



US Business Leadership Network Announces 2012 Annual Leadership Award Winners

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WASHINGTON, DC (October 19, 2012) – The US Business Leadership Network (USBLN®) today announced the winners of its **2012 Annual Leadership Awards**, which were presented to the recipients during the 2012 USBLN® 15th Annual Conference & Expo held in Orlando, Florida on October 3. The awards recognized leaders in three categories including Affiliate of the Year, Employer of the Year, and Supplier Diversity Corporation of the Year.

Additionally, **Kevin A. Lynch, President and Chief Executive Officer, National Industries for the Blind (NIB)**, accepted the USBLN® Outstanding Collaborative Partner Award on behalf of NIB for their continued alliance.

The purpose of the 2012 USBLN® Annual Leadership Awards is to further the USBLN® mission of identifying leading disability workplace, market place and supply chain practices. Award recipients demonstrate outstanding commitment to promoting disability diversity across their enterprises and clearly embody the highest ethical standards and values in the community.

- **Affiliate of the Year**

The **DC Metro Business Leadership Network** is the Affiliate of the Year award recipient. The DC Metro Business Leadership Network is an employer led non-profit that uses a business-to business model offering education, training programs and resources to change attitudes and address concerns of businesses to enable them to proactively include people with disabilities in the workforce, marketplace and supply chain. The DC Metro BLN uses a B2B format to engage, educate and inform employers on critical topics designed to promote the inclusion of talent with disabilities as a diversity strategy resulting in ROI. Their programs are held in Suburban MD, Northern VA and the District of Columbia. All topics focus on disability best practices. <http://www.dcmetrobln.org/>

- **Employer of the Year**

Walgreens Co. is the Employer of the Year award recipient. Walgreens' mission is to become the most trusted, multichannel provider and advisor of innovative pharmacy, health and wellness solutions, consumer goods, and convenient services in communities across America. After more than a century of service to communities across the country, diversity and inclusion continue to be key aspects of Walgreens' strong value system and culture. The company remains focused on helping customers live well, stay well and get well and that commitment extends to helping people with disabilities develop productive and successful careers. They are proud of the success they have seen within their company when it comes to hiring people with disabilities. Knowing that they've made an impact on other companies to inspire them to develop and implement their own disability inclusion programs raises that success level even further. More than 100 companies have toured their facilities and met with them or have been mentored by Walgreens' leadership. At this time, 15 Fortune 500 companies have embraced or enhanced their company's disability inclusion as a direct result of their interactions with Walgreens. <http://www.walgreens.com/>

- **Supplier Diversity Corporation of the Year**

Northrop Grumman Corporation is the Supplier Diversity Corporation of the Year award recipient. Northrop Grumman Corporation (NGC) is a leading global security company whose approximate 72,000 employees provide innovative systems, products and solutions in aerospace, electronics, information systems, and technical services to government and commercial customers worldwide. Northrop Grumman Corporation publicizes its commitment to diversity and the inclusion of people with disabilities on the company website and through various media outlets dedicated to supporting and employing people with disabilities. Northrop Grumman signed a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) with the AbilityOne Program (administered by the Committee for Purchase from People Who Are Blind or Severely Disabled) to raise awareness and provide, when possible, procurement and technical assistance to those firms that qualify under the AbilityOne Program. Northrop Grumman Corporation and the U.S. AbilityOne Commission joined together to host a series of “Lunch and Learn” seminars across the country where there is a large population of nonprofit agencies that can benefit from training and discussion with federal prime contractors and supporting organizations.

<http://www.northropgrumman.com/>

The 2012 Annual Leadership Awards capped off yet another successful conference with the event experiencing record-breaking attendance which grew by 54 percent over last year with nearly 600 corporate, government, disability-owned businesses and BLN affiliates attending the conference.

Save the Date for the 2013 USBLN® Annual Conference & Expo

Mark your calendar now for the 16th Annual USBLN® Conference & Expo to be held in Los Angeles, California on **September 30 – October 3, 2013** at the Los Angeles Airport Marriott hotel. This event will kick-off National Disability Employment Awareness Month (NDEAM) and event details will be made available at: www.usblnannualconference.org.

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 60 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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