

respect
ability

FIGHTING STIGMAS. ADVANCING OPPORTUNITIES.



Born This Way **FAN GUIDE**

Free Resources You Can Use



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Do you know other people or organizations that should be included as a resource for any of these categories?

Contact Lauren Appelbaum at laurena@respectability.org.

For Job Seekers with Disabilities

People with disabilities can be excellent employees, but the job search can be a challenge. Thus, below is a selection of information, resources and websites that can help you and your loved ones with a disability search for a job.

Job Search Websites & Job Training Resources:

- [abilityJOBS – Affirmative Disability Action](#) – abilityJOBS provides a system for people with disabilities to search for jobs. The site allows employers to post job opportunities and search through resumes to find dedicated and qualified people.
- [AbilityLinks](#) – AbilityLinks is a nationwide, web-based community where qualified job seekers with disabilities and inclusive employers meet and gain access to valuable networking opportunities. They offer online virtual job fairs for individuals searching for work to connect with employers.
- [America’s Service Locator](#) – American’s Service Locator connects individuals with employment opportunities, along with training services in their local areas through the American Job Center Network. These programs are sponsored through the U.S. Department of Labor.
- [Bender Consulting Services](#) – Bender Consulting Services, Inc.’s mission is to recruit and hire people with disabilities for competitive career opportunities in the public and private sectors. Headquartered in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, Bender Consulting Services also has a strong presence across the United States and in Canada through its sister company, Bender Consulting Services of Canada.
- [Career Opportunities to Students with Disabilities \(COSD\)](#) – This organization uniquely serves college students with disabilities. They provide a Career Gateway system for students to search for job postings and for employers to post jobs.
- [Enable America](#) – Enable America works to help people with disabilities find jobs. The site also has a jobs board of various openings, from all over the country, which companies are able to post and job seekers can apply for.
- [Getting Hired](#) – An Allegis Group Company, GettingHired is a recruitment solution dedicated to helping inclusive employers hire professional individuals and veterans with disabilities.
- [Hire Disability Solutions LLC](#) – Hire Disability Solutions, LLC is committed to work for people with disabilities. They provide career services as part of that commitment and allow job seekers to post their resume, search for jobs or have access to resources regarding starting their own business.
- [HirePotential](#) – HirePotential focuses solely on the employment of people with disabilities, mature workers and veterans while working with companies and employers to provide services, education and resources on accommodations and accessibility.
- [Manpower](#) – Manpower is a job site that offers temporary and full time job search opportunities by locality. Manpower also offers employment resources.

- [Work For Good](#) – Founded in 1999 as Opportunity Knocks, Work for Good is one of the first job boards focused exclusively on the nonprofit sector.

Internships / Fellowships for College Students / Graduates with Disabilities:

- [RespectAbility – The National Leadership Program](#)
- [AAPD – Summer Internship Program](#)
- [Open Society Foundations – Disability Rights Scholarship Program](#)
- [Association of University Centers on Disabilities](#)
- [American Association for the Advancement of Science \(AAAS\) – Entry Point! STEM Internships for Students with Disabilities](#)
- [Smithsonian Museums – Access to Opportunities – Program for People with Disabilities](#)
- [The Washington Center – The Leadership Initiative for Students with Disabilities](#)

Programs for Students and Youth with Disabilities:

- [Bridges to Work](#) – Bridges to Work helps more than a thousand young people, each year, most of whom are transitioning out of high school special education into the workplace. This program helps them find jobs with an employer in need of qualified, entry-level applicants.
- [Project SEARCH](#) – Project SEARCH is a one-year, school-to-work program that takes place entirely at the workplace. This innovative, business-led model features total workplace immersion, which facilitates a seamless combination of classroom instruction, career exploration and work site-based training and support.
- [Jewish Foundation for Group Homes](#) – Meaningful Opportunities for Successful Transitions (MOST™) is a one-year individualized program of activities and training designed to facilitate successful transition into the adult community. The MOST™ program serves as a portal for individuals and their families, through which they are introduced and integrated into a broad range of community resources.

Federal Disability Employment Resources:

- [USAJobs](#) – This website is the application portal for the wide range of career opportunities available within the federal government. Of special interest to job seekers with disabilities, you can use this site in conjunction with [the Selective Placement Program Coordinator \(SPPC\) directory](#). The directory lists the SPPC contact, which helps to recruit, hire and accommodate people with disabilities within each government agency. The Selective Placement Program Coordinator will be able to connect people with disabilities to jobs posted in the USA Jobs website.
- [The Workforce Recruitment Program \(WRP\)](#) – WRP is a recruitment and referral program that connects federal sector employers nationwide with highly motivated college students and recent graduates with disabilities who are eager to prove their abilities in the workplace through summer or permanent jobs.

- [U.S. Department of Labor \(DOL\)](#) – DOL provides a comprehensive website with not only an extensive list of employment resources, but also information regarding benefits, civil rights, community life, education, emergency preparedness, health, housing, technology and transportation for people with disabilities.
- [U.S. Department of Education \(DOED\)](#) – DOED has published a variety of guidebooks that provide a range of explanations, further information and resources on a variety of disability services, including legal and policy definitions about eligibility.
- [U.S. Small Business Administration \(SBA\)](#) – The SBA offers a range of toolkits and resources for people with disabilities looking to start their own business and connects individuals to financial information regarding starting a business.

State-Level Employment Resources:

- [State Apprenticeship Information](#) – All 50 states offer a wide range of apprenticeship programs leading to meaningful careers and credentials. Because of the new workforce law, all of these programs now are legally open and accessible for job seekers with disabilities.
- [State Vocational Rehabilitation Agency Offices](#) – Find a list of each state’s Vocational Rehabilitation Agency Office, the contact information of the point person and links to website with further information and resources specific to each state and their unique employment services for people with disabilities.
- [Ticket to Work Program](#) – Ticket to Work is a free and voluntary program that can help Social Security beneficiaries go to work, get a good job that may lead to a career and become financially independent, all while keeping their Medicare or Medicaid. Individuals who receive Social Security benefits because of a disability and are age 18 through 64 probably already qualify for the program.
- [Working While Disabled: How We Can Help](#) – The Social Security Administration offers this pamphlet to guide people who receive disability benefits on employment and employment issues. There are discussions about how to keep benefits and have a job.

Employment Resources for Veterans with Disabilities:

- [Entrepreneurship Bootcamp for Veterans with Disabilities \(EBV\)](#) – This program is designed as an intensive training program to offer experiential training in entrepreneurship and small business management for veterans with disabilities resulting from their service to our country post 9/11.
- [Hire Heroes USA – Employment resources for Veterans with Disabilities](#) – This nonprofit organization creates job opportunities for U.S. Military Veterans and their spouses through employment training and engagement in the workforce at no cost.
- [JOBHERO](#) – JOBHERO’s veteran career guide connects you to all kinds of information, advice, tools and programs that offer real-world help including transition and training resources as well as career resources for injured veterans.

- [Vet Jobs](#) – Vet Jobs allows military veterans to search for jobs, post resumes and find employment assistance. It is available to assist all members of the military, from all branches both enlisted or veteran status, and their families.
- [Walmart](#) – Walmart and Sam’s Club have committed to hiring 100,000 veterans by 2018 and this link connects veterans with the application process. This site provides job searches and applications for open positions, along with career counseling.

Public Service/Government Jobs:

Of special interest to those people with disabilities who are pursuing a career in public service, the federal government is a leading employer of qualified individuals with disabilities. Job seekers with disabilities should pay special attention to [Sections 501](#) and 503 of the Rehabilitation Act. A new rule from the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) has set a clear goal for more federal agencies to hire talented people with disabilities. Likewise, [Section 503](#) requires federal contractors to take active steps to recruit, hire, promote, and retain employees with disabilities.

Employers Embracing Employees with Disabilities

Companies including Amazon, Starbucks, Pepsi and others have shown that employees with disabilities are loyal, successful and help them make more money. That's because people with disabilities bring unique characteristics and talents to the workplace that benefit employers and organizations. If we find the right jobs for the right people, it can and does increase the bottom line of companies. People with disabilities can work in hospitals, hotels, computer programming and other fields.

Many disability organizations are leading the way for more businesses to add disability to the diversity and talent pipelines. Learn more about how by hiring workers with disabilities you could achieve more success by reviewing the resources below.

Business Focused Disability Organizations:

- [US Business Leadership Network \(USBLN\)](#)
- [National Organization on Disability \(NOD\)](#)
- [Disability Solutions @ Ability Beyond](#)
- [Return on Disability](#)
- [National Business & Disability Council \(NBDC\) at The Viscardi Center](#)
- [Bender Consulting Services](#)
- [Talent Acquisition Portal® \(TAP\)](#)
- [Career Opportunities for Students with Disabilities \(COSD\)](#)

Resources for Employers:

- [Disability Equality Index \(DEI\)](#) – The DEI is a national, transparent, annual benchmarking tool that offers businesses an opportunity to receive an objective score, on a scale of zero (0) to 100, on their disability inclusion policies and practices.
- [Disability Employment Tracker](#) – The Disability Employment Tracker™ is a free, confidential company assessment that measures disability and employment policies and practices and includes a confidential section on veteran employment practice.
- [The Job Accommodation Network \(AskJAN.org\)](#) – Working toward practical solutions that benefit both employer and employee, JAN helps people with disabilities enhance their employability, and shows employers how to capitalize on the value and talent that people with disabilities add to the workplace.
- [Employer Assistance and Resource Network on Disability Inclusion \(AskEARN.org\)](#) – EARN is a free resource that helps employers tap the benefits of disability diversity. They educate public- and private-sector organizations on ways to build inclusive workplace cultures and empower them to become leaders in the employment and advancement of people with disabilities.
- [Getting Hired](#) – An Allegis Group Company, GettingHired is a recruitment solution dedicated to helping inclusive employers hire professional individuals and veterans with disabilities.

[#RespectTheAbility Campaign](#) Celebrates Model Employers that Demonstrate Inclusive Hiring on all Levels:

- [Em's Coffee Company: Bringing Independence To Independence, Iowa](#)
- [Physical Limitations Don't Stop the Spece Brothers From Making Their Dreams Come True](#)
- [Kwik Trip's Retail Helper Program a "Blueprint" for Other Companies](#)
- [AT&T: Every Voice Matters – Fortune 50 Global Company is Top Employer of People with Disabilities](#)
- [If you can make it there, you can make it anywhere: Inclusion at EY](#)
- [Youth with disabilities help make government work better](#)
- [Young people with disabilities help senior citizens: Provide excellent workforce for the future](#)
- [Workers with disabilities help hospitals help patients](#)
- [Autistic man on path to become an organic farmer](#)

Press Clips on the Benefits of Hiring People with Disabilities:

- [Hiring Americans with Disabilities](#), CNBC – Discussing what hiring people with disabilities means for an organization, with Rodger DeRose, Kessler Foundation CEO, and Gregory Wasson, Walgreen CEO. “People with disabilities want to work, and can absolutely be qualified to work,” explains Wasson.
- [What People Don't Understand About Hiring Someone with A Physical Disability](#), Fast Company – Hiring someone with a physical disability isn't an act of charity; it's a decision that will bring a valuable perspective to your business. Here's why and how you should welcome your newest hire.
- [Giant Eagle Makes Case for Hiring People with Disabilities](#), Progressive Grocer – Grocer shares insights at National Disability Institute event.
- [Making the Business Case for Hiring People with Disabilities](#), EconoTimes – National Disability Institute (NDI), in partnership with Kessler Foundation and Poses Family Foundation, assembled corporate leaders and community providers at the Duquesne Club in Pittsburgh for the event: *Disability at Work, a Conversation with Randy Lewis*. Lewis, a former Senior Vice President at Walgreens, shared evidence of “return on investment” when disability becomes a centerpiece of a corporation's diversity and inclusion strategy to enhance workforce productivity and the bottom line.
- [Viewpoint: How Hiring People with Disabilities Works for Businesses, Too](#), Society for Human Resource Management – Person-centered career planning makes the process of finding and retaining a job easier, but there are still many willing and capable people left out of the workforce. Job placement and training services are looking for new strategies to get people with disabilities employed.

Education Resources on Disability Issues

Ensuring children with disabilities receive the education and training they need to succeed is vitally important. Nationally, only 65 percent of students with disabilities graduate high school each year compared to 86 percent of student without disabilities. That means there is 21-point gap in outcomes. Furthermore, only seven percent of students with disabilities graduate college. As such, educators have a critical role to play in empowering more students with disabilities to succeed.

Teachers are important partners in the efforts to overcome bias, barriers and stigmas by promoting and implementing best practices in the classroom. Below you will find resources to teach students about disability and assist students with disabilities to succeed. You also will find recommended reading for both children and adults.

Teacher Resources:

- [ADA 25th Anniversary Toolkit](#) – This website provides a background on the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) legislation, its purpose and history. It also covers other legislation regarding rights for people with disabilities.
- [ADL Curriculum Connections](#) – The Anti-Defamation League provides lesson plans surrounding all aspects of people with disabilities for all grade levels. This curriculum seeks to challenge the myths and stereotypes that surround people with disabilities.
- [A Measure of Perceived Stigma in People with Intellectual Disability](#) – The stigma of intellectual disability is often neglected by health professionals and researchers. Qualitative research has shown that people with intellectual disabilities are aware of the stigma of their disability and its social consequences.
- [Born This Way Teacher's Guide](#) – The Emmy award winning show *Born this Way* features the lives, loves and experiences of seven young adults with Down syndrome. A&E has prepared a detailed viewing guide about the stigmas that society places on people with disabilities and various ways that the show tries to overcome those barriers with an inclusive, racially diverse message.
- [The Disability Rights Movement](#) – This lesson plan provides discussion topics, journal questions and a reading to teach your class about the ADA and the role people with disabilities played in its implementation, success and progress. The reading also discusses disability by focusing on the ability of the individual and using people first language.
- [How to Have an Inclusive Prom](#) – This guide for school dance organizers includes an introduction to the challenges and opportunities, tips for promotion, a checklist for securing accessible facilities and a sample non-discrimination policy for school boards.
- [Judy Heumann movie](#) – Samuel Habib made this video for his final history and English project on the American Dream and the disability rights movement.
- [Kids Included Together \(KIT\)](#) – KIT strives to help the world see the ability in every child. KIT helps others meaningfully include kids with disabilities through inclusion

training, policy development and sharing best practices. KIT has created several free inclusion resources including videos, tip sheets, checklists and booklets.

- [Museum of disABILITY History: Educational Resources](#) – This site provides extensive lessons plans, with worksheets and readings, on the history of people with disabilities, including the ADA of 1990. The lesson plans based off of the New York State curriculum also includes quizzes and other resources for different age groups.
- [Sesame Street Toolkit](#) – With Julia’s introduction to the cast, Sesame Street can be a great way to talk about disability issues. Julia is a child with autism and openly talks about her experiences in a way that children can understand. Their website showcases many different lessons for young children.
- [Special Olympics Unified Champion Schools](#) – This website is dedicated to the Unified Champion Schools program that builds on Special Olympics’ values, principles, practices, experiences and impacts to shape a generation that welcomes everyone. This programming promotes social inclusion in schools to ensure special education and general education students are equitably engaged.
- [Special Olympics Unified Champion Schools High School Playbook](#) – This resource provides many tips and resources to make high schools socially inclusive.
- [Special Olympics Unified Physical Education Resource](#) – This resource contains information that can be used in a physical education curriculum.
- [Stigma and Intellectual Disability: A Review of Related Measures and Future Directions](#) – The theoretical construct of stigma has received much attention in psychiatric disability research, leading to the development of widely used measures to assess stigma change. The study of stigma has not received the much attention for people with intellectual disabilities. This manuscript evaluates existing measures of intellectual disability stigma through a systematic review of the literature.
- [Teaching Tolerance](#) – Teaching Tolerance showcases the shared struggles and the intersectionality shared by people with disabilities and African Americans. This includes lesson plans for elementary, middle and high school students.
- [Who I Am Outreach](#) – This toolkit talks about people with disabilities living life in various roles. Produced by the U.S. Department of Labor Office of Disability Employment Policy, this toolkit includes videos and stories about people with disabilities.

Historical Resources:

- [Disability and History](#) – This Smithsonian page focuses on people with disabilities throughout history and the historical impact on the American culture around disability.
- [Smithsonian National Museum of American History: The Disability Rights Movement](#) – This online exhibit focuses on the disability rights movement with text, pictures and video to explain various aspects of the movement and the ADA.

- [Disability History: An Important Part of America's Heritage](#) – This reading – developed by the Office of Disability Employment Policy – gives background information on the ADA, plus additional educational resources.
- [IDEA: Individuals with Disabilities Education Act – History & Summary](#) – This video provides a simple overview of the history of IDEA and the struggles of students with disabilities to have the right to a free, appropriate public education protected by law.
- [Wisconsin Reflecting on 20th Anniversary of ADA](#) – This video illustrates the struggle of passing the ADA, as well as successes and future opportunities for people with disabilities in Wisconsin and across the nation.
- [Supreme Court Rules Schools Must Provide More Opportunities for Students with Disabilities](#) – The Supreme Court ruled unanimously (8-0) that schools must do more than provide “merely more than *de minimis*” education for students with a disability and instead provide them with the opportunity to make “appropriately ambitious” progress.

Universal Design Resources:

- [CAST](#) – CAST is a nonprofit education and development organization that works to expand learning opportunities for all individuals through Universal Design for Learning.
- [Understood.org](#) – This hub possesses great resources for caretakers trying to figure how to navigate the education system. There are tips on how to ensure a universally accessible classroom on the site.
- [UDL Center](#) – The Center for Universal Design for Learning serves as a hub where teachers from all over can share tips, resources and other great tools, which helps spread Universal Design in the classroom. In addition, the site hosts an online version of *Universal Design for Learning* by David Gordon, Anne Meyer and David Rose.
- [Meet the Normals – Adventure in Universal Design](#) – This is an animated short that focuses on the process and challenges of universal design.
- Making Sense of Universal Design for Learning – This is a great video that explains how Universal Design for Learning can be incorporated into the classroom.
- [UDL Credentialing and Certification Initiative](#) – This website is an initiative to develop a Universal Design for Learning (UDL) credentialing and certification process to recognize best practices in education program design, product development and classroom instruction.

Resources for College Students with Disabilities:

- [Think College](#) – Think College is a national organization dedicated to developing, expanding and improving inclusive higher education options for people with intellectual disabilities. With a commitment to equity and excellence, Think College supports evidence-based and student centered research and practice by generating and sharing knowledge, guiding institutional change, informing public policy, and engaging with students, professionals and families.

- [National Center for College Students with Disabilities \(NCCSD\)](#) – The National Center for College Students with Disabilities (NCCSD) is a federally funded project under the U.S. Department of Education (P116D150005), through the Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education (FIPSE). NCCSD’s home is at the Association on Higher Education And Disability (AHEAD).
- [Disability Rights, Education Activism and Mentoring \(DREAM\)](#) – DREAM (Disability Rights, Education Activism, and Mentoring) is a national organization for and by college students with disabilities. DREAM advocated for disability culture, community and pride, and hopes to serve as an online virtual disability cultural center for students who want to connect with other students. They are supported by sponsoring organization National Center for College Students with Disabilities (NCCSD) and based at the Association on Higher Education And Disability (AHEAD).
- [Association on Higher Education and Disability \(AHEAD\)](#) – AHEAD is a professional membership organization for individuals involved in the development of policy and in the provision of quality services to meet the needs of persons with disabilities involved in all areas of higher education.
- [Center on Postsecondary Education and Disability \(CPED\)](#) – For more than 25 years, the Center on Postsecondary Education and Disability (CPED) has been a national leader in promoting access to postsecondary education for students with disabilities. Their work combines research-based evidence and professional training to inform the field and advance postsecondary education opportunities for students.
- [Disabilities, Opportunities, Internetworking, and Technology \(DO-IT\)](#) – The DO-IT (Disabilities, Opportunities, Internetworking, and Technology) Center is dedicated to empowering people with disabilities through technology and education. It promotes awareness and accessibility—in both the classroom and the workplace—to maximize the potential of individuals with disabilities and make our communities more vibrant, diverse and inclusive.
- [Historically Black Colleges and Universities \(HBCUs\) Disability Consortium](#) – This project involved a group of colleagues working in disability services at Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) and Predominantly Black Colleges and Universities (PBCUs), working in partnership with the Taishoff Center at Syracuse University. They worked to identify strategies for providing culturally responsive disability services and classroom instruction to Black and African American college students with disabilities on all campuses, while also trying to increase the number of Black and African American students with disabilities graduating from college and graduate schools.
- [Mason LIFE Program](#) – The Mason LIFE Program is an innovative post-secondary program at George Mason University for young adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities who desire a university experience in a supportive academic environment.
- [2017 NBCUniversal Tony Coelho Media Scholarship](#) – Thanks to a contribution from NBCUniversal, the American Association of People with Disabilities (AAPD) offers scholarships to undergraduate and graduate students with disabilities who are interested in pursuing a career in the communications, media or the entertainment industry.

Recipients will receive \$5,625 to help cover the cost of education at their current college or university.

Background Reading Resources:

- [Bookshare](#) – Bookshare is an accessible online library for individuals with print disabilities, with free memberships available for qualified students and schools. This can be a great resource in the classroom for students with print disabilities with over 200,000 titles on the site.
- [Goodreads Shelf on People with Disabilities](#) – This site lists popular novels in which the protagonist or other major characters have disabilities.
- [Disability in Kid Literature](#) – Disability in Kid Lit looks for and reviews disability representation in children’s literature. Their contributors are people with disabilities who love literature and want to help.
- [Books Written by People with Disabilities](#) – This site lists books that are written by and are about people with disabilities, most being true stories. They offer insight into the lives of people with disabilities and can be used in classroom discussions or book reports.

Recommended Reading for Children:

- Glatzer, Jenna. Taking Down Syndrome to School (Special Kids in School) (JayJo Books, 2002). Picture book about what it is like to have Down syndrome in school. Appropriate for children in elementary school.
- Ling, Nancy Tupper. My Sister, Alicia May (Pleasant St. Press, 2009). What it’s like to grow up with a sister with Down syndrome. Appropriate for children in first to third grade.
- Llano, Gabriella and Tiziana Vazquez. In My World: Down Syndrome (AuthorHouse, 2013). With the support of her family, a girl with Down syndrome lives her life and learns to accept being herself. Appropriate for children in elementary school.
- Nuenke, Susan K. Popping Wheelies Coloring Book, Volume 1 (Popping Wheelies LLC, 2014). Coloring book featuring drawings of kids with physical disabilities. Appropriate for children in elementary school.
- Palacio, R.J. Wonder (Knopf Books for Young Readers, 2012). A story about a boy born with facial defects. Appropriate for children ages 8 to 12.
- Paticoff, Melanie. Sophie’s Tales: Overcoming Obstacles (Sophie’s Tales, 2012). A dog with a cochlear implant meets Champ, another dog who wears glasses, and they talk about disability. Appropriate for children ages 3 to 10.
- Robinson Peete, Holly and Ryan Elizabeth Peete. My Brother Charlie (Scholastic Press, 2010). Story told from the point of view of the twin sister of a boy on the autism spectrum. Appropriate for children in kindergarten to second grade.
- Stuve-Bodeen, Stephanie. We’ll Paint the Octopus Red (Woodbine House, 1998). A six-year-old girl learns how to be a good big sister to a baby brother with Down syndrome. Appropriate for children in kindergarten to third grade.

- Woloson, Eliza. *My Friend Isabelle* (Woodbine House, 2003). Story of a friendship when one of the friends has Down syndrome. Appropriate for children in kindergarten to second grade.

Recommended Reading for Adults:

- Davis, Lennard J. *Enabling Acts: The Hidden Story of How the Americans with Disabilities Act Gave the Largest US Minority Its Rights* (Beacon Press, 2015). A gripping and nuanced telling of the behind-the-scenes efforts to pass the Americans with Disabilities Act.
- Shapiro, Joseph P. *No Pity: People with Disabilities Forging a New Civil Rights Movement* (Broadway Books, 1994). An historical, in-depth look at people with disabilities. The book also takes a close look at the advocacy efforts that led to the passage of the Americans with Disabilities Act.
- Solomon, Andrew. *Far From the Tree: Parents, Children and the Search for Identity* (Scribner, 2012). A deeply touching look at how parents and children can learn to accept and embrace differences. The people featured in this book demonstrate how lives with extreme challenges also have extreme value.

Resources for Policy Makers

Our nation was founded on the principle that anyone who works hard should be able to get ahead in life. People with disabilities deserve the opportunity to earn an income and achieve independence, just like anyone else.

There are 22 million working-age people with disabilities and only one-in-three have work. As the annual [Best and Worst States Report](#) states, Americans with disabilities are twice as likely to be employed in some states as opposed to others. In fact, in some states and counties that are using best practices, people with disabilities have 50 percent employment.

As such, leaders at the state and local level are critical partners in our mission to fight stigmas and advance opportunities. Below you will find an expansive list of reports, resources, testimonies, toolkits and data on disability employment. Please make use of our resources below.

Reports on Best Practices:

- [A Better Bottom Line: Employing People with Disabilities](#) – 2012-2013 Chair’s Initiative-National Governors Association (NGA)
- [Article – Workers First](#) – National Association of State Directors of Developmental Disabilities (NASDDDS)
- [Disability Employment First Planning Toolkit](#) – Developed in partnerships with Best Buddies, The National Association of Councils on Developmental Disabilities (NACDD), National Council on Independent Living (NCIL), Paralyzed Veterans of America (PVA) and National Organization on Disability (NOD).
- [Establishing a National Employment First Agenda](#) – Association of People Supporting Employment First (APSE).
- [Fulfilling the Promise: Overcoming Persistent Barriers to Economic Self-Sufficiency for People with Disabilities](#) – US Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor and Pensions (HELP)
- [Promising Occupations for Low-Income Families by State](#) – Mathematica Policy Research (MPR)
- [Leading Practices on Disability Inclusion](#) – US Business Leadership Network (USBLN) and the US Chamber of Commerce.
- [Q & A’s on State Employment First Policies](#) – State Employment Leadership Network (SELN)
- [The Time is Now: Embracing Employment First](#) – National Association of Councils on Developmental Disabilities (NACDD)
- [Work Matters: A Framework for States on Workforce Development for People with Disabilities](#) – The Council of State Governments (CSG) and National Conference of State Legislatures (NCSL)

Disability and Employment Data Sources:

- [Total Disabled Social Security Disability Insurance \(SSDI\) Beneficiaries, Ages 18-64 by State](#) – Kaiser Family Foundation
- [Total SSI Beneficiaries by State](#) – Social Security Administration
- [Local Disability Data for Planners – A Resource for County and State Data](#)
- [Disability Statistics](#)– Cornell University
- [Persons with a Disability: Labor Force Characteristics](#) – Bureau of Labor Statistics
- [Access to Integrated Employment \(AIE\) Project](#) – Institute for Community Inclusion
- [Annual Disability Statistics Compendium](#) – University of New Hampshire-Institute on Disability
- [Disability Resources](#) – Office of Disability Employment Policy (ODEP)

State Data and State Plan Comments:

Alabama:	AL – PDF	AL – PPT	AL – WIOA State Plan Comments
Alaska:	AK – PDF	AK – PPT	AK – WIOA State Plan Comments
Arizona:	AZ – PDF	AZ – PPT	AZ – WIOA State Plan Comments
Arkansas:	AR – PDF	AR – PPT	AR – WIOA State Plan Comments
California:	CA – PDF	CA – PPT	CA – WIOA State Plan Comments
Colorado:	CO – PDF	CO – PPT	CO – WIOA State Plan Comments
Connecticut:	CT – PDF	CT – PPT	CT – WIOA State Plan Comments
District of Columbia:	DC – PDF	DC – PPT	
Delaware:	DE – PDF	DE – PPT	DE – WIOA State Plan Comments
Florida:	FL – PDF	FL – PPT	FL – WIOA State Plan Comments
Georgia:	GA – PDF	GA – PPT	GA – WIOA State Plan Comments
Hawaii:	HI – PDF	HI – PPT	HI – WIOA State Plan Comments
Idaho:	ID – PDF	ID – PPT	ID – WIOA State Plan Comments
Illinois:	IL – PDF	IL – PPT	IL – WIOA State Plan Comments
Indiana:	IN – PDF	IN – PPT	IN – WIOA State Plan Comments
Iowa:	IA – PDF	IA – PPT	IA – WIOA State Plan Comments IA – WIOA update
Kansas:	KS – PDF	KS – PPT	KS – WIOA State Plan Comments
Kentucky:	KY – PDF	KY – PPT	KY – WIOA State Plan Comments
Louisiana:	LA – PDF	LA – PPT	LA – WIOA State Plan Comments
Maine:	ME – PDF	ME – PPT	ME – WIOA State Plan Comments
Maryland:	MD – PDF	MD – PPT	MD – WIOA State Plan Comments
Massachusetts:	MA – PDF	MA – PPT	MA – WIOA State Plan Comments
Michigan:	MI – PDF	MI – PPT	MI – WIOA State Plan Comments
Minnesota:	MN – PDF	MN – PPT	MN – WIOA State Plan Comments
Mississippi:	MS – PDF	MS – PPT	MS – WIOA State Plan Comments
Missouri:	MO – PDF	MO – PPT	MO – WIOA State Plan Comments
Montana:	MT – PDF	MT – PPT	MT – WIOA State Plan Comments

Nebraska:	NE – PDF	NE – PPT	NE – WIOA State Plan Comments
Nevada:	NV – PDF	NV – PPT	NV – WIOA State Plan Comments
New Hampshire:	NH – PDF	NH – PPT	NH – WIOA State Plan Comments
New Jersey:	NJ – PDF	NJ – PPT	NJ – WIOA State Plan Comments
New Mexico:	NM – PDF	NM – PPT	NM – WIOA State Plan Comments
New York:	NY – PDF	NY – PPT	NY – WIOA State Plan Comments
North Carolina:	NC – PDF	NC – PPT	NC – WIOA State Plan Comments
North Dakota:	ND – PDF	ND – PPT	ND – WIOA State Plan Comments
Ohio:	OH – PDF	OH – PPT	OH – WIOA State Plan Comments
Oklahoma:	OK – PDF	OK – PPT	OK – WIOA State Plan Comments
Oregon:	OR – PDF	OR – PPT	OR – WIOA State Plan Comments
Pennsylvania:	PA – PDF	PA – PPT	PA – WIOA State Plan Comments
Rhode Island:	RI – PDF	RI – PPT	RI – WIOA State Plan Comments
South Carolina:	SC – PDF	SC – PPT	SC – WIOA State Plan Comments
South Dakota:	SD – PDF	SD – PPT	SD – WIOA State Plan Comments
Tennessee:	TN – PDF	TN – PPT	TN – WIOA State Plan Comments
Texas:	TX – PDF	TX – PPT	TX – WIOA State Plan Comments
Utah:	UT – PDF	UT – PPT	UT – WIOA State Plan Comments
Vermont:	VT – PDF	VT – PPT	VT – WIOA State Plan Comments
Virginia:	VA – PDF	VA – PPT	VA – WIOA State Plan Comments
Washington:	WA – PDF	WA – PPT	WA – WIOA State Plan Comments
West Virginia:	WV – PDF	WV – PPT	WV – WIOA State Plan Comments
Wisconsin:	WI – PDF	WI – PPT	WI – WIOA State Plan Comments
Wyoming:	WY – PDF	WY – PPT	WY – WIOA State Plan Comments

RespectAbility Testimony:

- DOL Advisory Committee on Increasing Competitive Integrated Employment for Individuals with Disabilities (ACICIED) [Testimony March 2015](#)
- [ACICIED Testimony October 2015](#)
- [ACICIED Testimony July 2016](#)
- [Gaps and Opportunities in the WIOA Presentation](#)
- [House Ways and Means Committee Testimony](#)
- [Illinois Employment First Plan Testimony](#)
- [New York State Employment First Commission Testimony](#)
- [Top 10 Things to Know about WIOA and Jobs for People with Disabilities](#)
- [WIOA State Plan Checklist](#)

Examples of State Leadership:

- Terry Branstad R-IA – [Employment of People with Disabilities Summit](#)

- Scott Walker R-WI – [Announces Success with Initiatives That Assist People with Disabilities in Gaining Employment](#)
- Jay Inslee D-WA – [Disability Employment Task Force](#)
- Tom Wolf D-PA – [Improving Efforts to Help People with Disabilities Find Employment](#)

Resources for Entertainment Professionals

People with disabilities are the largest minority in America, with almost [one-in-five Americans](#) having a disability. Yet the disability community often is forgotten in inclusion and diversity conversations. According to [GLAAD](#), fewer than two percent of scripted television characters (15) have disabilities in 2016. Furthermore, more than [95 percent](#) of characters with disabilities on television are played by actors without disabilities.

What does exist is misleading. Almost all portrayals of people with disabilities in media [are white](#), despite the fact that disability impacts all. Anyone can join the disability community at any point and people with disabilities come from all communities – including the African American, Asian, Hispanic, Native American and LGBTQ communities. According to a recent report by [The Media, Diversity, & Social Change](#) (MDSC) Initiative at USC’s Annenberg School for Communication and Journalism, only 2.4 percent of all speaking or named characters in film were shown to have a disability in 2015 and none of the leading characters were from underrepresented racial or ethnic groups. “Depictions of disability are not only marginalized,” [the report says](#), “they also obscure the true diversity of this community.”

Advocacy:

- [Hollywood, Media & Disability Webinar](#) – As part of RespectAbility’s process of creating a Community of Practice to work on the closely connected issues of disability, diversity, inclusion, poverty and media, RespectAbility hosted this webinar. RespectAbility is working with several partners within the entertainment industry on the full inclusion of people with disabilities – in front and behind the camera.
- [Alliance for Inclusion in the Arts](#) – The Alliance for Inclusion in the Arts advocates for full diversity American theatre, film and television. They promote authentic dialogue about race, culture and disability that embraces the complexity of underlying social and historical issues.
- [Amputees in Hollywood](#) – The mission of Amputees in Hollywood is the realistic portrayal of the amputee in the media and amputees in amputee roles in movies and on television, as well as the authentic representation of prostheses and the professionals who design and fit them.
- [CinemAbility](#) – This documentary takes a detailed look at the evolution of disability in entertainment through interviews with filmmakers, studio executives, film historians and celebrities on the powerful impact that entertainment and the media has on society.
- [GLAAD](#) – As a dynamic media force, GLAAD tackles tough issues to shape the narrative and provoke dialogue that leads to cultural change. GLAAD is the only organization to track the number of characters with disabilities on scripted television through its [Where We Are on TV](#)
- [Hands On](#) – Hands On offers interpreted performances in the nonprofit theatrical arena, as well as information on deafness and the arts across the country.
- [Media Access Awards](#) – The Media Access Awards honors members of the entertainment and broadcast industries for their efforts in promoting awareness of the disability

experience, accessibility for people with disabilities and the accurate depiction of characters with disabilities.

- [Multicultural Motion Picture Association \(MMPA\)](#) – The MMPA celebrates creative voices and portrayals bringing needed perspectives to film and television by making these stories available to a mass audience.
- [National Arts & Disability Center](#) – The National Arts and Disability Center promotes the full inclusion of audiences and artists with disabilities in all facets of the arts community.

For Performers with Disabilities:

- [Actors for Autism](#) – Actors for Autism is dedicated to the advancement, education and training of people on the autistic spectrum. They provide new and innovative programs in the arts, film and television, animation, visual effects and video game industries.
- [The Art of Autism](#) – The Art of Autism is an international collaboration of talented individuals who have come together to display the creative abilities of people on the autism spectrum and others who are neurodivergent. They provide a forum to connect with those who wish to employ these abilities.
- [Born to Act Players](#) – The Born to Act Players is a unique theater company comprised of professional performers with and without disabilities. Many members of the company are working actors.
- [Down Syndrome in Arts & Media \(DSiAM\)](#) – DSiAM is a casting liaison service for individuals with Down syndrome and other developmental disabilities like William's syndrome, Cerebral Palsy and those on the autism spectrum.
- [Deaf West Theatre](#) – Deaf West Theatre Company serves as a model for deaf theater worldwide. Founded to directly improve and enrich the cultural lives of the 1.2 million deaf and hard-of-hearing individuals who live in the Los Angeles area, it is the first professional resident Sign Language Theatre in the western half of the United States.
- [Kazarian/Measures/Ruskin & Associates \(KMR\)](#) – KMR is one of the country's leading bi-coastal talent agencies. The diversity department specializes in character actors and models with diverse disabilities for film, television, commercials, theatre, print and live appearances. KMR is a resource for finding just the right actor for that "hard to find" character when it comes to a disability.
- [The Miracle Project](#) – The Miracle Project provides individuals with autism and other disabilities tools to build communication, social skills, community and greater self-esteem through inclusive theater and expressive arts programs. This acclaimed arts program was documented in the HBO double Emmy Award-winning documentary, *AUTISM: THE MUSICAL*.
- [National Theatre of the Deaf \(NTD\)](#) – In 1967 when NTD began, Sign Language was seen as a stigma. By placing Sign Language on stage, the NTD showed the world that Sign Language was a beautiful, powerful, visual language.

- [Performing Arts Studio West \(PASW\)](#) – Founded in 1998, PASW provides hands-on individualized training, career management and on-location support for performers with intellectual disabilities working in film, television and commercials.

For Behind the Scenes:

- [Exceptional Minds \(EM\)](#) – EM is a nonprofit vocational school and working studio preparing young adults on the autism spectrum for careers in digital animation and visual effects.
- [From the Heart Productions](#) – From the Heart Productions is dedicated to helping independent filmmakers with unique films that contribute to society get their films funded.
- [Inclusion Films](#) – Inclusion Films, started in 2007 by veteran filmmaker Joey Travolta, teaches filmmaking to children and adults with developmental disabilities. In addition to workshops in California, they travel the country doing short film camps for children and teens with autism.

Ending the School to Prison Pipeline

In 2016, RespectAbility, in consultation with a wide-ranging group of diverse leaders, prepared a detailed report, [Disability & Criminal Justice Reform: Keys to Success](#). The report, which was [featured](#) on the PBS Newshour, looks at how youth with disabilities get caught in the school-to-prison pipeline, what happens to people with disabilities behind bars and how people exit the criminal justice system. The report offers very specific proposals for progress.

There are many dedicated reformers who are fighting hard at the federal, state and local level to reform our nation's schools and justice system. However, some have not yet fully realized the deep degree to which the issues they are working on intersect with disability, poverty and discrimination. Based on our review of the available data, we estimate that there are more than 750,000 Americans with disabilities behind bars today.

Leaders in the disability community and leaders in the criminal justice reform movement have much to learn from each and have great opportunities to collaborate. Below is a short list of resources, reports and organizations that touch on the critical intersection of ableism, racism and economic inequality in criminal justice.

Safety and Criminal Justice Webinars:

- [Sexual Violence and People with Disabilities – Lessons on Prevention, Protection and Survival from RAINN](#)
- [Special Conversation with Special Olympics about Violence, Police Training and People with Disabilities](#)
- [Disability and Criminal Justice Reform – Key to Success and Challenges Ahead](#)

Government Resources:

- [Department of Justice \(DOJ\)](#)
- [Bureau of Justice Statistics \(BJS\)](#)
- [Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention \(OJJDP\)](#)
- [National Institute of Justice \(NIJ\)](#)
- [CSG Justice Center – Collaborative Approaches to Public Safety](#)

Advocacy and Research Resources:

- [Prison Policy Initiative](#)
- [The Coalition for Public Safety](#)
- [American Civil Liberties Union \(ACLU\)](#)
- [Vera Institute of Justice](#)
- [John Jay College of Criminal Justice](#)
- [NAACP](#)
- [The Arc – National Center on Criminal Justice & Disability \(NCCJD\)](#)
- [Helping Educate to Advance the Rights of the Deaf \(HEARD\)](#)
- [National Disability Right Network \(NDRN\)](#)

- [Pew Research Center](#)
- [Center for American Progress \(CAP\)](#)
- [American Enterprise Institute \(AEI\)](#)
- [Charles Koch Institute](#)
- [Disability Rights Education and Defense Fund \(DREDF\)](#)
- [Rooted in Rights](#)
- [Equal Justice Initiative](#)

Philanthropic Organizations:

- [Anne E. Casey Foundation](#)
- [Laura and John Arnold Foundation](#)
- [The Pew Charitable Trusts](#)
- [Open Society Foundations](#)

Model Programs:

- [Social Impact Bonds](#)
- [Center for Employment Opportunities \(CEO\)](#)
- [Prison Entrepreneurship Program \(PEP\)](#)

DC/Maryland Specific Resources:

- [One by 1, Inc.](#)

Inclusive Philanthropy

Philanthropy works best when people from all races, genders, sexual orientations and abilities are served, including the one-in-five people who have a disability. Philanthropists can learn how to welcome, include, serve and benefit from the talents of people with physical, learning, sensory, intellectual, mental health and other disabilities who often are left out of the diversity discussion.

By doing so, foundations and philanthropists can have the maximum impact that they desire, whether that is in education, training, employment, criminal justice, health, access or other key issues. We encourage you to learn more by reading the resources below:

Disability Funders and Inclusive Statements:

- [Council on Foundations: Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion](#)
- [Disabilities Funders Group](#)
- [Change Philanthropy](#)

Ensuring Accessibility:

- [Making Documents and Presentations Accessible](#)
- [Web Accessibility Tips and Tricks](#)

Related Articles:

- [Rethinking Disability – Donors Launch an Experiment That Could Spark Seminal Social Reform](#)
Philanthropy Roundtable – Spring 2017
- [How Foundations Can Ensure Diversity Efforts Include People With Disabilities](#)
Chronicle of Philanthropy – December 20, 2016 (Subscription Only)
- [Ignorance is the Enemy Within](#)
Ford Foundation Newsletter – September 12, 2016
- [Ford’s Push on Disability Rights Should Be a Model for Philanthropy](#)
Chronicle of Philanthropy – September 12, 2016 (Subscription Only)
- [Inclusive Philanthropy](#)
EJewish Philanthropy – April 17, 2016
- [A funder asks potential grantees: “How Inclusive are you of People with Disabilities?”](#)
EJewish Philanthropy – April 6, 2016
- [Respect is Key to Inclusive Funding](#)
National Committee for Responsive Philanthropy – July 7, 2015
- [Celebrating ADA: It’s Time to Add a Disability Lens to Our Philanthropy](#)
D5 Blog – June 18, 2015
- [Making Jewish E-Learning Accessible to All](#)EJewish Philanthropy – April 30, 2015

- [Lessons From Failed Giving to Charity](#)
Huffington Post – September 12, 2014
- [5 Reasons Why Philanthropy Does Not Follow The Disability Sector](#)
Beyond Impact – February 6, 2014
- [Is Philanthropy Sufficiently Proactive on the Issues of People with Disabilities?](#)
Nonprofit Quarterly – June 20, 2013
- [Diverse Managers – Philanthropy’s Next Hurdle](#)
Council on Foundations