Disability Equality Index Survey to be Unveiled on June 26, 2014

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WASHINGTON, DC (May 29, 2014) –The American Association of People with Disabilities (AAPD) and the US Business Leadership Network® (USBLN®) are excited to announce the public release of the first Annual Disability Equality Index^{SM} (DEI^{SM}). Created by leaders in the business and disability communities, the DEI is an online benchmarking tool that offers businesses the opportunity to receive an objective score, on a scale of zero to 100, on their disability inclusion policies and practices.

After the successful completion of the DEI pilot with 48 Fortune 1000 scope companies in March 2014, AAPD and the USBLN will be releasing the DEI survey questions publicly on June 26, 2014 before opening up the first Annual DEI survey to Fortune 1000 scope companies for participation in October 2014. Those interested in attending the DEI survey public release call must **register here by June 19, 2014: http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/DEI_Release.**

"The DEI is an aspirational, educational, recognition tool that is intended to help companies identify opportunities for continued improvement and help build a company's reputation as an employer of choice," said **Mark Perriello,** President and CEO of AAPD, the nation's largest disability rights organization. "The DEI pilot was thorough and helped us create an even more meaningful tool for the business community and disability community."

"We are confident the DEI is going to be a game changer for all companies who are interested in enhancing their disability inclusion efforts regardless of where they are at in their journey," said **Jill Houghton,** Executive Director of the USBLN. "The DEI is also helpful for a company whether or not they are a Federal Contractor."

Companies that take the DEI self-report on a wide-range of criteria within four categories: Culture & Leadership, Enterprise-Wide Access, Employment Practices, and Public Support & Engagement.

Companies that participated in the pilot DEI reported the following strengths:

- "Comprehensive but not too challenging to complete"
- "Well-rounded; touches on more areas than just employment, such as customers and suppliers"
- "Questions are insightful and provide ideas for improvement"
- "Focuses on strategy and concrete programs/policies rather than data reporting"

Additionally, companies participating in the DEI pilot said:

- "Allowed us to look at the big picture to see how far we've come"
- "Required us to engage multiple stakeholders across the company; enabled us to reaffirm our commitment to inclusion of people with disabilities during the discussions"
- "The areas of indication provided a good indication of current and future trends"
- "Helped us to set targets for improvement"

For more general information about the DEI, please visit: http://www.usbln.org/programs-dei.html.

About the American Association of People with Disabilities (AAPD)

The American Association of People with Disabilities is the nation's largest disability rights organization. AAPD promotes equal opportunity, economic power, independent living, and political participation for people with disabilities. AAPD's members, including people with disabilities and family, friends, and supporters, represent a powerful force for change. To learn more, visit the AAPD Web site: www.aapd.com.

About the US Business Leadership Network® (USBLN®)
The US Business Leadership Network (USBLN) is a national non-profit that helps business drive performance by leveraging disability inclusion in the workplace, supply chain, and marketplace. The USBLN serves as the collective voice of nearly 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 businesses owned by service-disabled veterans. www.usbln.org

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