



ADVANCING
DISABILITY INCLUSION
& WORKFORCE
INNOVATION

Council of State Administrators of Vocational Rehabilitation

Careers and Business Relations News Brief

August 27, 2023



CSAVR *Careers and Business Relations News Briefs* is a regular series covering The National Employment Team (NET) activities, business relations initiatives, media stories, business research initiatives, webinars, reports, conferences, and employment activities of interest to the membership.

Announcements:

There is still time to [submit your proposal \[csavr.org\]](https://csavr.org) for fall conference! Keep them coming, please! And have you registered for conference yet? [Here is the link \[csavr.org\]](https://csavr.org). We are all getting excited to see you in Savannah!

HIGHLIGHTS

National Items of Interest

- 60 Year Anniversary of the March on Washington
- Women's Equality Day
- NCD Requests Feedback on Website
- DOJ Requests Feedback on Proposed Rule
- DOL-ODEP NDEAM Theme, Posters and Information

NET Updates

- NET Summit
- MSU Conference
- Finley's
- Walmart
- Boeing
- Association for Career and Technical Education
- Hands on at the Hyatt – WA DVR
- Homeland Security Partnership
- AbilityOne Commission Meeting

Articles and Events of Interest

- CNBC – Hiring Workers with Disabilities
- EEOC Reasonable Accommodation
- Podcast with Times Person of the Week: Eddie Ndopu on How Disability Helped Him Rethink Excellence
- Harvard Business Review: Why People Hide Their Disabilities at Work
- National Institutes of Health (NIH) Long COVID Symptoms and Impact:
- FACT SHEET: Biden-Harris Administration Works to Make it Easier for People with Disabilities to Access Public Services Online
- U.S. Access Board Staff Present on Designing Accessible Electric Vehicle Charging Stations
- AI is biased. The White House is working with hackers to try to fix that

NATIONAL ITEMS OF INTEREST

60 Year Anniversary of the March on Washington - WASHINGTON (AP) — Thousands converged Saturday on the National Mall for the 60th anniversary [\[apnews.com\]](https://apnews.com) of Rev. Martin Luther King Jr.'s March on Washington, saying a country that remains riven by racial inequality has yet to fulfill his dream.

“We have made progress, over the last 60 years, since Dr. King led the March on Washington,” said Alphonso David, president and CEO of the Global Black Economic Forum. “Have we reached the mountaintop? Not by a long shot.”

Women's Equality Day 2023: The History - [Women's Equality Day \[census.gov\]](https://census.gov) 2023 (August 26): The historic day marks the victory of women, who constitute half of the population, to get voting rights in the USA in 1920. On this day, the 19th Amendment to the US Constitution was officially certified in 1920. The amendment provided women the right to vote.

Congresswoman Bella Abzug of New York introduced a resolution to declare August 26 as Women's Equality Day in 1971, following the 1970 statewide Women's Strike for Equality, and again in 1973, as the fight over the Equal Rights Amendment raged on.

National Council on Disability (NCD) Requests Feedback on Website - NCD requests your public input on their [new website \[beta.ncd.gov\]](https://beta.ncd.gov) currently undergoing beta testing. All feedback is reviewed and taken into consideration as they work to ensure content is secure, easy to navigate for everyone.

[Department of Justice Seeks Public Input on Proposed Rule to Strengthen Web/Mobile Access \[access-board.gov\]](https://access-board.gov)

NDEAM 2023 Poster, Outreach Tools Now Available - The official poster for National Disability Employment Awareness Month (NDEAM) 2023 is [now available for download and free mail order. \[dol.gov\]](https://dol.gov)

Illustrating this year's NDEAM theme, *“Advancing Access and Equity,”* the poster conveys the importance of ensuring disabled people have equal opportunity to prepare for and succeed in employment and honors the 50th anniversary of the passage of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. In addition, the NDEAM website features new outreach tools including customizable versions of the poster, key [NDEAM messages and social media graphics for individuals and organizations to use in their NDEAM observances. \[dol.gov\]](https://dol.gov)

NET UPDATES

NET Summit - We currently have 165+ NET members, Training Center Directors and VR Business Relations staff registered to attend the NET Summit in Washington, D.C on September 19th and 20th. We are working to expand the room block to accommodate additional guests. You can find updated details on the CSAVR website under [Events \[csavr.org\]](https://www.csavr.org/events).

Michigan State University - Kathy was invited to present and participate in a conference co-sponsored by Michigan Rehabilitation Services, Labor, and Economic Opportunity, Michigan State University Center for Ethical and Socially Responsible Leadership, Eli School of Business, the College of Education (STRIDE) and Peckham. The conference was titled "Abilities, Opportunities, and the Future of Work." It was held at the MSU School of Business and sponsored by a National Science Foundation Grant. It brought together several partners and stakeholders in a cross-disciplinary conversation to focus on increasing the employment of people with disabilities. You can read more details at www.AOFOW.org [aofow.org].

Special thanks to Sriram Narayanan, Faculty Director at MSU, Jenny Piatt Bureau Division Director (NET Point of Contact) MRC and Nacsha Ealy, MRC Business Relations Consultant for including Kathy and the discussion related to the development and work of the CSAVR-NET.

Finley's - The NET is involved in an interesting and growing partnership with Finley's, a KLN Family Brand. This company grew from the work of a Special Education teacher in Minnesota who recognized that her students did not have the same access to work opportunities as other students. She worked with the class to develop a business making dog cookies that they sold in grocery stores, pet stores and other locations. The product is named after their dog, Finley, who is now the Chief Treat Officer.

The company was acquired by KLN Brands and is now expanding to other locations outside of MN, including IA, PA, NY, CA, CT, DE, NJ. This week Kathy met with Angie, the VP of Mission Advancement (former teacher), Jeannine Chandler the NET POC and the Washington State team to introduce Finley's and make connections in the areas where they are working with Pet Pro Stores. Introductions have also been made to the NET connections in Colorado, Kansas, South Carolina, Florida, Tennessee, and Texas.

This is a unique model where individuals are hired as Brand Ambassadors to work in the stores. They are independent contractors demoing and marketing the product in stores within a geographic area. They are earning a competitive wage and working in an integrated setting. People who have participated in the program have gone on to work as store staff and moved into the career track as a Veterinary Assistant. Read more about the company and their mission [here \[getfinleys.com\]](http://getfinleys.com).

Walmart – NET Partnership - Kathy has been working with the new Global Director of the Accessibility Center of Excellence for Walmart and working with NET members to establish connections at the state/local level .As Walmart expands their recruitment to include Disabled

Veterans and People with Disabilities, they have set up links for VR-NET members to enable VR candidates to apply directly to these two open positions, Resolution Coordinator, Remote Jobs, (In 26 states, see below) and Case Manager, Remote Jobs, in the following area, within a 50 mile radius of Bentonville, AR, Charlotte, NC, Dallas, TX, St Petersburg, FL.

Approved States				
Alabama	Arkansas	Arizona	Florida	Georgia
Idaho	Kansas	Kentucky	Louisiana	Maine
Maryland	Michigan	Missouri	Mississippi	Nebraska
New Mexico	North Carolina	Ohio	Oklahoma	South Carolina
Tennessee	Texas	Utah	Vermont	Virginia
Wyoming				

[Walmart - Unleashing the Power of Disability Inclusion \[corporate.walmart.com\]](https://corporate.walmart.com)

[Disability Scoop: Walmart Spotighting Products for People with Disabilities \[disabilityscoop.com\]](https://disabilityscoop.com)

Boeing – Expanding Partnership - As we have shared in past newsletters, Inger has been taking the lead in facilitating Disability Awareness Training for the Boeing Engineering team, Neurodiversity @ Work Program. The purpose of the program is to empower staff to lead Boeing into a new era of innovation.

The training is held on Tuesday of each week through September 5th. On the final day, Inger will attend in person along with the St Louis Mo NET POC’s Kevan Rutledge, Lesa Barber, and Jeffery La Montia as well as Genny Asher both with St Louis Blind Agency. As a result of the impeccable job the team is doing Boeing has requested the same training for facilities in Texas and Arizona.

Inger will be coordinating with our NET POC’s in these states to meet the business request for training as they prepare to increase their hiring initiatives.

Association for Career & Technical Education - Inger attended an Association for Career & Technical Education (ACTE) and Advanced Career Technical Education (CTE) webinar: Midyear Check-in of State Policies Impacting CTE. The purpose of the webinar was to introduce what states are doing regarding legislation, policies, and funding for CTE programs. The states highlighted included: California, Montana, Oregon, Colorado, Iowa, Virginia, Wyoming, Hawaii, Utah, Maine, Arkansas, South & North Dakota and Kansas.

Discussed were the 2024 Predictive Trends which are: increased investments in green workforce, advanced manufacturing, and automation as well as AI; teacher recruitment and retention; work-based learning. Our NET team have been following these trends and working with business teams, schools, and businesses to ensure that students and adults with disabilities are included.

During the webinar they introduced a state policy tracker that will be available for states to view in September and accessible on the CTE website. If you would like more information, visit the following links:

[Home | Advance CTE \(careertech.org\) \[careertech.org\]](#)

[Lunch & Learn: Midyear Check-in of State Policies Impacting CTE | Advance CTE \(careertech.org\) \[careertech.org\]](#)

Partnership Between Washington DVR, Seattle Public Schools, and the Hands on at the Hyatt Training Program - Yet another magical event in the Emerald City. Congrats to Michael, Alex, Kayden, Miguel, Grady, Baci, and Abraham! Thank you to our wonderful partners at [Hyatt Regency Seattle \[facebook.com\]](#) [Grand Hyatt Seattle \[facebook.com\]](#) [Hyatt at Olive 8 \[facebook.com\]](#) for providing such a caring environment for our students to learn about this unique industry. Thanks also to our partners at [Seattle Public Schools \[facebook.com\]](#) and WA State Division of Vocational Rehabilitation. This is truly a partnership that WORKS [HYATT Hotels \[facebook.com\]](#)

[Homeland Security – Office of Partnerships - Steve, Tonia and Kathy met with the new lead from the Office of Partnerships in Homeland Security \(DHS\). DHS is reaching out to community partners to gather feedback and share their goals in several areas, including cybersecurity, maritime security, chemical/biological threats, the impact of climate change on communities across the country, immigration, and the protection of critical infrastructure. DHS includes several lines of business, including the U.S. Coast Guard. The DHS team reaffirmed their interest in continuing to work with the NET focused on sharing information related to careers in the agency, recruitment, hiring and retention.](#)

[AbilityOne Commission - The AbilityOne Commission met in the Seattle area this week. They invited Kathy to share information on the work of the NET and the Talent Acquisition Portal \(TAP\). The Commission is interested in partnering with CSAVR-NET as they continue to build their focus and capacity around competitive, integrated employment outcomes.](#)

ARTICLES AND EVENTS OF INTEREST

Hiring untapped talent: Hiring workers with a disability - CNBC: Senior Personal Finance Correspondent Sharon Epperson [looks at a part of the labor force that is seeing job gains. \[youtube.com\]](#) **VR Recognized as a Resource for Hiring!!!**

EEOC Article on Reasonable Accommodation - As an employer, you can choose whether you want to designate a specific person to handle disability-related reasonable accommodation requests. If you do, train other supervisory employees to refer the request to that person when they receive an accommodation request. When you receive an accommodation request, if necessary, clarify what the employee needs to address a disability-related limitation, and what accommodation would best suit them.

The best way to respond to an accommodation request, especially if it's unclear what accommodation is needed and why, is to ask what the specific work-related problem is confronting the individual due to having a disability. The employee may be able to provide suggestions and information to help you decide what type of reasonable accommodation is best. If both of you are unsure of what accommodation is available, consult resources, such as Job Accommodation Network, free of charge, for ideas.

For more information, visit the [Job Accommodation Network \[askjan.org\]](https://askjan.org).

[Podcast with Times Person of the Week: Eddie Ndopu on How Disability Helped Him Rethink Excellence \[time.com\]](https://time.com)

[Harvard Business Review: Why People Hide Their Disabilities at Work \[hbr.org\]](https://hbr.org)

[National Institutes of Health \(NIH\) Long COVID Symptoms and Impact \[covid19.nih.gov\]](https://covid19.nih.gov)

[FACT SHEET: Biden-Harris Administration Works to Make it Easier for People with Disabilities to Access Public Services Online \[whitehouse.gov\]](https://whitehouse.gov)

U.S. Access Board Staff Present on Designing Accessible Electric Vehicle Charging Stations

- The Joint Office of Energy and Transportation hosted the webinar "[Designing for Accessible EV Charging Stations](#)," [\[Inks.gd\]](#) and the recording is publicly available. The webinar included a presentation by U.S. Access Board Transportation Systems Engineer Juliet Shoultz who discussed design recommendations for accessible electric vehicle (EV) charging stations.

Shoultz reviewed applicable [Americans with Disabilities Act \(ADA\) \[Inks.gd\]](#), [Architectural Barriers Act \(ABA\) \[Inks.gd\]](#), and [Section 508 \[Inks.gd\]](#) requirements and new recommendations for making EV charging stations accessible as promulgated in the Board's technical assistance document [Design Recommendations for Accessible Electric Vehicle Charging Stations \[Inks.gd\]](#). This technical assistance provides guidance to those involved in the planning, designing, building, installing, and use of EV charging stations, including State and local governments, designers and developers, electrical and construction professionals, equipment manufacturers, automakers, utility providers, charge point operators and e-mobility service providers, EV owners, and people with disabilities.

[AI is biased. The White House is working with hackers to try to fix that \[npr.org\]](https://npr.org)

If you have any questions, please feel free to reach out to Kathy or Inger.