

ASED 2009 Conference Recap

National Disability Employment Awareness Month Empowerment = Expectation + Opportunity = Full Participation

October 8, 2009

MORNING SESSION:

Sara Kristal, Board President of the Disability Network of Michigan, described some of the changes in the disability community in Michigan.

Jeff Lichon, Dow Chemical's Global Disability Employee's Network Chair, talked about Dow's disability affinity group ([copy of slide presentation available here](#)).

Kelvin W. Scott, Director of the Michigan Department of Civil Rights, read the Governor's proclamation and shared insights on how the state, as an employer, was addressing disability issues ([copy of recommended resources here](#)).

Member Survey – 16 current ASED member respondents

1. Did you officially designate yourself as an employee with a disability, either through your personnel office or the MI HR Service Center? **YES 88%**
2. Would you recommend that new hires or existing employees who acquire disability characteristics officially designate themselves as employees with disabilities? **YES 88%**
3. Have you ever used the services of your agency/department Reasonable Accommodation or ADA Coordinator? **YES 63%**
4. Have you ever felt that your disability characteristics resulted in workplace prejudice or discrimination? **YES 63%**
5. Overall, would you say that Michigan Government is a great place to work for people with disability characteristics? **YES 88%**

AFTERNOON WORKGROUPS:

Careers and Promotion – Coordinator: Myrtle Gregg-LaFay

- CSC Career Office
 - Offers help with what jobs people may be qualified for

- NEOGOV – are the videos closed/opened captioned?
- “From the trenches” (Seasoned Employee Panel)
 - Don’t be ‘political’ on the job
 - Work to the best of your ability
 - Talk, communicate, try to resolve issues on your own, first
 - Get along with your boss
 - Develop an expertise no one else has (niche)
 - Help your employer know what your needs are

Reasonable Accommodations – Coordinator: Toni McFarland

- Things to work on:
 - Educating supervisors – need a process
 - Central location for information & resources
 - Emergency evacuations & shelter
 - Employees who have to go on Disability Retirement without the Employer attempting reasonable accommodations
 - Hiring displaced employees with disabilities in other departments
- We need more than one annual meeting!
- **Disability and Business Technical Assistance Center at**
<http://www.dbtacnorthwest.org/>

Disability and Separation/Retirement – Coordinator: Mary Pollock

- No uniformity of policy & practice across departments
- Medical recall options for NEREs
- Different definitions of disability for different benefits and systems
- Return to work programs are not consistent
- We need part time job opportunities
- No consistent approach to transitional employment
- Need to be able/willing to change jobs as abilities change

COMBINED CLOSING SESSION:

Roadmap Themes:

- Statewide uniformity of policies & procedures
- Enforcement of existing policies
- Accommodations proactive support – a line item for accommodations?
- Respect for existing employees
 - DMB security equipment needs to be physically, visually, & audibly accessible!
- Target Persons with Disabilities for employment opportunities; recruitment
 - What is the state doing about recruitment of people with disabilities?
 - Make job postings more appealing to folks with disabilities
 - Advertise assistance for people with mental health disabilities

- (Letting employees with acquired disabilities go is a) waste of state resources – let's use what we have.
 - Folks with disabilities should take the same hit as other employees (in these hard times), not more of a hit like we did in 1982
- Power & empowerment (for employees with disabilities)
- Lack of leadership – decision makers (in this area)
 - Where's the data?
- Recognize a disability affinity group
- Cabinet level appointment (for a voice at the highest level)
- Advisory group for disability policy
- Get the people who need to be here to the table (employees with disabilities).

Recurrent Themes:

- We Need Powerful Sponsorship
- We need to create channels and networks to reach employees with disabilities – to help attract, retain & empower

Resource List from Kelvin Scott

Michigan Works! <http://michiganworks.org/home/information-for-persons-with-disabilities/>

US Department of Labor Office of Disability Employment Policy
<http://www.dol.gov/odep/>

What can you do? (Campaign for Disability Employment)
<http://www.whatcanyoudocampaign.org/>

American Association of People with Disabilities
<http://www.aapd.com/index.html>

International Center for Disability Resources on the Internet
<http://www.icdri.org/index.html>

US Business Leadership Network <http://www.usbln.org/>
Equal Employment Opportunity Commission <http://www.eeoc.gov/>

Link to EEOC draft regulations to implement the employment provisions of the ADAAA of 2008
<http://edocket.access.gpo.gov/2009/pdf/E9-22840.pdf>

DiversityInc <http://www.diversityinc.com/>

Leadership Conference on Civil Rights <http://www.civilrights.org/>

Michigan Department of Civil Rights <http://www.michigan.gov/mdcr>