



LEAD CENTER

Best Practices in Universal Design: Strategies for Intake & Orientation

NAWDP Conference: May, 2014

TODAY'S SPEAKERS

Rebecca Salon, PhD.

LEAD Center, Project Director
National Disability Institute

Elizabeth Jennings

LEAD Center, Assistant Project Director
National Disability Institute

Miranda Kennedy, M.P.P.

DEI, Director of Training
National Disability Institute



The National Center on Leadership for the Employment and Economic Advancement of People with Disabilities (LEAD) is a collaborative of disability, workforce and economic empowerment organizations led by **National Disability Institute** with funding from the **U.S. Department of Labor's Office of Disability Employment Policy**, Grant No. #OD-23863-12-75-4-11.

This document does not necessarily reflect the views or policies of the U.S. Department of Labor's Office of Disability Employment Policy, nor does the mention of trade names, commercial products, or organizations imply endorsement by the U.S. Government.



LEAD CENTER MISSION

- ▶ To advance sustainable individual and systems level change that results in improved, competitive integrated employment and economic self-sufficiency outcomes for individuals across the spectrum of disability.



OBJECTIVES

Participants in this session will:

- ▶ Identify Universal Design strategies to successfully serve a diverse range of jobseekers.
- ▶ Explore applications of universal design principles and practices with jobseekers, during intake, orientation and assessment.
- ▶ Learn techniques to incorporate Universal Design principles and practices into initial and subsequent contacts with people who may need accommodations to fully access services.
- ▶ Examine resources, strategies and products that promote success and represent best practices for communicating with and supporting people with diverse cultural backgrounds, disabilities, or limited literacy or English proficiency, to assist them during intake and orientation processes, both at AJCs and through partnerships.
- ▶ Discuss specific issues for which Universal Design strategies can lead to better outcomes.



DOL DEFINITION OF UNIVERSAL DESIGN

- ▶ The use of common strategies that reinforce the concept of an inclusive setting that welcomes diversity, including products and environments that are accessible to and useable by all.
 - ▶ The use of universal design strategies enables workforce staff to provide easier access, a welcoming atmosphere, and better customer service.
 - ▶ Universal design strengthens practices to serve better persons with disabilities and other challenges to employment (e.g., people with a wide range of learning styles, languages, educational levels, intelligences, experiences, and abilities).
 - ▶ Universal Design provides multiple and flexible methods to ensure that the learners acquire the information and knowledge they need.



WHAT IS UNIVERSAL DESIGN?

- ▶ Universal Design is a strategy for making products, environments, operational systems and services welcoming and usable to the most diverse range of people possible.
- ▶ Its key principles are simplicity, flexibility, ease of access and efficiency.
- ▶ It is a lens through which all aspects of interaction can be viewed, and can be applied to products, services, physical environments, communications, technology, policies and practices.

<http://www.dol.gov/odep/media/newsroom/universal.htm>



WHAT IS UNIVERSAL DESIGN (UD)?

- ▶ UD is a proactive approach that anticipates barriers people might face regardless of the cause and creates approaches to overcome or accommodate them.
- ▶ Developing services that are accessible to the largest number of people reduces the need for:
 - ▶ specialized assistance,
 - ▶ individualized accommodation requests, and
 - ▶ delays while accommodations are put into place.



DID YOU KNOW?

- ▶ An estimated 20% of the U.S. population are people with disabilities.
- ▶ Less than one-third of working age adults with disabilities are employed.
- ▶ People with disabilities are more likely to be unemployed and to live in poverty than any other single demographic group in the United States today.



DID YOU ALSO KNOW?

- ▶ Public benefit programs for people with disabilities, especially Supplemental Security Income (SSI), are not aimed at increasing assets and independence for people with disabilities.
- ▶ More so than any other population on a fixed income, services and policies do not hold the expectation of economic self-sufficiency.



CHARACTERISTICS OF PEOPLE WITH HIDDEN DISABILITIES

- ▶ People with hidden disabilities comprise as high as 25% of the population. (Some studies show as high as 1/3 of the TANF population)
- ▶ People with hidden disabilities have a range of abilities, levels of education, employment background, and ethnicities.
- ▶ A 2013 Secret Shopper Initiative by the LEAD Center and ASAN found that improved Universal Design was necessary to ensure access to programs and services.



EXAMPLES OF UNIVERSAL DESIGN

- ▶ Open/closed captioning
- ▶ Availability of screen readers
- ▶ Increasing font size on documents
- ▶ Curb cuts
- ▶ Voice activated applications
- ▶ Door handles that don't require grasping, use push-bars, and/or have automatic or electronic door openers



WHY IS UNIVERSAL DESIGN IMPORTANT TO THE WORKFORCE SYSTEM?

- ▶ Universal design makes access to services, jobs and learning accessible to all people, thereby serving the largest number of youth and adults, even without expertise in disability or knowledge of someone's specific disability.
- ▶ Job seekers are encouraged to use alternate methods to represent themselves and their skills, abilities and talents.



WHY ELSE IS UNIVERSAL DESIGN IMPORTANT TO THE WORKFORCE SYSTEM?

- ▶ Section 188 regulations require that recipients of WIA funds provide equal opportunities and not discriminate on the basis of disability.
- ▶ Discrimination is prohibited in registration, provision of assistance, benefits, services, and training including core, intensive, training and support services.



WHAT DO WE KNOW ABOUT INCLUSIVE SETTINGS?

- ▶ All people benefit when settings and interactions are inclusive.
 - ▶ Workplaces
 - ▶ Learning environments
 - ▶ Places of business
 - ▶ Networking settings
 - ▶ Communities



UNIVERSAL ACCESS INCLUDES:

- ▶ The use of strategies for making products, environments, operational systems and services welcoming and usable to the most diverse range of people possible (definition of UD).
- ▶ Reasonable efforts and appropriate steps to ensure that recruitment, outreach and targeting efforts are accessible and promote the inclusion of people with disabilities (and others) in programs and activities.
- ▶ All activities being offered in the most integrated setting appropriate.
- ▶ Workforce professionals providing reasonable accommodations in the registration for and provision of aid, benefits, services and/or training.



UNIVERSAL ACCESS ALSO INCLUDES:

- ▶ An obligation to communicate effectively, with generalized actions for anyone and the availability of specific support to meet an individual's needs.
- ▶ Architectural accessibility.
- ▶ Programmatic accessibility (e.g., the provision or redesign of equipment, design of classes, provision of assistive technology, use of alternative career assessments, provision of someone to assist, etc.)

All complying with most integrated setting requirements.



WHAT CAN AJCS DO TO CONTINUE TO IMPROVE SERVICES TO PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES?

- ▶ Offer assistance and accommodations to all customers rather than just to a particular population.
- ▶ Make information on all services available to all customers, avoiding assumptions that certain people may not be interested in some services.
- ▶ Provide choices (e.g., technology; physical settings; assessment approaches and tools; on-line, face-to-face and self-directed approaches; accommodations for learning styles; etc.)



WHAT ELSE CAN AJCS DO TO CONTINUE TO IMPROVE SERVICES TO PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES?

- ▶ Eliminate unnecessary complexity and/or contacts
- ▶ Offer accommodations to everyone for literacy and language needs (e.g., include graphics, color-coding, larger print, etc.)
- ▶ Create on-line or video-taped versions of forms and materials, including orientation information



WHAT ELSE CAN AJCS DO TO CONTINUE TO IMPROVE THEIR SERVICES TO PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES?

- ▶ Conduct periodic “Secret Shopper” projects.
- ▶ Create universal design staff roles/teams.
- ▶ Require that partners use UD practices in formal partnership agreements (MOUs, contracts, etc.).
- ▶ Identify and implement cross-training opportunities with partners and people with disabilities (e.g., VR, CILs, DD, MH, etc.).
- ▶ Identify internal “experts” who can provide assistance and creative problem-solving support as challenges arise.



WHAT ELSE CAN AJCS DO TO CONTINUE TO IMPROVE THEIR SERVICES TO PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES?

- ▶ Create networking opportunities to make the business case for hiring people with disabilities, including the benefits of incorporating universal design into employment, recruitment, hiring and retention practices.
- ▶ Pursue Customized Employment in the AJC and/or with partners.
- ▶ During orientation for all customers, review their rights to equal opportunity and their right to file a complaint.
- ▶ Provide training for staff on use of assistive technology, materials in accessible formats, materials that address different learning styles and reading levels, captioning and interpretation services, etc.





The Disability Employment Initiative (DEI) is a collaborative effort between the U.S. Department of Labor's (DOL) Employment and Training Administration (ETA) and the Office of Disability Employment Policy (ODEP)

This project has been funded, either wholly or in part, with Federal funds from the Department of Labor, Employment and Training Administration under Contract Number DOLJ131A22067.

DEI Goals

The goal of the Disability Employment Initiative is to:

- improve coordination and collaboration among employment and training and asset development programs implemented at state and local levels, including the Ticket to Work Program, and
- build effective community partnerships that leverage public and private resources to better serve individuals with disabilities and improve employment outcomes.

DEI Outcomes:

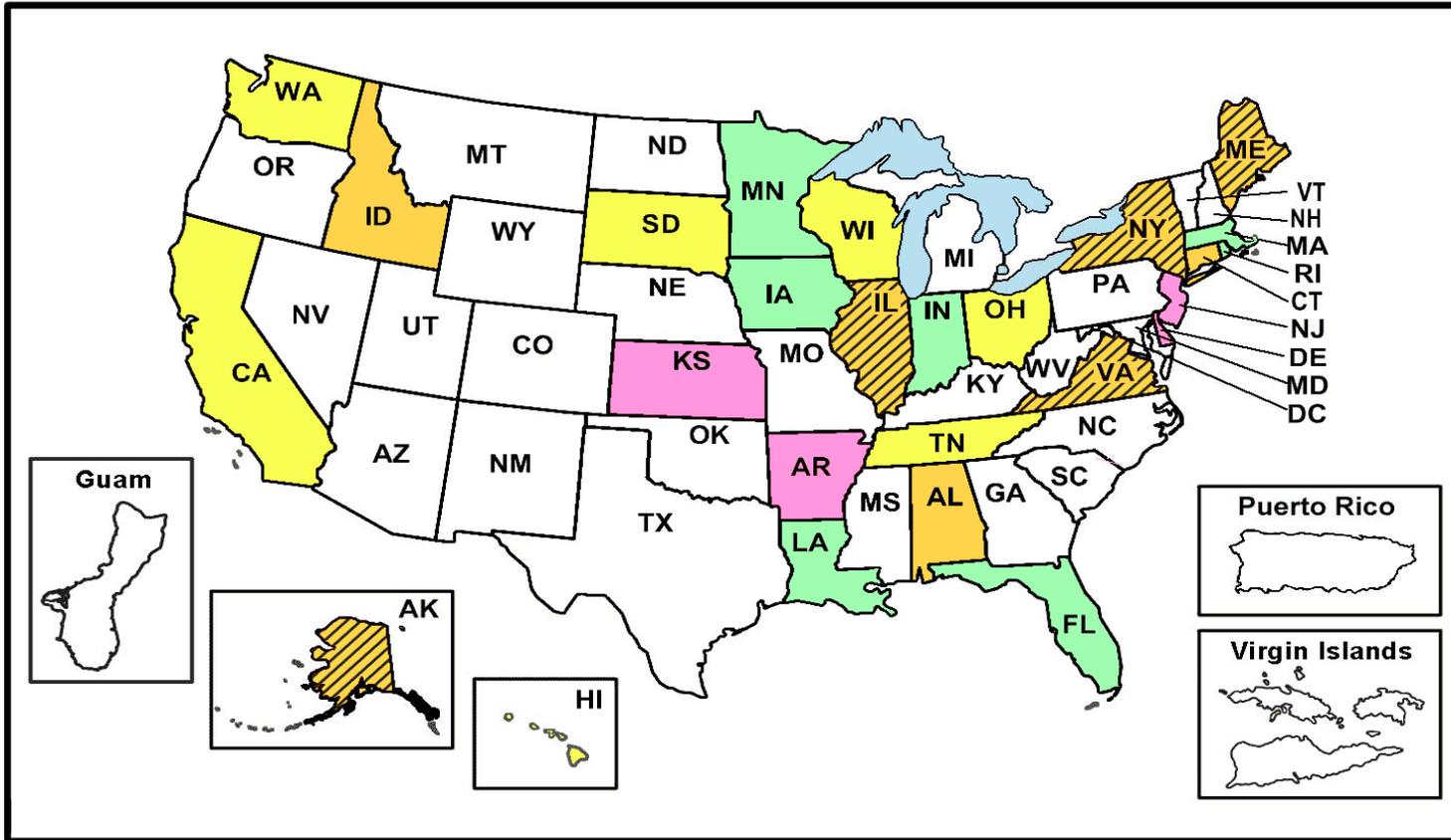
Data from SSA Ticket to Work and WIASRD

- Through the DEI, DOL is creating systemic change within the public workforce system by providing tools and strategies to promote the economic self-sufficiency of job seekers with disabilities.
- Under the DEI, the numbers come in two formats through:
 1. Ticket to Work Program, and
 2. The workforce system's performance outcomes

DISABILITY EMPLOYMENT INITIATIVE

This map represents the twenty-six states that have entered into cooperative agreements with the U.S. Department of Labor to implement strategic approaches to support exemplary employment services for Individuals with disabilities in the workforce development system.

The Disability Employment Initiative (DEI) is jointly funded and administered by the Department's Employment and Training Administration and the Office of Disability Employment Policy.



- Round 1 DEI Projects (Founded in 2010)
- Round 2 DEI Projects (Funded in 2011)
- Round 3 DEI Projects (Funded in 2012)
- Round 4 DEI Projects (Funded in 2013)
- Round 4 (Funded in 2010-Round 1 and 2013-Round 4)



**Showcasing the
Disability and Employment CoP Website,
American Job Center (AJC) Access Guide
and the
AJC Access 30-Second Training Series**

Disability and Employment Community of Practice

provides disability and employment resources for the public workforce system, including promising practices to promote the positive employment outcomes of persons with disabilities. <http://disability.workforce3one.org>

WorkforceOne Communities ▾ Login ▾ Sign Up

Disability and Employment

Connecting the Pieces of the Employment Puzzle

HOME ABOUT RESOURCES DISCUSSIONS

Promising Practices • Access & Accommodations • Employer Resources • Front Line Staff Training • DEI Project • DPN Archive Subscribe

Welcome to the Disability and Employment Community of Practice.

Navigating the services and resources available for assisting people with disabilities to obtain quality employment is like fitting together the pieces of a puzzle. America cannot successfully compete in a global economy without fully engaging the 33 million working-age people with disabilities in our workforce. As we meet our goal of "Good Jobs for Everyone," the public workforce development system needs to expand its capacity to provide integrated, seamless, and accessible services and programs to people with disabilities and/or other challenges to employment. To achieve this goal and building upon lessons learned from the Employment and Training Administration's Disability Program Model (DPM) initiative, the workforce system is

Announcements

- DOL Announces 2014 Theme of National Disability Employment Awareness Month: "Expect. Employ. Empower!"
- Webinar: Comment Period Opens on Career Pathways Systems
- Webinar: Making the VR Connection!
- Webinar: Jobs for Veterans State Grant (JVSG) Program Refocusing Front-line American

Please Login

sign up, it's free!

 lost password?

- » DEI Technical Assistance Center
- » Ticket Success TA Center

American Job Center Access Guide:

<https://disability.workforce3one.org/command/view.aspx?look=2001405840432475887&mode=info&pparams=>

Workforce3One Communities ▾ Login ▾ Sign Up

Disability and Employment

Connecting the Pieces of the Employment Puzzle

HOME ABOUT RESOURCES DISCUSSIONS

Promising Practices • Access & Accommodations • Employer Resources • Front Line Staff Training • DEI Project • DPN Archive [Subscribe](#)

American Job Center Access Resource Guide

Posted by Laura Gleneck - On February 27, 2014 (EST)

This guide was developed to provide American Job Centers and their partner agencies with relevant federal, state and local level information around their legal obligations and resources that can assist them in identifying and implementing effective accommodation strategies in serving and training job seekers who experience a disability.

Feedback

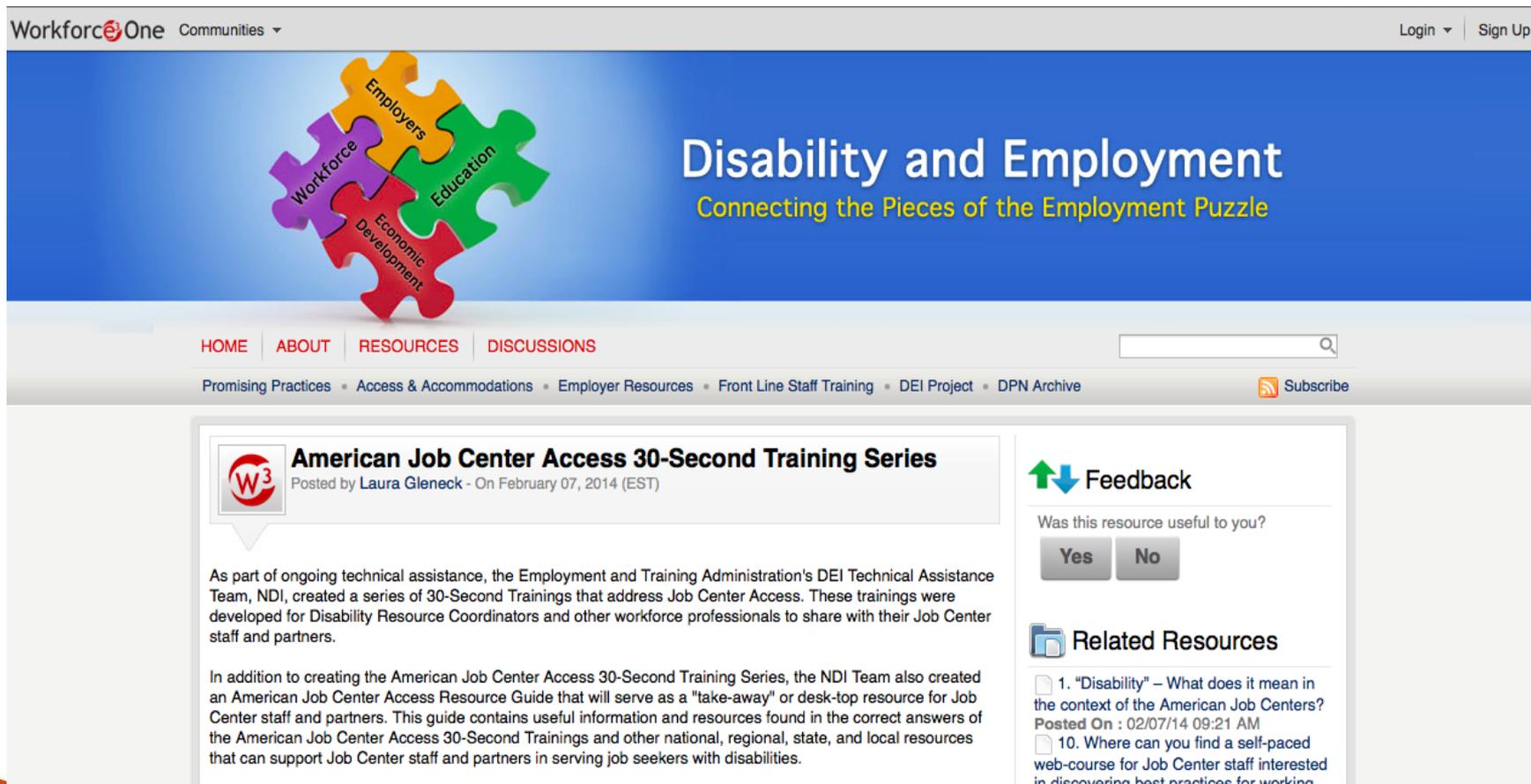
Was this resource useful to you?

Information

Modified On : February 27, 2014

American Job Center Access 30-Second Training Series:

<https://disability.workforce3one.org/view/1001403833465878171/info>



WorkforceOne Communities Login | Sign Up

Disability and Employment

Connecting the Pieces of the Employment Puzzle

HOME | ABOUT | RESOURCES | DISCUSSIONS

Promising Practices • Access & Accommodations • Employer Resources • Front Line Staff Training • DEI Project • DPN Archive Subscribe

American Job Center Access 30-Second Training Series

Posted by Laura Gleneck - On February 07, 2014 (EST)

As part of ongoing technical assistance, the Employment and Training Administration's DEI Technical Assistance Team, NDI, created a series of 30-Second Trainings that address Job Center Access. These trainings were developed for Disability Resource Coordinators and other workforce professionals to share with their Job Center staff and partners.

In addition to creating the American Job Center Access 30-Second Training Series, the NDI Team also created an American Job Center Access Resource Guide that will serve as a "take-away" or desk-top resource for Job Center staff and partners. This guide contains useful information and resources found in the correct answers of the American Job Center Access 30-Second Trainings and other national, regional, state, and local resources that can support Job Center staff and partners in serving job seekers with disabilities.

Feedback

Was this resource useful to you?

Related Resources

- 1. "Disability" – What does it mean in the context of the American Job Centers? Posted On : 02/07/14 09:21 AM
- 10. Where can you find a self-paced web-course for Job Center staff interested in discovering best practices for working

Resources

- ▶ **DEI Technical Assistance Project** <http://www.dei-ideas.org/>
- ▶ **Disability and Employment Community of Practice** provides disability and employment resources for the public workforce system, including promising practices to promote the positive employment outcomes of persons with disabilities. <http://disability.workforce3one.org>
 - ▶ For background information on the DEI:
https://disability.workforce3one.org/page/tag/dei_project
 - ▶ For the American Job Center Access Guide:
<https://disability.workforce3one.org/command/view.aspx?look=2001405840432475887&mode=info&pparam>
 - ▶ For the American Job Center Access 30-Second Training Series:
<https://disability.workforce3one.org/view/1001403833465878171/info>
- ▶ **ODEP** <http://www.dol.gov/odep/>

QUESTIONS?

CONTACT INFORMATION

Miranda Kennedy, M.P.P.
Director of Training

Disability Employment Initiative
National Disability Institute
1667 K Street, NW - Suite 640
Washington, DC 20006

Boulder Office

720.890.3990 (telephone)
mkennedy@ndi-inc.org
www.dei-ideas.org

Elizabeth Jennings
Assistant Project Director

LEAD Center
National Disability Institute
1667 K Street, NW - Suite 640
Washington, DC 20006

202.296.2044 (telephone)
ejennings@ndi-inc.org
www.leadcenter.org