



See the Ability. See how we can work together.

Twelve Connecticut Companies Honored For Hiring, Promoting People with Disabilities

HARTFORD, Conn., (June 28, 2006) . . . The State of Connecticut's Connect-Ability initiative, launched yesterday, honored twelve employers Wednesday (June 27) for their leadership and accomplishment in hiring and promoting people with disabilities. The award recognizes employers who understand that workforce diversity includes people with disabilities.

The Connect-Ability Top Employer Awards were made by Department of Social Services (DSS) Bureau of Rehabilitation Services at the Connect-Ability Employment Summit held at the Connecticut Convention Center in Hartford.

Connect-Ability named the following Top Employers: Aetna, Advo, Deloitte, Henkel, HID, IBM, Northeast Utilities, Pfizer, Price Chopper, Shop-Rite of Meriden, Sodexo and Travelers.

Brenda Moore, director of DSS Bureau of Rehabilitation Services, said the Top Employer Award recognizes the kinds of efforts the Bureau wants to encourage among companies and organizations statewide. "These Top Employers are setting the bar. We hope other employers will appreciate the diversity people with disabilities bring to the workplace. The Top Employers have already discovered this. We want to share their best practices."

Examples of efforts made by Top Employers include:

- A Disability and the Workplace Website for managers and staff needing help or answers to questions, including those they might feel uncomfortable asking in person.
- Recruitment outreach to interns with disabilities.
- Continuity and accommodation for an employee who became disabled after years on the job.
- A workplace program that provides local agencies a chance to assess individual is in the work environment.
- Commuting arrangements for people who do not drive.

According to Moore, nominations for the award came from peers, employees, the companies themselves and from the Bureau. The Top Employers received a crystal pyramid with the State crest.



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Moore noted that many employers recognize the value of diversity in their marketplace as well as the workplace. “Employers are noticing that their customers also appreciate a diverse workforce that includes people with disabilities.”

The Employment Summit, organized by the Bureau of Rehabilitation Services, is part of the Connect-Ability initiative, a statewide effort to facilitate connections between employers and people with disabilities and put their focus on ability.

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Connect-Ability is an initiative connecting Connecticut employers with the state’s talent pool of people with disabilities. Connect-Ability is intended to open minds by helping employers see the ability, not the disability. The initiative will bring together more resources than ever to increase employment opportunities for people with disabilities. Addressing the fundamental barriers to employment, it is one of the first initiatives of its kind in the nation and a model for other states planning similar efforts. Connect-Ability is funded by a four-year federal grant from the federal Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services and managed by the Connecticut Department of Social Services. Visit at www.Connect-Ability.com or call toll-free 1-866-844-1903.

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