



NH Governor's Commission on Disability

CLIENT ASSISTANCE PROGRAM UPDATE 10.4.18

OCTOBER BRINGS A FOCUS ON EMPOWERING ALL IN WORKFORCE

Concord, NH— *Empowering All.* What a great theme the US Dept. of Labor's Office of Disability Employment chose for the October 2018 National Disability Employment Awareness Month.

What does that mean to us? In real time, it means we must not only empower those with disabilities, but also those who create the jobs, those who make hiring decisions, and all who work side-by-side with individuals with disabilities.

It's no secret that barriers to employment for those with disabilities still exist.

While the overall rate of employment seems to be rising, it's still fair to point to a disproportionately high unemployment rate for those with disabilities.

With this backdrop, how do we go about the business of empowering all? For starters, let us acknowledge that we all must be involved and be active participants.

- Company policies are only valid if they are enforced with action.
- Working environments are positive only with collaborative and welcoming employees.
- Ultimately, everyone is responsible for a diverse and open workplace.

Human Resource Professionals will tell you they can set a tone for an employer even before the interview takes place by advertising openings in disability related venues and promoting equal opportunity employment. They can also...

- Provide applications and documents in multiple accessible formats, as a standard.
- Make clear a company's commitment to workplace accommodations and assistive technology.
- Educate Managers and Staff on a range of topics, from disability etiquette to diversity.

Throughout October and beyond, *Empowering All in the Workforce* is just not a slogan, but will remain a goal and a reminder that disability is but one aspect of a person. Every person in the workplace is unique.

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