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2010 DISABILITY MATTERS AWARDS BANQUET & CONFERENCE ~ SPECIAL EDITION ~

The Springboard Team would like to thank everyone who made the 2010 Disability Matters Awards Banquet & Conference the success that it was. We could not have done it without each and every person involved.

The Honorees:

We would like to start off by congratulating our Award recipients. They are the pillars of the Disability Matters Awards event, which is why this issue is dedicated to their accomplishments.

And the winners are..

DIVERSITY / WORKFORCE AWARDS

Blue Cross Blue Shield of Florida (BCBSFL):

BCBSFL has a community-driven, customer-focused mission. Their corporate beliefs call for a commitment to the public good and they consistently attempt to contribute to the well-being of their customers and all Floridians.

BCBSF has a long history of supporting people with disabilities throughout Florida. Since 1980, BCBSFL has provided assistance to employees after returning to work from illness, injury or disease that

(Continued on page 2)

TOP 3 REQUESTED SERVICES:

- *Event Production in Celebration of National Disability Awareness Month*
- *The Disability ERG Leadership Networking Forum*
- *ADA/ADAAA Hotline*

If you would like any information about these three services or any of Springboard's other offerings, please call us at 973-813-7260.

Springboard's Mission --

“Mainstream Disability.”

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would affect their ability to be productive and service the customer. Over the years BCBSFL has enlarged their approach to providing assistance to any employee depending on the condition that affects their ability to work.

“For more than 15 years, BCBSFL has provided the tools their employees need to be most productive in their job assignments ...”

BCBSFL learned early on that employees’ skill sets were valuable to the success of their organization, and they developed programs to assist employees with disabilities on a short-term basis. In the late 1980’s they began altering job tasks and creating alternate tasks for these employees until their medical conditions improved and allowed them to return to their initial job assignment. As BCBSFL realized that certain conditions became more permanent, they began to develop a process that allowed employees to receive the right tools needed to perform their jobs. For more than 15 years, BCBSFL has provided the tools their employees need to be most productive in their job assignments whether they self disclose their disability at the onset of their job assignment or at the time when they feel comfortable asking for assistance. BCBSFL also has a policy on disability accommodations that reflects their commitment to reasonable accommodations for qualified individuals with a temporary or long-term disability. Ultimately, the company feels that it is about helping all employees reach their maximum potential and it has been their long-standing philosophy to demonstrate this commitment by the way they support their employees.

Through BCBSFL’s Employee Resource Group, *possAbilities*, which launched November 2009, the group supports individuals with disabilities in achieving their career goals among many other important initiatives.

Northrop Grumman Corporation (NGC):

Northrop Grumman’s Electronic Systems (NGES) sector is a global leader in developing advanced solutions for the U.S. Department of Defense and various other governmental agencies as well as numerous international customers. Their success relies on its ability to attract, retain and motivate its highly talented and technical workforce. At NGES, inclusion means bringing your whole self to work. It means an environment where everyone is engaged in their work and feels comfortable bringing personal and professional skills and talents to the work place. This sector’s disability initiatives are focused on providing career opportunities for qualified candidates, dispelling the myths & stereotypes surrounding people with disabilities, raising awareness and increasing the comfort level through education.

“They believe you have to view the ability, rather than the disability.”

Northrop Grumman is committed to creating an environment that causes prospective and current employees to view the organization as a preferred employer. They demonstrate a commitment to employees as individuals and provide opportunities for them to make multiple positive connections with managers, co-workers, customers and members of their respective communities. Maintaining a genuine interest in individual employees, their career development and ability to balance work and personal-life priorities is a critical part of their people strategy.

Rather than considering these efforts as “the right thing to do”, NGES believes that there is a “business case” for these initiatives. NGES’ success relies on its ability to attract, retain and motivate its highly talented and technical workforce. NGES recognizes that they are facing a shortage of talent as the baby boom generation leaves the workforce. They see the disabled community as a nearly untapped resource pool for

The Honorees:

qualified talent. NGES, looks beyond the stereotypes misinformation surrounding this community. They believe you have to view the ability, rather than the disability.

Public Service Enterprise Group (PSEG):

One of PSEG’s initiatives for people with disabilities is training management on the importance of disability etiquette and awareness. Another equally important initiative was to develop a robust section of the PSEG intranet site with nationwide information and resources that meet the needs of employees who either have a disability or have a child or other dependent with special needs.

“They value this diversity — and seek to foster it — because it sparks innovation...”

Both of these initiatives along with the PSEG hosting of Disability Mentoring Day (DMD), while important all year long are celebrated, in particular, in October for National Disability Employment Awareness Month. Disability Mentoring Day is a day to promote career development for students and jobseekers with disabilities through career awareness activities such as tours of community businesses and opportunities to speak with employers. Through DMD, students learn about the company, observe training demonstrations, identify necessary skills and learn about possible internships and employment opportunities.

The purpose of DMD is to explore and enhance common values that emphasize interdependence, equality and the sanctity of each individual’s dignity. The goal is to further a unified vision and recognition of the principle of diversity and inclusion.

Disability Mentoring Day underscores the connection between school and work. This experience encourages participants to evaluate personal goals, target career skill for improvement and explore possible career paths. PSEG defines diversity as the full spectrum of human differences that contribute to our individuality. They value this diversity — and seek to foster it — because it sparks innovation when employees with different perspectives work together to offer solutions to the many challenges their business and times present. This partnership accelerates diversity at PSEG, empowers members, encourages personal development and facilitates recruitment and retention of a diverse workforce.

MARKETING / MARKETPLACE AWARDS

Prudential Financial:

Prudential’s Special Needs program, known as “Prudential Special Needs Solutions for All Ages”, is designed to deliver educational seminars to parents and guardians of individuals with special needs regarding the importance of planning for the future. The program provides “essential information, tools and resources” introduced by licensed financial professionals who have participated in a comprehensive training program including, information on state and federal programs, the role of a Special Needs Trust, unique

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housing, education and employment concerns, and the role of support groups and non-profit organizations.

“... having funds to supplement and not supplant government benefits is of critical importance.”

Prudential’s Individual Life Insurance business seeks to insure America’s future, and the special needs community is a large part of that future. Life insurance can provide income replacement and instant estate creation for all, but specifically for those individuals who have dependents with special needs or disabilities. For them, having funds to supplement and not supplant government benefits is of critical importance.

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Prudential also has ADAPT (Able and Disabled Associates Partnering Together), a network of employees, some with disabilities, some who are caregivers, and all of whom are interested in maintaining an inclusive work environment and business focus on individual with disabilities. This business resource group is represented on the company’s Special Needs Advisory Committee and has partnered with the company to expand education and awareness that add on all aspects of disability. During 2009, a six-session webinar series for parents of children with special needs was sponsored by Prudential’s Health and Wellness organization in partnership with ADAPT, whose discussion database supported a forum following each session.

Toys “R” Us:

Since 1994, Toys “R” Us has developed the Toys “R” Us Toy Guide for Differently-Abled Kids, which features over 80 toys specifically selected for children with special needs and serves as an easy-to-use toy selection manual for caregivers. The complimentary Guide is available year-round at Babies “R” Us and Toys “R” Us stores nationwide. Additionally, an online edition of the Guide (in English and Spanish) is accessible at the user-friendly, dedicated micro site, <http://www.toysrus.com/differentlyabled>.

Products showcased in the publication are everyday toys that children with special needs can play with alongside their siblings, friends and classmates, while helping them develop important social and cognitive skills. Each year, Toys “R” Us’ philanthropic partner, the National Lekotek Center, assesses the play value of hundreds of toys for children with special needs. Lekotek categorizes the toys for inclusion in the Guide into eight skill sets—Auditory, Creativity, Fine Motor, Language, Self-Esteem, Social Skills, Tactile Thinking and Visual. Colorful symbols, along with an index help parents easily identify items that are best suited for their child’s needs.

“All of the children featured throughout the Guide have differing abilities, further illustrating that through the magic of play, all children can share in the joy of learning.”

Each year, the cover of the Guide features individuals who are part of — or are touched by — the special needs community. Most recently Whoopi Goldberg was featured on the 2009 cover along with Grace Kurovski, a five-year-old girl with special needs. To secure models for the Guide, Toys “R” Us conducts an annual “casting call” for children in the New York City area that have special needs. All of the children featured throughout the Guide have differing abilities, further illustrating that through the magic of play, all children can share in the joy of learning.

Since its inception in 1994, the Guide has been published each year and is distributed nationally at Toys

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“R” Us stores, online and through disability awareness groups, such as Autism Speaks, National Down Syndrome Society, Special Olympics and others.

Toy “R” Us and the Toys “R” Us Children’s Fund together are extremely proud of their ongoing support of organizations that advocate for children with special needs. The company also strives for inclusion in all consumer materials — from publishing the Guide to featuring children with unique abilities in all its marketing materials. Toys “R” Us loves kids — and they know playtime is valuable to ALL children.

Verizon Communications:

Verizon’s latest solutions for vision and hearing-impaired customers is their text reader software (TALKS TXT Reader software). This software, launched March 2009 on the Moto Q9 and in August 2009 on the HTC Ozone, support reading the internet. Verizon has also launched a Nationwide Messaging plan for the deaf and hearing-impaired (launched April 2008).

“Verizon’s goal is to ensure that their products and services are fully accessible to all customers with disabilities.”

Verizon aims to support people with vision, cognitive, mobility, speech and hearing disabilities. They are committed to the goal of attaining universal accessibility, through their sites, handsets and video offerings. Verizon’s goal is to ensure that their products and services are fully accessible to all customers with disabilities. They are in constant conversation with leaders in the disability community about how they can make their products and services more accessible to more people.

Verizon’s “Forward Access” quarterly online newsletter for people with disabilities provides up-to-date information on products and services for people with disabilities, thus enhancing communication for the Verizon customer. The newsletter provides news, special offers, and articles that promote a greater understanding of the issues and needs most important to people with disabilities.

WORK-LIFE / WORKPLACE AWARDS

Cisco Systems:

According to Cisco’s CEO, John Chambers, “Education and technology are the two great equalizers in life, leveling the playing field for everyone, especially the disabled”. Cisco believes that building an inclusive and diverse environment is a business imperative for three reasons:

1. Top talent wants to work for inclusive and diverse employers. The more inclusive Cisco is, the better able they are to attract, retain and engage top talent.
2. Innovation is best achieved in an environment where there is a collective mix of diverse ideas and a willingness to be open to them.
3. Study after study shows that highly diverse companies financially outperform less diverse companies.

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Having a culture of inclusion in diversity is so critical to Cisco's success they have added it to the Cisco badge and to their annual performance review.

By educating their employees and creating a centralized website, employees are equipped to manage disability-related concerns. This not only addresses the needs of employees with disabilities, but also builds the foundation for an inclusive workplace in which everyone is encouraged and supported. Additionally, Cisco provides disability etiquette and awareness training throughout the organization. They have also established a Reasonable Accommodation Committee that ensures accommodation requests are handled appropriately and fairly across the footprint of their organization.

"Education and technology are the two great equalizers in life, leveling the playing field for everyone, especially the disabled".

*- John Chambers, CEO
Cisco Systems, Inc.*

As a global corporation employing 60,000 plus, Cisco pays special attention to disability hiring requirements and unique needs on a country-by-country basis.

Other programs such as CDAN, Cisco's Disability Awareness Network, works on many initiatives to support the disability community at Cisco and embed the PWD message throughout the organization.

Cisco's mission is to be the company that is "Changing the Way We Work, Live, Play, and Learn".

By focusing on all areas of their human network and striving to live out their mission, Cisco will inevitably be an employer of choice for the disability community.

The Dow Chemical Company:

The Dow Chemical Company's Disability Employee Network (DEN) has a Global Strategy Team that oversees local chapters throughout every geography in which Dow operates — North America, Latin America, Europe, Asia Pacific and India, Middle East and Africa (IMEA). A geographic DEN representative is available as a connection between local chapters and the global team.

"Each employee or intern hired and each voluntary disclosure of a disability is one more step that shows just how successful Dow is in raising the bar for inclusion."

Dow has a global policy on people with disabilities and DEN is a critical player in realizing the objective of the policy which is to be a global employer of choice for people with disabilities. DEN is involved in many different activities related to attracting and retaining people with disabilities at Dow. The network also plays a vital role in breaking down stereotypes within the company and the community. DEN acts as a resource for all employees impacted by disability, providing mentors, networking opportunities, access to community resources, and championing for an inclusive work environment. Most notably, in 2009, DEN focused on workplace accessibility and emergency response (ER) plans. Additionally, the network is a resource for leaders, hiring managers and colleagues on business etiquette and disability awareness.

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Perhaps DEN’s biggest accomplishment in 2009 was helping Dow become a supplier sponsor of the 2010 Paralympics. Through DEN, 60 employees around the world were nominated to attend the Games. Ten were selected to be Dow Ambassadors at the Games.

Dow has been successful in hiring individuals with disabilities as well as making the environment and culture a place where people with disabilities who already work for the company come forth with their personal stories. Each employee or intern hired and each voluntary disclosure of a disability is one more step that shows just how successful Dow is in raising the bar for inclusion.

In 2007, Dow received the New Freedom Initiative Award from the US Department of Labor, for its hiring practices and overall position on individuals with disabilities.

PepsiCo, Inc.:

EnAble was founded in 2005 by PepsiCo employees with an interest in raising awareness and advancing the inclusion of people with different abilities in all aspects of PepsiCo culture, including human resources, marketing and community engagement. PepsiCo has a rich history of leadership in diversity and inclusion and EnAble is a natural extension of that. PepsiCo is committed to Performance with Purpose — achieving financial success while leaving a positive imprint on society by advancing Human, Talent and Environmental sustainability. EnAble works both internally and in the community to help advance Human and Talent sustainability objectives.

EnAble is an employee led initiative focused on removing technological, cultural and physical barriers to “enable” people to reach their full potential. This includes advancing awareness, acceptance and understanding of issues related to people with different abilities and caregivers in the workplace, the community and the marketplace. In addition to local initiatives, EnAble focuses on issues such as Autism, Alzheimer’s, Cancer, Scleroderma and financial and education planning for families. In 2009, EnAble also led the development of a formal Accessible Technology (AT) policy for PepsiCo and each chapter hosted an expo to educate employees about the universal appeal of AT. On-going initiatives include the EnAble online resource library and EnAble Connect, peer-support groups on topics including Autism, Elder Care, Cancer, MS and Epilepsy.

“The EnAble network includes more than 1,000 PepsiCo employees across the U.S... “

The EnAble network includes more than 1,000 PepsiCo employees across the U.S., led by local chapter and national leadership teams. Membership has increased 400% since EnAble’s inception in 2007.

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SMALL BUSINESS AWARDS

J.LODGE:

J. Lodge was founded in 1999 by Mike and Kolleen Schrider and is headquartered in Fort Myers, Florida. Upon the company's founding, the Schriders adopted a remarkable employee model that continues to be used in the company today and can be credited for much of their success.

Jack Lodge, for whom the company was named after, was affected by cerebral palsy and after years of battling the disease, Jack's paralysis had spread through his entire body. Despite his unfortunate circumstances, Jack's intelligence, wit and ability to affect people's lives were never diminished. He was an inspiration to the family and allowed Mike and Kolleen to recognize the large, untapped pool of capable citizens that needed an opportunity that fit their circumstances.

J.Lodge currently employs Americans with disabilities in over 35 states and has recently begun the process of recruiting in the remaining 15 states. J. Lodge is diligently striving to bring call center operation positions back to the American population as opposed to outsourcing to overseas countries.

"J. Lodge is diligently striving to bring call center operation positions back to the American population as opposed to outsourcing to overseas countries."

J. Lodge's mission is to provide meaningful, long-term employment to Americans with disabilities. J. Lodge was founded on this employee model and it continues to be the key to their success today — they employ over 270 individuals of which 90% are Americans with disabilities working from virtual offices.

It is exceedingly important to J. Lodge that they provide part-time, at-home, and long-term career opportunities for people with disabilities. Their mission is to not only provide jobs to this segment of the population, but to find jobs that meet their unique needs while also instilling hope.

J. Lodge regularly receives letters of praise for their dedication and for providing the applicants with an opportunity for a life that they never before recognized as a possible.

J. Lodge has proven to be at the top of the recommended "work from home" list among placement centers nationwide. Today, J. Lodge employs over 250 Americans with disabilities in over 30 states. In 2008, J. Lodge launched three new divisions that all have adopted the same employee model. The company looks forward to continued success and growth.

Max's Positive Vibe Café:

The team mission at Max's Positive Vibe Café is to train and hire people with disabilities. Since their first graduate completed the program in 2006, they have graduated more than 300 people with disabilities. Of that number, 40% are employed at any given time in area restaurants, fast-food establishments, corporate

The Honorees:

and club dining rooms, school cafeterias and similar venues.

Max's trains people with disabilities for jobs in food-service and then often hires the graduates. Training lasts four-weeks and requires mastery in all modules.

"Since their first graduate completed the program in 2006, they have graduated more than 300 people with disabilities."

Aside from training and employing people with disabilities, they are also involved in partnerships with placement organizations to assist in finding jobs for their graduates. They also work closely with the transition coordinators of the public school systems of Richmond, Chesterfield, and Henrico, the VA Department of Rehabilitative Services and other non-profits such as the Center for Independent Living.

Max's Positive Vibe Café, a café whose patrons travel from as far as 50-miles away, also has a newsletter titled, "Tasty Morsels". It is sent to students, supporters, special needs schools, political leaders and other interested parties. There are also short clips from national news programs (NBC, CBS), newspaper clippings from the Wall Street Journal, the Richmond-Times Dispatch, and other outlets that are used to introduce people to their work and success.

Parrott's Trophies and Engraving:

Parrott's Trophies has a unique program in Kentucky, they have taken the typical adult day-training program and turned it into a business; actually two businesses — Parrott's Trophies houses Full Circle Supports, a day-training program for people with cognitive impairments / developmental disabilities. Full Circle Supports employs 7 staff to work as Employment Trainers. The Employment Trainers work and train the 36 Awards Specialists of Parrott's Trophies, all of whom have special needs.

Parrott's Trophies individuals learn about the responsibilities of running a business. They are trained in customer service, laser engraving, rotary engraving, graphic design, sublimation and screen-printing. They learn about taking customer orders and completing customer orders in a timely and accurate manner. All awards, engraving and screen-printing orders are completed by the individuals of the program under the supervision of their Employment Trainers. These individuals are also responsible for planning and leading team meetings. In the meetings, they discuss upcoming orders, advertising, building maintenance and upkeep, financial issues, inventory, etc. The end product is a professionally completed order that customers really like and everyone is very proud of.

"To provide a meaningful adult day-training program that will teach real life job skills."

The Mission: Full Circle Supports provides individuals with the opportunity to learn and work in an integrated community business and to assist with the day-to-day functions of the business to their greatest extent possible.

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The Purpose: To provide a meaningful adult day-training program that will teach real life job skills. They hope to show individuals that there are a variety of jobs available. They train them on the skills needed to focus on jobs in customer service, graphic design, basic and not so basic computer skills, engraving, using a heat press, making t-shirts, and the basic skills needed to work in a business setting.

Their strategy is basically to provide something different that make their folks feel empowered. The people's opinions are valued, the input and ideas are often times used to make the business grow stronger.

In September 2009, the company was awarded the Visionary Award by the Kentucky Business Leadership Network for their forward thinking and innovative program. Currently, the Kentucky Cabinet for Health and Family Services, Department for Medicaid Services is looking at the program as a model program to other agencies and businesses.

Let's applaud all of our 2010 winners!



The Sponsors:

We would also like to thank our 2010 Sponsors and Patrons...



The 2011 Disability Matters Awards Banquet & Conference

~ Our 5th Anniversary ~

Disability Matters is the one most important Corporate Awards Banquet and Conferences in the United States and considered the most important for those businesses either supporting or interested in supporting the disability community. The highly coveted awards are given to Corporations that are leading the way in terms of supporting people who either have a disability or who have a child or other dependent with special needs in the workplace through diversity, work life and/or human resource initiatives and in marketing to this segment of the population in the consumer space. The conference features experts from corporate America, academia, the federal government and the national non-profit sector who share best practices relative to internally supporting and externally marketing to this large, loyal segment of the population.

[Click here to learn more >>](#)

If you are interested in having your company considered as a 2011 honoree and/or in becoming a Sponsor, Patron, or purchasing individual tickets for the 2011 Disability Matters Awards Banquet & Conference, we would be happy to speak with you. Please contact, Ivette Lopez, Operations Manager at ivette@consultspringboard.com; 973-813-7260 x. 102.

2010 Disability Matters Awards Banquet & Conference

PHOTOGRAPHS COMING SOON!!!

Please visit our website over the next few weeks... stay tuned!

<http://www.consultspringboard.com>



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