



New Corporate Index Being Developed for People with Disabilities in the Workplace

American Association of People with Disabilities and US Business Leadership Network (USBLN®) Partner to Create New Benchmarks for Employers

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WASHINGTON, DC (December 19, 2012) - The US Business Leadership Network (USBLN®) and the American Association of People with Disabilities (AAPD) jointly announced today their partnership to establish a national benchmarking tool on corporate policies and practices for disability employment inclusion and accessibility. Work on this important project has begun and AAPD and the USBLN® look forward to launching it in 2013.

"Bringing together the unique strengths of both AAPD and USBLN® will enable us to reach more employers with a strong message and resources for creating equitable workplaces for people with disabilities," said **Mark Perriello**, President and CEO of AAPD. "This new index will give us objective standards we can use to assist all businesses in continuing to improve opportunities and inclusion for people with disabilities."

"The USBLN® is excited to be working with AAPD, the nation's largest disability rights organization, on a meaningful tool that will strengthen our ability to support businesses to increase their inclusion of persons with disabilities across the business enterprise," said **Jill Houghton**, USBLN® Executive Director.

The new index - currently referred to as the "Disability Equality IndexSM" - will provide employers with a transparent, objective road-map for improving opportunities for people with disabilities. AAPD and USBLN® will work with each business to ensure continual progress on the index.

About the AAPD

The American Association of People with Disabilities (AAPD), the country's largest disability rights association, organizes the disability community to be a powerful force for change - politically, economically, and socially. AAPD was founded in 1995 to help unite the diverse community of people with disabilities, including their family, friends and supporters, and to be a national voice for change in implementing the goals of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). <http://www.aapd.com>

About the US Business Leadership Network® (USBLN®)

The US Business Leadership Network® (USBLN®) is a national non-profit, non-partisan business to business network promoting workplaces, marketplaces, and supply chains where people with disabilities are included. The USBLN® serves as the collective voice of over 50 Business Leadership Network affiliates across the United States, representing over 5,000 businesses. Additionally, the USBLN® Disability Supplier Diversity Program® (DSDP) is the nation's leading third party certification program for disability-owned businesses, including service-disabled veterans. www.usbln.org

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