

In this Issue: **National Disability Employment Awareness Month 2018 is Here!**

EARN IN ACTION

NDEAM Kicks Off Across the Nation

October is National Disability Employment Awareness Month (NDEAM), and EARN will be participating in or assisting with a number of NDEAM-related events throughout the month. Observed annually, NDEAM is a nationwide campaign that celebrates the contributions of workers with disabilities both past and present and educates about the value of a workforce inclusive of their skills and talents. This year's theme is "America's Workforce: Empowering All." Businesses of all sizes and in all industries are encouraged to participate. For ideas and resources to assist, visit the [NDEAM website](#).

New Success Story Highlights How WRP Helps Source Talent

EARN partner Disability:IN's innovative use of the Workforce Recruitment Program (WRP) allows its members to tap fresh talent and make their workforces more disability inclusive. A new profile on EARN's website shares how this process works through the story of recent Johns Hopkins University Chemical and Biomolecular Engineering graduate Daniel Sanchez, who was hired by defense contractor Northrop Grumman as part of its Professional Development Program. Sanchez has a progressive neuromuscular disorder called Friedreich's Ataxia. [Read Sanchez's story](#).

DISABILITY EMPLOYMENT IN THE NEWS

NDEAM Recognized by White House, Labor Department

In recognition of National Disability Employment Awareness Month (NDEAM), the White House issued an official Presidential Proclamation summarizing different administration efforts to increase the workforce participation of people with disabilities. U.S. Secretary of Labor Alexander Acosta also issued a formal statement, while Deputy Assistant Secretary of Labor for Disability Employment Policy Jennifer Sheehy penned a blog post. Read the [Presidential Proclamation](#), [Acosta's statement](#) or [Sheehy's blog post](#).

RETAIN Grants Announced

The U.S. Department of Labor recently announced \$19 million in grants to eight states to implement Retaining Employment and Talent After Injury/Illness Network (RETAIN) demonstration projects. The goal of these demonstration projects is to help Americans who are injured or ill remain in or return to the workforce through early coordination of health care and employment-related supports and services. The eight states receiving funds include Ohio, Washington, Kansas, California, Vermont, Minnesota, Connecticut and Kentucky. [Learn more about the RETAIN grants](#).

Association Health Plans Expand Options for People with Disabilities

The U.S. Department of Labor recently expanded access to affordable health coverage through Association Health Plans. These plans allow small businesses, including self-employed workers, to band together by geography or industry to obtain health care coverage

as if they were a single large employer. They also strengthen negotiating power with providers from larger risk pools and greater economies of scale. As a result, they increase options for many workers, both with and without disabilities, to obtain employer-provided health insurance coverage. [Learn more about AHPs.](#)

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ASK EARN



Q: What benefits does a disability-inclusive workforce offer for employers?

A: Businesses inclusive of people with disabilities, including veterans with disabilities, benefit from a wider pool of talent, skills and creative business solutions. They also benefit from tapping into a growing market, since people with disabilities represent the third largest market segment in the U.S. By proactively employing individuals with disabilities, businesses can gain a better understanding of how to meet the needs of this important and expanding customer base. [Learn more.](#)

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

October 16, 2018, 12:00-1:00 p.m. ET

Webinar: Autonomous Vehicles: Driving Employment for People with Disabilities

This webinar, hosted by the National Center for Mobility Management (NCMM) in coordination with the Office of Disability Employment Policy (ODEP), will explore the potential for autonomous vehicles (AV) to increase access to employment and independence for people with disabilities, and the challenges that must be met to make this a reality. Panelists will include representatives from both NCMM and ODEP, as well as AV innovators. The webinar is free, but registration is required. [Register for the webinar.](#)

November 12-18

Event: National Apprenticeship Week

National Apprenticeship Week (NAW) 2018 will be November 12-18. Held annually, NAW educates about apprenticeship and offers leaders in business, labor and education an opportunity to showcase how programs help prepare a highly skilled workforce for employers in their communities. Combining classroom instruction with on-the-job training, apprenticeships help bridge skills gaps and bring new and more diverse talent into the workplace, including people with disabilities. [Learn more about NAW.](#)

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EMPLOYER SPOTLIGHT



National Institutes of Health

The National Institutes of Health (NIH) is hosting a series of events and programs in honor of National Disability Employment Awareness Month, with an emphasis on educating employees about its Reasonable Accommodation Program. To kick-off the observance, Office of Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Director Debra Chew wrote a blog post in which she explains the program and reinforces NIH's commitment to creating "inclusive spaces, so people with disabilities can feel more comfortable asking for accommodations." [Read the blog post.](#)

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The Employer Assistance and Resource Network on Disability Inclusion (EARN) is a resource for employers seeking to recruit, hire, retain and advance qualified employees with disabilities. It is funded by the U.S. Department of Labor's Office of Disability Employment Policy under a cooperative agreement with The Viscardi Center. For more information, visit AskEARN.org

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