



July 2012, Volume 3, Issue 2

[www.consultspringboard.com](http://www.consultspringboard.com)

## Nadine's Message

Hello friends and welcome to the second issue of The WAVE 2012.

With October just around the corner, we in the disability community look once again to the month that the U.S. Department of Labor's Office of Disability Employment Policy celebrates as National Disability Employment Awareness Month (NDEAM). This year's theme is, "A Strong Workforce is an Inclusive Workforce: What Can YOU Do?"

This year's theme reinforces the known fact that individuals with disabilities represent a highly skilled talent pool, a talent pool that as society ages, Corporate America needs more than ever. But it goes beyond accessing talent. It speaks to making the workplace accessible to talent and not just physically accessible although that is an important component. It means being organizationally ready to fully embrace workers with disabilities with inclusive workplace policies and practices that are seamlessly integrated into the corporate culture.

So what can YOU Do? A lot because although led by ODEP, NDEAM's true spirit lies in the many observances held at corporate offices held throughout the U.S. Activities can range from something as simple as placing posters around the building to acknowledge the celebration to offering disability related training and education programs to launching a comprehensive corporate disability strategy. If you have been considering starting a Disability Employee Resource or Affinity

### 2013 Disability Matters

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**United States:**  
**April 16-17, 2013**  
**Hosted by:**  
**Florida Blue**  
**Jacksonville, FL**

**International:**  
**Europe**  
**&**  
**Asia-Pacific**

**Stay Tuned for more!**

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## Nadine's Message - Continued.

Group, October is a perfect time to announce and execute the launch. Or, if you have been considering launching a talent acquisition strategy, specifically with college students with disabilities, October is a great time to host your first Disability Mentor Day. What about rolling out a Disability Disclosure Tool? This will clearly illustrate your company's commitment to all its' employees to be able to bring their whole selves to work, including those with disabilities.

At the end of the day, what you do is not nearly as important as doing something. No matter how big or small the celebration, just be sure to make it relevant not only to individuals with disabilities but to your company, its' people and its' culture.

I wish you all a wonderful second half of summer.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Nadine', written in a cursive style.

Nadine

## The ADA Inquirer:

by Shelley A. Kaplan, Manager ADA Services, Springboard Consulting, LLC

### MITIGATE RISK BY BUILDING DISABILITY READINESS *A 3-Part Series*

#### PART 2 — BE PROACTIVE

This article is the second of a three-part series called, “**BE PROACTIVE.**” Part 1 (July issue) focused on “**BE**”. This Part 2 focuses on “**PRO**”; and Part 3 will address concepts related to “**ACTIVE.**” Together, these articles address some of the common pitfalls employers face when including people with disabilities in the workforce and workplace and ways to avoid those pitfalls. When companies decide to “**BE PROACTIVE**” they mitigate, reduce, and often eliminate potential risk and, as a result, greatly increase the benefit from a very large untapped labor pool.

#### The “**PRO**” in “**PROACTIVE**”

Perspective. Successful inclusion of employees with disabilities requires that you seriously consider the legal, ethical, business and financial policies and practices influencing your operations. Are business decisions driven by perceived legal obligations, or are you adjusting certain practices because it makes good business sense? Minimizing risk involves adhering to the “letter of the law” AND providing equal opportunity in the “spirit” of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Obeying the “letter of the law” is a matter of physical action (i.e., removing disability-related questions from your job application questionnaire, or providing reasonable accommodations in the workplace), whereas embracing the “spirit of the Law” requires more than just outward actions—it also involves an attitude of the mind (i.e., appreciating and valuing individual differences). For example, providing a written job application in large print to an applicant with low vision may comply with the “letter of the law, but, to enthusiastically hire this applicant because s/he will add to the “rainbow of perspectives” needed for your company to remain competitive in an ever-changing environment (i.e., offering fresh ideas on how to solve problems, accomplish tasks and implement strategies) and perhaps providing additional support and training beyond that which is required, complies with, and even embraces the spirit of the law.

Employers who recognize that disability is a natural part of diversity benefit by taking steps to ensure that people with disabilities are represented in their workforce. For example, recruiting and retaining workers with disabilities is one strategy to counter the effects of the aging and shrinking workforce. This untapped labor pool can offer a source of skilled employees and can contribute to increasing retention and reducing turnover.

## The ADA Inquirer - continued

To attract and retain employees with disabilities, it is suggested that employers consider incorporating the following reported best practices:

- Seek out qualified candidates with disabilities for job openings by posting job openings with the Office of Student Disabilities located on college campuses.
- Establish a system for educating all workers about the value people with disabilities bring to your company.
- Incorporate a disability focus into your diversity training program.
- Ensure that internal professional development programs are available to people with disabilities.
- Provide employees with disabilities with candid and prompt feedback on their performance in the same manner as provided for individuals without disabilities
- Make certain that training and other off-site activities are accessible to employees with disabilities.
- Take advantage of tax credits and education resources to provide accommodations for both new employees with disabilities and employees returning to work following an illness or injury.

Furthermore, to minimize risk and to comply with the letter and spirit of the law, employers must modify their approach from one that focuses on verifying the disability to reflect the real question at hand: **“What workplace support or accommodation is needed to help this worker be successful in their job?”** Employers must not overly focus on disability verification, but on providing the effective workplace supports necessary to enable the employee to successfully perform the essential job functions.

The reality is this: disability presents itself in so many shapes and forms, and results from so many causes, that we must simply recognize disability as a "constant in life" that has either happened or will happen at some time or another. It is always a "best practice" to attempt to accommodate someone who may not technically qualify under the ADA as long as you treat others in similar situations in the same way. For example, providing access to all areas of the workplace for everyone.

**Review.** In order to provide equal opportunities and benefits for those with disabilities, employers may find it necessary to modify certain policies, practices and procedures, unless they would fundamentally change the nature of the employment. Those modifications may touch upon all stages of employment, including applications, training, education, promotion, leave and all other company benefits. Therefore, every employer should comprehensively examine its own policies, practices and procedures to determine if any changes are necessary to ensure

## The ADA Inquirer - Continued

that those with disabilities have an equal opportunity to enjoy all benefits of employment. Inflexible policies, such as the amount of leave an employee can take before automatic termination, is an invitation for disaster because additional leave--absent undue hardship--may be necessary as a reasonable accommodation for certain situations. Keep in mind that any testing administered to applicants or employees with disabilities must be of a form and nature that reasonably accommodates the individual's specific needs. For example, allowing a job applicant to take a required typing test using voice dictation.

It is strongly recommended that employers communicate in every possible way (i.e., in policy manuals, job opening announcements, job descriptions, intranet/internet postings, etc.), that reasonable accommodations will be provided and how to request them. This will enable you to deliver required reasonable adjustments in a confidential, timely, and efficient manner.

Training programs should be reviewed and continually updated in order to provide managers with the skills and information necessary to recognize and address disability issues. This will enable employers to implement practices that not only comply with their legal obligations, but greatly benefit the business being conducted as well as the return generated there from.

Creativity, flexibility, and a determination to be proactive, result in better and more cost efficient hiring and accommodation practices, as well as improved productivity, retention and expanded opportunities to all parties involved.

**Organic.** It would be a profound misconception to believe that people with disabilities are anything but an asset to the workforce and workplace. It is undeniable that successful companies recognize that addressing disability concerns actually increases profits by attracting top talent and reducing turnover.....and striving to enhance the workplace always produces a better product.

Predictably, serious challenges arise as inclusion strategies are implemented or as new standards of operation are introduced-- each and every one of which can be resolved with "organic" systems (i.e., sustainable, in-place policies and procedures that address real problems and provide real solutions such as where to find top talented personnel with disabilities, how to anticipate, recognize and respond to requests for accommodations, how to under-

## The ADA Inquirer - Continued

stand and react to poor performance that may or may not be disability-related, and how to provide effective and reasonable accommodations, etc.).

Organic growth results from an ability to...

1. attract and identify individuals who have the best mix of skills and attributes for the job available;
2. ensure that all qualified individuals—including those with disabilities—can participate in all aspects of employment;
3. provide flexibility in the workplace to respond to individual employee needs;
4. encourage creative problem-solving; and
5. value the individual differences and the unique perspectives of all people.

Creating such an inclusive culture is not difficult, but does require some forethought and planning. Companies that are recognized for their successful and sustainable organic systems are far better prepared to attract the most skilled workforce possible, conduct appropriate and effective staff training, establish and review benchmarks for success and improvement, and provide routine oversight of workforce management and operations.

These fortunate employers establish and maintain a culture that fosters employee engagement and open communication that values people with disabilities as a valuable company asset.

Springboard Consulting helps global corporations create sustainable systems by delivering the practical know-how and essential information needed to grow organically.

You are encouraged to share other ways your company addresses the “**PRO**” in “**PROACTIVE**” by sending an email to [Shelley@consultspringboard.com](mailto:Shelley@consultspringboard.com). All comments and suggestions are confidential.

Be sure to read Part 3, The “**ACTIVE**” in “**PROACTIVE**” in the next issue of the “Wave.”

## Springboard Canada:

by *Connie Putterman, Manager Canada, Springboard Consulting, LLC*

### **YOUR NEIGHBORS TO THE NORTH: HOW DO THEY FAIR WHEN IT COMES TO DISABILITY IN THE WORKPLACE?**

Part One: AODA and the Customer Service Standard: What is it? And how does it affect organizations in Canada?

Did you know that your neighbors to the north have been very busy lately, with new disability legislation that uniquely affects all businesses in Ontario, Canada's most populated province? AODA or Access for Ontarians with Disability Act, as it is called, was first legislated in 2005. Its purpose was to achieve accessibility for Ontarians with disabilities. It is unique legislation for Canada and for the world as it is the first of its kind to specifically and proactively prevent barriers for people with disabilities through accessibility standards. Accessibility standards are rules that organizations will have to follow in order to identify, remove, and prevent barriers. AODA outlines standards in five key areas including customer service, information and communication, employment transportation, and built environment.

But why are Ontario companies so busy? As of January 1st, 2012, new standards for customer service came into effect for all companies greater than one employee. That affects virtually all organizations in Ontario, and it means that all organizations are obliged to become aware, train, make changes and behave in a way that eliminates barriers for customers with disabilities.

So how does this translate to practice and what does that mean companies have to do? How does your company fare?

Here is a brief checklist on AODA's customer service standard requirements:

- A. Companies must establish policies, practices, and procedures on providing goods or services to people with disabilities.
- B. Companies must use reasonable efforts to ensure that the policies, practices and procedures they develop are consistent with the core principles of independence, and dignity, integration unless alternate measures are necessary, and equality of opportunity to obtain, use and benefit from the goods or services.

## Springboard Canada – Continued

- C. The policies need to include the use of personal assistive devices to obtain and benefit from the goods and services, and they need to address any other measures the organization offers to enable people with disabilities to access goods and services. This also includes the use of guide dogs or other service animals in areas owned by the company that are open to the public and also those who require support people to accompany them in public spaces. Things like additional fees for service people and notices of disruptions need to be addressed in any policies.
- D. Communication with a person with a disability needs to take into account their disability.
- E. Lastly, training and feedback are a must. Training of employees, managers who manage those employees or write the policies for customer service standards, and contract workers who interact with the public on the company's behalf are essential. Start with training your employees on etiquette and awareness. It will go a long way to setting the standards on future behavior and attitudes in the organization and will impart a sense of awareness in the culture of an organization. After all, the employees are the "face" of the organization to the public.

At the same time, establishing a process for feedback and how your company will manage the feedback process and any complaints also needs to be done. Make the information about feedback readily available to the public, and preferably on line that is easily accessible for all to obtain.

Although AODA legislation came into effect for Ontario, the other nine provinces in the country are following suit with their own similar legislation.

In practical terms, companies that have offices in Ontario as well as across the country will need to ensure that all of their offices are compliant and standardized in their practices. This will mean AODA will affect more than just companies in Ontario. It will have a trickle effect to more companies across the country.

Federally regulated companies, although not obligated under the regulation, will look at best practices as a result of this provincial legislation. They too will be affected by AODA.

Now that you are aware of some of the requirements of AODA and the customer service standard, did you know that the Integrated Accessibility Standards in Information and Communication and Employment will come into effect in a couple of years? Is your company ready for these?



## Springboard Canada – Continued

Employment standards cover areas such as recruitment, accommodation and return to work, performance management, career development and advancement.

These will have significant impact on Ontario and Canadian companies in the future.

What does all of this mean practically for companies?

Where do you start?

The following is Springboard's AODA checklist. Ask yourself the following questions:

1. Employee engagement-how are you communicating new policy is it coming from the top? Is top management aware and supportive?
2. Training and Etiquette is the global number one best practice for disability management- Focus on sensitivity and awareness building and dispelling myths. Have you targeted the specific groups mentioned above?
3. Change management and communication management- how does the organization deal with change? Have you prepared the documents for this?
4. Feedback and testimonials: Do you have a process for feedback from employees and persons with disabilities, what about disclosure? Has this been discussed?
5. Time lines and Goals-Set a timeline for further discussions and long term strategy. Organizations need short and long term objectives for disability, do you have them?

Now you know some of what the Canadian Springboard office has been busy working on? We can help you ensure that you are up to speed on the practical aspects of AODA legislation.

We can also help you to communicate to your Canadian counterparts what they need to know about disability management in the workplace.

Let's get started today. Don't delay.

# The Disability ERG Strategy Summit 2012 - Canada



## THE DISABILITY ERG STRATEGY SUMMIT 2012 - CANADA

**HOSTED BY: HSBC**

### DATE & LOCATION:

Tuesday, October 9, 2012  
8:30 AM - 4:45 PM EST

### TIFF Bell Lightbox

Reitman Square  
350 King Street West  
Toronto, Ontario  
M5V 3X5

### PRICING\*

\$299 (CAD) per person: General Admission

\$199 (CAD) per person: Disability ERG Leadership Networking Forum Subscribers

*\*Includes light breakfast and lunch*

### RSVP:

Purchase a ticket and register no later than Monday, September 24, 2012 or until capacity is reached - [CLICK HERE](#).

Should you have any questions, please contact Connie Putterman, at Springboard's Toronto office at [connie@consultspringboard.com](mailto:connie@consultspringboard.com) or via telephone: 1-416 800-0479 x 2.

### HOTELS:

The Fairmont Royal York: 100 Front Street West, Toronto, Ontario, M5J 1E3, Canada; T: 1-416-368-2511. To view hotel, please visit - <http://www.fairmont.com/royal-york-toronto/>

The InterContinental Toronto Centre: 225 Front Street West, Toronto, Ontario, M5V 2X3, Canada; T: 1-416-596-1400. To view hotel, please visit - <http://www.ichotelsgroup.com/intercontinental/en/gb/locations/overview/yyztc>

## Springboard Canada – Continued

The Hilton Toronto: 145 Richmond Street West, Toronto, Ontario, M5H 2L2, Canada; T: 1-416-869-3456. To view hotel, please visit - <http://www3.hilton.com/en/hotels/ontario/hilton-toronto-TORH1HH/index.html>

### **PARKING:**

Parking is available at Bell Lightbox. The cost is \$12/Day and access to the parking garage is located off of Widmer Street.

### **TRANSPORTATION:**

#### **By Bus**

TIFF Bell Lightbox is located at Reitman Square on the north-west corner of King and John Streets (350 King Street West), TIFF Bell Lightbox occupies an entire city block in the heart of Toronto's media and entertainment district. All spaces, including the cinemas, are wheelchair accessible to the public.

#### **By Car**

From The Gardner Expressway

- Take the Spadina Ave. Exit
- Turn Left onto Lower Spadina Ave
- Turn right onto King Street W

#### **By TTC**

The closest Subway stop is St Andrew. Bell Lightbox is a 5 minute walk West of St Andrew subway station on the north-west corner of King Street and John Street. Alternatively, the King Street Car stops at John Street in front of Bell Lightbox.

### **MESSAGE:**

The difference between success and greatness or in a worst case scenario, mediocrity or even failure of a Disability Employee Resource Group is the organizers' and leaders' understanding of the unique issues and applicable best practices. This Inaugural Canadian Summit will address everything from Benchmarking, Perspective and Communications to the group's mission, vision and overall value proposition. Key priorities and well as leadership and structure will also be addressed. The Summit will also provide a forum for cross-company/industry learning, experience sharing and of course, networking.

Whether you have already launched your Disability ERG or you're just introducing it to your organization, the Disability ERG Strategy Summit will be invaluable in helping you successfully take your group to the starting block or to that next level, whatever that level may be.

## National Disability Employment Awareness Month: Book Springboard Now!

**N**ational  
**D**isability  
**E**mployment  
**A**wareness  
**M**onth



“A Strong Workforce is an Inclusive Workforce: What Can YOU Do?” This is the 2012 theme for National Disability Employment Awareness Month which takes place in October. ODEP, the U.S. Labor Department’s Office of Disability Employment Policy believes this theme promotes the benefits of a diverse workforce that includes workers with disabilities, who represent a highly skilled talent pool.

An inclusive workforce, one where the policies and practices are seamlessly integrated into a company’s corporate culture almost guarantees long-term success. This is especially true when your workforce is inclusive of individuals with disabilities, including service disabled veterans. So, what can you do? A lot and Springboard can help.

In fact, when you schedule your NDEAM event or service with Springboard, if you book by July 31, 2012 you will receive one case of Nadine’s book, *DIVE IN, Springboard into the Profitability, Productivity and Potential of the Special Needs Workforce*, free of charge. That’s an extra value worth \$1,344.

Call or email us today (T: 1-973-813-7260 x102; E: [ivette@consultspringboard.com](mailto:ivette@consultspringboard.com)) to learn about the wide variety of exciting, cost effective options that will ensure a successful celebration. We look forward to hearing from you and ultimately, celebrating with you.

Nadine O. Vogel  
President

**Springboard Consulting LLC**®

*dive in with precision*

## The Disability ERG Professional Development Leadership Summit - U.S. 2013



SPONSORED BY:



### DATE & LOCATION:

Monday, April 15th, 2013  
8:30 AM-4:30 PM EST

CSX Headquarters  
500 Water Street  
Jacksonville, FL 32202

### PRICING\*:

\$299 per person: General Admission (regardless of registration, in order to gain entry to the event, you must show proof of being a corporate disability ERG leader at the registration desk on the day of the event.)

\$229 per person: Disability ERG Leadership Networking Forum Subscribers

\*Includes light breakfast and lunch

### RSVP:

Purchase a ticket and register no later than Friday, March 5, 2013 or until capacity is reached - [CLICK HERE >>](#)

Should you have any questions, please contact Jill Frankel at [jill@consultspringboard.com](mailto:jill@consultspringboard.com) or via telephone: 1-973-813-7260 x. 106.

### REMINDER:

The 2013 U.S. Disability Matters Awards Banquet & Conference will be taking place the following two days, Tuesday and Wednesday, April, 16 & 19. If you are interested in attending please visit - <http://www.consultspringboard.com/2011/about-disability-matters-united-states/> or contact Jill Frankel at [jill@consultspringboard.com](mailto:jill@consultspringboard.com) or via telephone: 1-973-813-7260 x. 106 for more information.

### HOTELS:

**Sawgrass Marriott** – this is the host hotel for the Disability Matters event. To view hotel's website, visit - <http://www.sawgrassmarriott.com/>

# Disability Matters Awards Banquet & Conference:




## DISABILITY MATTERS U.S. 2013

April 16-17, 2013  
Jacksonville, Florida


**Our Host:** *Florida Blue* 

**Welcome Reception Host:** 

**Platinum Sponsor(s):** ***NORTHROP GRUMMAN***

**Gold Sponsor(s):** 



**Silver Sponsor(s):** 



**Bronze Sponsor(s):**   



## Disability Matters Awards Banquet & Conference:

**DISABILITY MATTERS EUROPE 2013**

*June 2013 - Paris, France*

**&**

**DISABILITY MATTERS ASIA-PACIFIC 2013**

*September 2013 - Bangalore, India*

*Stay Tuned....*

## Come See Nadine!



Inclusive Recruitment - Shaping Best Practice in Internship Programmes for Students with Disabilities. Tuesday, September 4, 2012 at the British Council, Hong Kong.



NALC 2012; Thursday, September 6, 2012 at the Hyatt Regency McCormick Place, Chicago, IL



11th Annual Diversity Solutions Best Practices Conference, Tuesday, September 18, 2012 at the Crystal City Marriott, Arlington, VA.



2012 Diversity Council Conference Enhancing Performance-creating Value . Thursday, October 4, 2012 at the Hyatt Regency Crystal City, Arlington, VA..



THOUGHT LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE  
Executive Think Tank Series™

Thought Leadership Executive TLC Think Tank Forum, September 19-21 2012 at The Hubert H. Humphrey Building, Washington, DC



CMO CLUB Innovation Summit, San Francisco, Thursday/Friday; October 25-26, 2012, at the Ritz-Carlton, San Francisco, CA.





## A Note from the Springboard Team:

As always, we hope everyone has enjoyed this edition of “[The WAVE](#)”.

Summer winding down; school is starting... and “[The WAVE](#)” is keeps its course steady. Don't forget to take your copy of “[The WAVE](#)” as you commute to work, sit in the park as your children play, to the side-lines to watch your children at after-school activities, or to relax with a cup of coffee or tea.

As always, please help us spread the word... tell everyone you know to visit our website and sign-up for the newsletter - <http://www.consultspringboard.com/newsletter/> .

Again, we thank you for your support and for subscribing to ...

**“The WAVE”**

*Until Next Time...*



14 Glenbrook Drive, Mendham, NJ 07945, United States  
T: 973-813-7260; F: 973-813-7261; E: [info@consultspringboard.com](mailto:info@consultspringboard.com)  
<http://consultspringboard.com>