

ODEP/Families and Work Institute

Alliance Report/November 5, 2015 – August 23, 2016

I. Alliance Background

Date Signed: November 5, 2015

This report describes the purpose and scope of the Alliance between the Office of Disability Employment Policy (ODEP) and the Families and Work Institute (Institute or FWI), provides a list of the team members / contributors and describes outcomes and results.

Overview

About FWI

The Families and Work Institute (FWI) is a nonprofit, non-partisan research institution established in 1989 to observe the shifting workforce as well as families and communities. Based in New York, New York, the Families and Work Institute's work was widely recognized for its ability to isolate up-and-coming issues, implement innovative research, and draw perceptive assessments that challenge conventional paradigms.

Summary of the Purpose of the ODEP/FWI Alliance

To provide information, guidance, and access to resources that will help encourage and promote the employment of persons with disabilities. The Alliance focus was on training and education, outreach and communication, technical assistance, and promoting a national dialogue.

The Office of Disability Employment Policy (ODEP) and the Families and Work Institute (FWI) recognized the value of establishing a collaborative relationship to promote the employment of workers with disabilities to FWI members and stakeholders. ODEP and FWI agreed to conduct outreach, education, and technical assistance activities that promote recruitment, hiring, retention, and advancement of individuals with disabilities, including our nation's veterans with disabilities. ODEP and FWI recognized that this Alliance was an integral part of a national effort to promote inclusive workplaces that include workers with disabilities.

Implementation Team Members

Partnership Members

Ellen Galinsky, Founder and President
Kenneth Matos, Senior Director of Research

ODEP Members

Carol Boyer, Senior Policy Advisor/Employer Team/ Alliance Coordinator
Chuck Conaty, Business Development Specialist, Policy Communications & Outreach Team
Janet Brown, Policy Advisor, Youth Team

ODEP Contributors

Renée Tajudeen, Director, Policy Communications and Outreach Team
Carol Dunlap, Business Development Specialist, Policy Communications and Outreach Team/ Alliance Manager

Evaluation Period

This report covers ten months of the first year of the Alliance: November 5, 2015-August 23, 2016.

II. Alliance Meetings

- 2.10.15 Pre-Alliance Meeting
- 2.13.15 Carol Boyer shared two important ODEP Employer Engagement Strategy documents with Ellen and Ken:

<http://www.dol.gov/odep/pdf/20150201EESFinalReport.pdf>

<http://www.dol.gov/odep/pdf/20140604BusinessCaseEngagementWhitePaper.pdf>

- 11.5.15 The ODEP/FWI Alliance signing and kickoff meeting took place at ODEP. A press release was issued by DOL including a quotation from Ellen Galinsky, FWI:

“Partnering with the U.S. Labor Department on this critical issue to promote the recruitment, development and retention of employees with disabilities is a dream come true for the Families and Work Institute. It is consistent with our mission of conducting rigorous research that leads to action.”

The purpose of the kickoff meeting was to frame Year I goals.

An overview of the Alliance goals was provided:

- Share expertise and disseminate information on hiring, advancing, and retaining workers with disabilities, including veterans with disabilities.
- Promote and disseminate information on ODEP resources to FWI members and stakeholders. ODEP resources include, but are not limited to, the Job Accommodation Network (JAN), the Employer Assistance and Resource Network on Disability Inclusion (EARN), the LEAD Center, the Partnership on Employment and Accessible Technology (PEATworks), and the Workforce Recruitment Program (WRP), as well as effective practices and policies to increase disability inclusion in the workplace.
- Develop and publicize resources on the value of recruiting, hiring, retaining, and promoting talented workers with disabilities, including veterans with disabilities. Such resources might include how-to-guides and other educational materials, success stories, and case studies developed collaboratively or by individual parties.
- Identify emerging issues to which the Alliance should direct particular attention and resources and determine how best to communicate relevant and useful information related to these issues.
- Speak, exhibit, and or attend at mutually agreed-upon ODEP and FWI events.
- As appropriate, convene or participate in stakeholder meetings focused on forging innovative strategies for recruiting, hiring, retaining, and promoting job candidates and employees with disabilities.
- Provide technical assistance to employers and employees regarding replicable disability employment strategies, policies, and effective practices.
- Participate in meetings and or discussions with representatives from other ODEP Alliances and TA Centers to exchange information on various disability employment issues that are being addressed and explore opportunities for additional collaborative activities.
- Carry out other activities, as mutually agreed upon, that promote the recruiting, hiring, advancement and retention of individuals with disabilities.
- Build awareness and use of the WRP as a hiring tool for Institute members and stakeholders.

The discussion on goals resulted in the following:

- ODEP to prepare two one-page resource sheets--one for employees with disabilities and one targeted to employers to supplement FWI's release of the *National Study of the Changing Workforce (NSCW)* published in 2016.

- ODEP to contribute suggested disability questions to Ken Matos for inclusion in the When Work Works (WWW) 2017 employer awards' program. Questions would spotlight employers for exceptional disability employment practices within the WWW awards program.

1.20.16 Conference call to discuss the content for the two fact sheets.

2.2.16 ODEP's internal WWW Working Group met.

III. Outcomes

11.3.15 Ken Matos posted a disability blog:
http://www.huffingtonpost.com/kenneth-matos/catch22-of-disclosing-dis_b_8456016.html

Catch-22 of Disclosing Disabilities for Job Seekers

12.28.15 Carol Dunlap sent Ken Matos two fact sheets developed by ODEP targeted to employers and employees with disabilities.

During Alliance Year I, Ken Matos submitted a proposal to the Work and Families Researchers Network (WFRN) on the FWI preliminary findings from the NCSW related to employees with disabilities. He invited Carol Boyer to co-present with him.

1.20.16 Ken Matos sent the acceptance of his WFRN paper submission to Carol Boyer.

In January 2016, Carol Boyer established an internal ODEP WWW Working Group to review the current WWW (2016) awards criteria for both employers and employees.

A conference call was held to review the two fact sheets as part of the NCSW Release: Ken Matos, Carol Boyer, Brittany Taylor and Elizabeth Jennings of the LEAD Center.

2.2.16 The kickoff meeting of ODEP's internal WWW Working Group. The group consisted of Carol Boyer, Janet Brown (ODEP Youth Team), Carol Dunlap (PC&O), Lauren Karas (PC&O), and Teserach Ketema (ODEP Research and Evaluation Team). This group met to expand, discuss, and add disability-related questions to both the WWW Awards' employer and employee surveys.

At one meeting, it was suggested to use questions SHRM asked in its 1997 Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) employer survey to obtain a 20-year retrospective comparative analysis. The WWW Awards Working Group agreed with this suggestion.

3.25.16 The WWW awards work group at ODEP developed open-ended questions that could be asked of employees with and without disabilities for the 2016-2017 WWW awards program processing. The questions focused on asking employers to “tell us what you’re doing that’s different.” ODEP sent disability-related questions to Ken Matos in early 2016 (Feb.-Mar.) ODEP planned to assist FWI in late 2016 in reviewing the disability-related spotlight questions in the WWW awards’ applications to assess how they responded to the new disability-related questions.

Carol Boyer sent Ken Matos the WWW Awards’ Working Group’s employee survey questions’ suggestions.

Soon afterwards, Ken Matos informed Carol Boyer and Carol Dunlap that he had accepted a new job and would be leaving FWI. Due to these changes, he would not be able to co-present with Carol Boyer at the WFRN Conference in June. He suggested that ODEP work with Tyler Wigdon and Ellen Galinsky (FWI).

4.16 FWI began dividing its work. The child development research/action work became part of the Bezos Family Foundation in March 2016, and the *National Study of the Changing Workforce*, the *National Study of Employers*, and the When Work Works award program will be administered by SHRM starting September 2016. Sometime thereafter, FWI will close with the organization’s work able to grow and thrive within these two other organizations.

5.16.16 The ODEP WWW Awards’ Working Group finalized their work on both the Employer and Employee surveys. All Working Group questions were sent to Ellen Galinsky (FWI), per her request.

6.23.16 ODEP Alliance coordinator, Carol Boyer, and Nanette Goodman, Senior Researcher, ODEP’s LEAD Center, co-presented the initial findings from FWI’s NSCW at the WFRN annual conference in Washington, DC. The presentation title was: “Life on & off the Job for Employees with Disabilities.”

IV. Results

Adopting Best Disability Practices

Once the FWI’s NSCW is published, ODEP’s resources for both employees and employers will be offered to a wider audience of employers, employees, researchers, policymakers, and disability stakeholders.

Because the preliminary findings of the *NSCW* were presented at the WFRN annual conference in June and the PowerPoint slides were shared with multiple policymakers and researchers, additional stakeholders in the disability employment arena have access to these important findings.

V. Beyond the Alliance

Under the ODEP/SHRM Alliance, a meeting will be held to discuss ways to involve ODEP during the design of survey questions for the 2018 When Work Works Awards. Key SHRM contacts for this meeting will be Cassidy Solis, Workplace Flexibility Specialist; Mike Aitken, Vice-President/Governmental Affairs; and Ellen Gallinsky, SHRM Senior Research Advisor.