

Expanding Employment Opportunities for People with Disabilities



A generation ago, President George H.W. Bush signed into law the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). The ADA mandates equal access to employment for people with disabilities, a promise that remains unfulfilled. Today, while our country is more accessible and welcoming of people with a wide variety of disabilities than it was in 1990, two-thirds of Americans with disabilities are unemployed or underemployed. That number has not changed since the ADA's passage.

Americans of many faiths believe strongly that work brings dignity, self-respect and responsibility and that lack of employment is demoralizing, socially isolating and wasteful of a person's abilities. Poverty often accompanies disability and a lack of employment may mean that adequate food, housing and medical care are not attainable. In light of these realities, the Interfaith Disability Advocacy Coalition (IDAC) encourages people of faith to expand employment opportunities for people with disabilities by:

- Drawing attention to the abilities of people with disabilities and their right to be recruited, hired, promoted and retained at all levels of work;
- Hiring qualified people with disabilities to staff and support the work of your congregation;
- Offering support to members and visitors with disabilities who are out of work, including moral support, specific advice and training, supervised volunteer opportunities and introductions to those who make hiring decisions;
- Encouraging employers in your congregation and community to hire qualified people with disabilities.



Interfaith Disability Advocacy Coalition

For more on what you can do, visit: www.aapd.com. Working together we can improve employment outcomes for people with disabilities.

The Interfaith Disability Advocacy Coalition seeks to mobilize the religious community to speak out and take action on disability policy issues with Congress, the President and Administration, and society at large. To learn more about the work of IDAC, visit: <http://www.aapd.com/what-we-do/interfaith/>

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