preparedness/Evacuation for People with Disabilities:



CBLN Members participate in Quarterly Meeting at Deloitte, May 20, 2009

Making local government emergency preparedness and response programs accessible to people with disabilities is a critical as well as required by the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA). Join this session to learn more about what has been occurring across the country in this area and best practices for implementation.

June 30, 2009: Legal Update on Title III Case Law: Title III requirements are not limited to addressing physical barriers, but also can include a business' website, policies and services. This session will discuss Title III of the ADA, its regulations and recent case law decisions affecting businesses and their customers. **Presenters:** Barry Taylor, Director of Legal Services & Alan Goldstein, Senior Attorney, Equip for Equality (Webinar)

July 21, 2009: ADA Update, 19 Years Later: Mark the 19th anniversary of the ADA by joining this audio conference as we listen to representatives of the Federal Agencies present an update on their litigation, technical assistance and enforcement efforts over the past year.

August 18, 2009: Ensuring Effective Communication: Whose Responsibility Is It?: Communication is central to all aspects of conducting business or providing services. Having equal access to information is a civil right yet many people continue to report that they struggle with their healthcare professionals, lawyers, theatres, educational institutions and government officials to get the form of communication that is most effective for them. Business owners and others remain confused about whose responsibility it is to provide communication related accommodations. This session will provide insight into the problems and identify best practice guidelines for approaching this issue.

Participation at the Chamber requires an RSVP no later than the Friday prior to the training. Please bring a photo i.d. for building security. If you are unable to attend, but would like to participate from your office, registration is at www.ada-audio.org.

Disability Employment & Accessibility Related Summer Conferences

July 7, 2009, Harper College: Web Accessibility Workshop 2009. Learn the latest in web accessibility. Admission is free. RSVP at: www.msfw.com/rsvp by June 30.

July 15, 2009, American with Disabilities Act Day: To commemorate the 19th anniversary of the signing of the original ADA, Equip for Equality/Illinois ADA Project is sponsoring **free** ADA Informational workshops. The topics include "Employment Roundtable" featuring **disabilityworks'** **Karen McCulloh**, **CBLN/Walgreens' Deb Russell** and **Alan Goldstein**, and "Americans with Disabilities Act, 2008 Update" featuring Barry C. Taylor, Legal Advocacy Director, Equip for Equality and Joe Russo, Deputy Commissioner, Mayor's Office for People with Disabilities. Additionally, an ADA Help Table will be staffed to answer employment questions. For more information or to register by June 26th, please visit the disabilityworks website and download the registration form at <http://www.disabilityworks.org/default.asp?contentID=161>

July 20-21, Northeastern University, Boston, MA: Accessing the Future: A Global collaborative exploration for accessibility in the next decade. The first Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers (IEEE) conference dedicated to identifying the next generation of accessibility challenges and solutions arising from the increasingly pervasive use of technologies such as 3-D Web, online collaboration, shared medical records, and advanced systems for transportation and communication. To learn more, visit their website: <http://ewh.ieee.org/conf/accessingthefuture>

July 28-29, 2009 Arlington Heights, IL: EEOC Chicago Training Institute. Join for the latest developments in EEO law and best practices – from the experts who enforce the law. To register, contact Rita Coffey at Rita.Coffey@eeoc.gov

Online Learning Spotlight

Disability and Business Technical Assistance Centers

Most members are familiar with the DBTAC-produced audio conference and webinar **Brown Bag Series** hosted at the Chamber offices each month. For those who haven't attended, or need to give them another listen, these broadcasts are archived on their website, www.ada-audio.org, stretching back as far as 1999. The best news is that they are free of charge! Each program runs approximately 1.5 hours. Members are encouraged to participate at the Chamber when possible, as it is an opportunity to ask the presenter questions as well as network with other members who are interested in similar issues.

Disability Law Lowdown Podcasts

With an archive of 29 shows ranging from 10 -30 minutes, DBTAC provides a portable "everything you need to know about the ADA and other disability laws," <http://dll.ada-podcast.com/showlist.php>. Topics include ADA Basics, Disability Etiquette, EEOC & Employee Conduct, and Transportation Issues among many others.



In the 'Hood: What the Local Mom & Pop Shop Can Teach Companies about Disability Awareness

Guest Columnist, J.J. Hanley



A few years ago, a friend of mine and I were looking for a place in our neighborhood to have a cup of coffee. I suggested a nearby café of a gourmet chain where the coffee was great. My friend preferred a small, mom & pop coffee house several blocks away. When I argued that it was further away and the coffee at that place wasn't all that good, my friend mumbled something about how the mom & pop "gets it." But he relented and we went to the gourmet spot.

As soon as we placed our order at the café, I understood why my friend had wanted to go to the mom & pop. He has a disability, and the person behind the counter didn't look at him when she took his order. When he spoke, she didn't understand what he said, and instead of asking him to repeat himself, she looked to me for help. It wasn't that the server was deliberately being rude. In fact, she was trying to be friendly. She just didn't "get" disability awareness and, as my friend told me later, the mom-&-pop shop did.

So, what is disability awareness? It's welcoming, common sense service to a person with a disability. It includes techniques such as "person-to-person communication," "flexible service," "assistance or accommodation when needed," "extra time as needed" and "respectful service." At jjslist.com, the review website that I started to help people touched by disability find disability-aware community businesses, visitors consistently place all of these service features at the top of the list when they recommend businesses as disability aware.

I asked a few of these recommended businesses how they make disability awareness a part of their day-to-day service and they shared these thoughts:

Owner/manager involvement - Disability awareness starts with owners' and managers' own attitudes and behaviors. According to Frank Lomoro, vice president and general manager of Sunset Foods, a Chicagoland supermarket chain with locations in Northbrook, Highland Park, Libertyville and Lake Forest, managers' attitude directly influences how the staff treats a customer or another employee with a disability. "Personal, attentive service is ingrained in the way we do business. We train our staff to treat everybody the same, regardless of whether there is a disability or not," Lomoro says.

Such top-down disability awareness may be challenging for larger companies to build and maintain because of the additional management layers through which the message often has to travel. One way for larger companies to address this problem is to offer disability awareness training workshops to managers so that they can transfer the knowledge to employees at the local level, or make basic disability awareness training a part of new employee orientation.

Serve as you would want to be served - Anyone who practices disability awareness may make a mistake but most customers with disabilities appreciate sincere efforts at respectful, attentive service. Staff shouldn't avoid person-to-person interaction out of fear of doing or saying the wrong thing. "I think [staff] is often afraid to communicate with people with disabilities," says Dave Cozzolino, owner of Wilmette Pet Center in Wilmette. "They're afraid they might say something wrong and they're afraid to approach people with disabilities because they're different. But they aren't. They just want to be talked to and appreciated like everybody else."

Be flexible - "This place is here to serve the community. That means everybody in the community," (CONTINUED on page 7)

“In the ‘Hood’ continued

says Sahel Patel, manager of a Subway franchise in Evanston who gets out from behind the counter whenever needed to make sure his customers with disabilities receive the service they need. “When the customer comes in we treat them nicely,” Patel says. “If I’m not too busy I’ll come outside and put his sandwich on the table. I want people with disabilities to have the same good experience that all my customers are having.”

Disability awareness doesn’t just build customer loyalty with those who have disabilities. It can also build loyalty among customers without disabilities. One visitor to JJ’s List wrote that she isn’t touched by disability, but she recommended Homer’s Ice Cream in Wilmette as disability aware when she observed the interaction between the restaurant staff and a young man with a disability. “The Homer’s employee...went out of her way to make sure [the person with the disability] had everything he needed. I was just waiting in line and happened to observe this wonderful interaction.”

That’s what disability awareness is all about.

JJ Hanley is the parent of a teenager with a disability, trainer of person-first and disability aware practices and founder of JJ’s List.com. She can be reached at jj@jjslist.com.

Marriott: Marketing through Web Accessibility

Ensuring that a company's website is accessible is a key component in reaching the disability community as consumers. In April, Marriott International announced their participation in the American Federation for the Blind's "Accessibility Assurance Program". Marriott states:

“The Accessibility Assurance™ Program (AAP), available through AFB Consulting, enables us to make our web site(s) more accessible to people with disabilities. Through our participation in the AAP, we will directly engage disabled consumers and solve the problems of web accessibility together. As an AAP participant, we offer the following three (3) assurances:

1. We will enable consumers with disabilities to use our web site(s) by applying accessible design standards and by providing accessibility-specific "help" features (FAQs, tips, tricks, techniques, etc.).
2. We will enable consumers with disabilities to report web site accessibility problems they encounter and will make reasonable efforts to respond to and/or remediate any such problems identified in a timely manner.
3. We will provide opportunities for consumers with disabilities to influence the accessible design of future website enhancements and upgrades.

To read Bill Marriott's blog announcement about the partnership, visit <http://www.blogs.marriott.com/default.asp?item=2361077>

Did You Know?

Text messaging was first developed and long used by the deaf community prior to

&

Technology first developed to improve wheelchairs is responsible for powering **Segways**



Leadership Workshop on Accessibility Schaumburg (Chicago), IL

SAVE THE DATE!

**Thursday, October
29, 2009**

**Renaissance
Schaumburg Hotel
and
Convention Center**

Do not miss the 2009 Leadership Workshop on Accessibility! This new, one-day educational workshop is being presented by ATIA in partnership with the ODEP Collaborative on Accessible Workplace Technologies.

The Leadership Workshop offers an excellent venue for education and networking specifically designed to help the leaders of today's corporate, government, and higher educational organizations discuss successful strategies, solutions, and business cases for accessibility integration.

Why Attend?

The Leadership Workshop on Accessibility provides the information needed to begin or enhance your accessibility integration. Attendees can:

- Discuss the business case for accessibility and its associated technologies with executives from some of the nation's top organizations such as Microsoft, IBM and AT&T
- Hear case studies of successful implementations across different work environments and lessons learned
- Gain insight to successful business strategies that enhance the employment of persons with disabilities
- Network with key industry executives and share insights into matters of customer outreach, employment and other accessibility issues
- Access the latest AT and IT products and services from the industry's leading vendors in the ATIA Exhibit Hall

Mark your calendar today! For complete details on the Leadership Workshop on Accessibility, visit our Web site at www.atia.org/workshop. Want to learn more? Stay up to date on all the Workshop updates by [signing up for our mailing list!](#)

Please feel free to forward this on to anyone you feel would benefit from attending the 2009 Leadership Workshop on Accessibility.

This workshop is hosted by ATIA as an independent event within the ATIA 2009 Chicago Conference and is included as the fourth part in the ODEP Policy Conference Series.

disabilityworks
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Contributions to the newsletter are encouraged and welcome – success stories, innovative solutions, editorials, you name it! The newsletter is published on the 15th of every other month. I look forward to hearing from each of you and seeing you at an upcoming training!

Selima Ani
M.D.C.B.L.N.

Mission

The CBLN mission is to allow employers to understand and benefit from people with disabilities in both the labor and consumer markets.

We are a business-to-business consortium dedicated to helping businesses learn from each other how disability can enhance diversity initiatives.

Vision

Our vision is to become Chicagoland's number one resource for businesses that want to benefit from hiring people with disabilities.

Values

In pursuit of our mission and vision, we have identified four core organizational values. As such, all of our activities will be: ethical, business-oriented, educational and place an importance on open, honest communication.

Provide a forum, model and structure for employers to share experience regarding employing people with disabilities.

The Chicagoland Business Leadership Network (CBLN), managed by Selima Ani, is Chicago's local chapter of the USBLN. The CBLN is one of three components of disabilityworks: a joint initiative of the Chicagoland Chamber of Commerce and the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity, disabilityworks' primary funder. The CBLN is a forum where business representatives gather to discuss matters related to disability employment matters. Promotion or solicitation of services is discouraged in order to maintain the integrity of the meetings and overall organization.

Disabilityworks hosts Armenian Delegation



On the morning of May 27th, an eleven member delegation from Armenia representing the Ministry of Labor and Chamber of Commerce met with the disabilityworks team to learn more about the organization's initiatives in the employment of persons with disabilities. Additionally, **CBLN member Robye Smith of Harris Bank**, joined in to provide the business perspective and explain Harris' efforts to recruit and accommodate employees with disabilities. Armenia, formerly under the jurisdiction of the USSR, is in the midst of creating a workforce development program for over 100,000 citizens with disabilities.