

## FIVE REASONS WHY EMPLOYING PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES SHOULD BE PART OF YOUR HIRING PLAN



The number of U.S. businesses that are making it a corporate priority to hire people with disabilities is on the rise ... and for good reason. Savvy businesses keenly understand that recruiting highly trained and dedicated people with disabilities is one of the smartest hiring strategies they can employ.

As Ability Beyond, we are fortunate to witness the incredible impact that our residential living, transitional, day programs and employment services have on more than 3,000 people with disabilities we serve annually. Last

year, we've supported more than 1,000 people with disabilities by training them for fulfilling work opportunities, providing job placement assistance and helping them maintain their jobs for the long-term.

Hiring someone with disabilities isn't charity, it's actually one of the smartest things you can do for your bottom line. Here are five of the many reasons why integrating employees with disabilities into your hiring plan makes good business sense:

### 1 Move the needle on your key HR benchmarks.

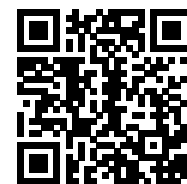
Across our client base, we've moved the needle on key HR benchmarks, including an average 14% higher retention rate. The reason is simple: the individuals we place are motivated, eager and prescreened for the position. Employees we place also receive continued job training and counseling from Ability Beyond – at no cost to the employer – for 90 days as they acclimate to the job.

Employers we've worked with have also noted a 53% higher rate of self-identification, significantly decreased time to fill key positions and a greater range of diversity within disability including 21% veterans with disabilities.

### 2 The process is much, much simpler than you think.

Working with a nonprofit disability employment service such as Ability Beyond can help you ensure the right fit for both employee and employer and navigate the nuances of ADA compliance. It's our goal to make the transition for both you – and your new employee – as simple as possible.

Story continued on page 2



Please scan this QR code with a smartphone to watch how Ability Beyond is helping Cheree gain back her independence after a medical complication cost her memory.

## Upcoming Events

**Saturday, April 23, 2022**

**Gala & Beyond**

The Amber Room, Danbury, CT

**Saturday, September 17, 2022**

**Families Rock!**

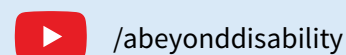
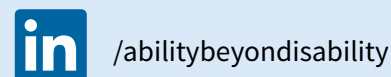
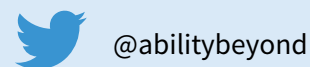
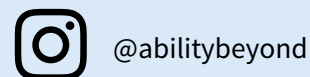
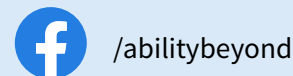
Dickinson Park, Newtown, CT

**Monday, October 3, 2022**

**Golf & Tennis Tournament**

Ridgewood Country Club  
Danbury, CT

## Like & Follow Us



## A NOTE FROM JANE



Dear friends,

We hope you all had an incredible summer. Fall is here, and Ability Beyond is enjoying the slow return to in person programming, and the growth of our virtual services. The smiles of the people we so proudly serve is always what makes our work fulfilling, and fun!

We're happy to report that in keeping safety a top priority: a large majority of our staff

as well as almost all of the people we serve are fully vaccinated. The vaccine is doing as it should, and we're seeing an almost non-existent rate of virus infection. We hope to return to 100% in person programming as soon as we can staff our programs appropriately. In the meantime, we will continue to expand our innovations in virtual services to support everyone's needs.

Staffing remains an industry-wide challenge, and this is the toughest hiring and retention environment we have ever seen. Ability's goal during the next 12 to 18 months is to increase staff by 222%. To achieve this, we are utilizing creative solutions like recruitment videos, redefining our employer value brand, and adding QR codes to staff badges for potential recruits to scan for application information.

We're also offering hiring bonuses and referral incentives, and we are rolling out a new app for staff that will allow them to pick up extra shifts as needs arise. We're getting there, but still have miles to go!

Read on for more great Ability Beyond news. And as always thank you for your support!

Jane Davis - President & CEO

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### 3 It simply makes cents.

If the prior reasons weren't compelling enough, we've seen firsthand that people with disabilities – the largest diversity group in the world - are fiercely loyal to companies who value diversity and inclusion. According to the Journal of Vocational Rehabilitation, 87 percent of the public would rather do business with companies that hire people with disabilities. And with one in ten Americans living with a substantial disability, creating a workforce that is reflective of your customer base can help your business tap into their immense \$645 billion annual spending power in the U.S.

### 4 A reliable and dedicated workforce.

Ability Beyond's employment services places the majority of our trained workers in positions that are considered essential.

One such success is David, employed by Stop & Shop. When spring COVID cases spiked, David went into overdrive, eagerly saying 'yes' to all tasks despite stressed customers and an array of new protocols. His managers recently reached out to us saying, "I know nobody is perfect, but David is OUR perfect."

### 5 Different perspectives drive innovation.

Let's face it. If a person has a physical or mental disability, they are accustomed to navigating innovative ways to do things differently to accommodate their ability. These very same individuals can bring their unique problem-solving abilities to the table and offer a different perspective to some of your biggest business challenges.

With these perspectives, you can see why including people with disabilities into your hiring plan is a win-win for all involved.



## PROGRAM SPOTLIGHT: CAREER DEVELOPMENT AND EMPLOYMENT SERVICES

With more than 40 employment specialists and job coaches in NY and CT, Ability Beyond partners with several hundred businesses annually to help people with disabilities train for and secure meaningful employment. In 2020, when the world was hunkering down due to the pandemic, Ability Beyond's services expanded to meet the needs our partners were experiencing. Over the past 18 months we have helped 1,500 people.

"We have creatively continued providing services throughout the pandemic, both in person and virtually", says Assistant Services Director Kate Travis. "Many of the people we serve in these programs are considered essential workers, and the never stopped working during the pandemic."

Through their Employment Programs, Ability Beyond helps people with disabilities such by training them for fulfilling work opportunities, providing job placement assistance, and helping them to maintain their job for the long term.

Employment specialists will design individualized strategies to help meet personal employment goals. Group supported employment, career development services, work readiness/youth employment services, supported employment, customized employment, assessment services and job shadowing are all offered, throughout Connecticut and New York.

Ability Beyond also assists individuals in reaching self-sufficiency through full-time work and going off of entitlements if that is their goal. "As part of the Social Security Administration's "Ticket to Work"

## October is National Disability Employment Awareness Month



For more information about how Ability Beyond can help your organization source talent, please visit our website.

Point your cell phone camera at this QR code to visit our website.

Employment Network, we help people with disabilities achieve their individual employment goals," says Travis.

Ability Beyond's Employment Network is a silver lining for many employers as they face hardships due to insufficient staffing to meet customer demands. Carrie O'Connell, Services Director says "The job market right now is so tough! Employers should absolutely be tapping into the disability community for qualified and dedicated employees who can assist with their business needs."



## GOLF & TENNIS RECAP

On Monday, September 27th, **120 golf and tennis players** brought their game to our **Annual Golf & Tennis Tournament** at Ridgewood Country Club. With everyone's support we were able to **raise over \$95,000** to support our mission and over 3,000 clients we serve annually!

A large graphic of a yellow and white electric guitar, positioned vertically on the left side of the section. It includes a treble clef and musical notes floating around it.

# FAMILIES ROCKED AGAIN!



The big kid in all of us came out at Dickinson Park on Saturday, September 18th for Ability Beyond's 8th Annual Families Rock! More than 80 friends and family members rocked to iconic music of three Ability family bands, and relished heaping ice cream sundaes.

Guests enjoyed ice cream, compliments of Bedoukian Research, along with perfect weather and our extraordinary pool of Ability Family talent: The Willie Portera Trio, featuring Ability Beyond father, Jay Willie; The Surf, with Rich Mallet, husband of our nursing director, Donna Mallet; and The Tyger Dynasty, featuring Ability Beyond parent, Steve Tracy.

## DSP NEWS

Every year, in honor of **National Direct Support Professional Recognition Week**, we extend a huge thank you to all of our direct care staff! In addition, we are proud to recognize the following team members, nominated by their managers and peers, for going above and beyond.

★ ★ ★ *Congratulations!* ★ ★ ★



**Rose Musolino**  
Assistant Residential  
Program Manager (CT)



**Melanie Giuffre**  
Life Skills Instructor (NY)



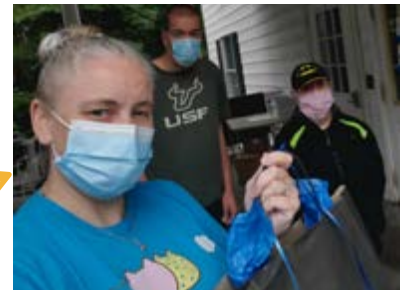
**Patrick McClelland**  
Life Skills Instructor (CT)



**Cassandra Fowler**  
Medical Support Assistant (CT)



**Sierra Peele**  
Acting Residential Program Manager (CT)



**Kelley Maloney**  
Direct Support Professional (NY)



**Michaela Montgomery**  
Life Skills Instructor (CT)



## JOIN OUR TEAM

Together, we **discover**, **build**, and **celebrate** the ability in all people.

There is no limit to what we can achieve together. Visit [abilitybeyond.org/join-our-team](http://abilitybeyond.org/join-our-team) for information and to apply.

