

KYBLN's DiversAbility News

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Director's Corner



United We Stand

The ice storm that hit parts of Kentucky this winter was a new experience for me. Coming from Pennsylvania, our storms were in the form of snow during the winter. I was distraught when I saw what the heavy ice did to our vegetation and homes in Lexington, especially in the downtown area. I called my family and friends in Pennsylvania and cried that this beautiful city where I live would never be the same. Then something happened! People came together! Lexingtonians.....Kentuckians.... Americans united, assessed the damage, and set out to systematically clean up and repair the destruction. It's May now, and it is beautiful in Kentucky. We still can see reminders of the harm done to our trees, and I'm sure the lack of utilities is a vivid memory to many. We didn't, however, turn our backs on the destruction or our suffering neighbors. We all chipped in and helped.

I recall this recent experience because of the experiences I have encountered in supporting persons with disabilities who are trying to find meaningful jobs in their communities. Many Americans with disabilities live at the poverty level, have little in the way of entertainment or convenience, are ignored or forgotten by their neighbors and community, and can't find a way out of the abyss. Most people with disabilities want to work because they realize that this is a means to blending in with society, to attaining even the most basic comforts, and because they want to contribute as Americans. Yet, most of these people can not find employment, frequently due to pessimistic attitudes about the abilities of job seekers with disabilities. We (the average community) have "turned our backs" on people who have tremendous skills and a desire to contribute. Wouldn't it be wonderful to see Kentuckians unite as we did a few months ago to end the prevailing conditions for citizens with disabilities? The purpose of the KYBLN is to make a cohesive effort to do just that. Informed, progressive members of the KYBLN are uniting to end archaic modes of thinking and to make a difference for job seekers with disabilities in Kentucky. For those of you who are members, thank you for your support and leadership. If you are not a member, call us and let's meet and talk about KYBLN's benefits and how your business can have a powerful impact on change in Kentucky!

Claudia Ernharth - Kentucky Business Leadership Network

NEWS

KYBLN Brown Bag Forum



Lexington Holiday Inn – North is hosting the KYBLN's next Brown Bag Forum featuring a panel of employees with disabilities and their employers. Discussion will focus on issues surrounding the successful employment of people with significant disabilities. Forum to take place on June 25th 12-1:30 at the Lexington Holiday Inn – North location. Members

of the KYBLN are free. Non-members of the KYBLN can attend their first forum free of charge. Registration required. Register online at <http://www.kybln.org/members/forums/>

College Students and Jobs

U.S. Labor Secretary Elaine L. Chao announced Government and private sector employers may take advantage of a free resource to identify college students and recent graduates with disabilities for their summer and permanent job openings . . .

<http://www.kybln.org/news/newsletter/documents/may2003.PDF>

May – National Mental Health Month

The 2003 Mental Health Month Guide provides a wide range of materials and how-to ideas -- everything you'll need to celebrate May and mental health. A complete table of contents appears below. Click on the highlighted items for free download. <http://www.nmha.org/may/materials.cfm>

TECHNOLOGY

Shoes with Technology

The buzz is all about Richard N. Castle's new shoes for the blind. Put them on and walk around, and the sides of the shoes begin to shake. Approach a wall or an object, and they shake faster. Move around, and different parts of the shoes vibrate. The shoes are equipped with infrared sensors that sense objects up to a meter away and trigger vibrations corresponding to the location and size of obstacles.

http://www.usatoday.com/tech/news/techinnovations/2003-03-31-smart-shoes_x.htm

Xerox unveils software for the blind

Xerox, along with other IT and electronics makers, are increasingly making their products accessible to people with disabilities so they can land sales with federal agencies and a growing number of state offices across the nation . . . <http://news.com.com/2100-1012-993526.html>

EDUCATION

Learning Disabilities

LD is a disorder that affects people's ability to either interpret what they see and hear or to link information from different parts of the brain. These limitations can show up in many ways: as specific difficulties with spoken and written language, coordination, self control, or attention. Such difficulties extend to schoolwork and can impede learning to read, write, or do math. For more general information on learning disabilities . . . <http://www.ldonline.org/cclinfo/index.html>

Scholarships

The Ethel Louise Armstrong Foundation Scholarship is for any woman with a physical disability who is pursuing graduate studies at a university in the United States. They are especially looking for women who are involved in the disability community in their local area. Visit their website at <http://www.ela.org> for the application and directions. The next deadline is June 1, 2003 by 5 PM Pacific Daylight Time.

Planning an accessible meeting

Planning conferences that are accessible to people with disabilities involves focusing on the accessibility of all aspects of your meeting, from choosing a site through promotion, registration, presentations, and handouts. <http://ericec.org/digests/e735.html>

Featured Job Seekers

Office Assistant

Graduated: June 1988-Two year professional secretary program. Learned use of office equipment such as typewriter, adding machine, micro fiche and taught office duties such as filing, writing business letters, and addressing envelopes. See the resume titled 'Office Assistant'. This individual is ready, willing, and able for a solid employment opportunity.

Licensed Electrician

The KYBLN job bank is now featuring job seekers with various skills and certifications. Need a licensed electrician? Simply log into the job bank and check out the resume titled 'Licensed Electrician' this individual is one of many qualified ready to work applicants.

The KYBLN Job Bank can be located at <http://jobs.kybln.org>

KYBLN's lead employer



To access past newsletters or sign up for future newsletters please see our newsletter archive at <http://www.kybln.org/news/newsletter/index.html>

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