

**National Disability Employment
Awareness Month
October 2011**

**Profit by Investing in Workers
with Disabilities**

National Disability Employment Awareness Month

President George H.W. Bush, in 1990, signed the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) into law.

The law guaranteed equal opportunity for people with disabilities in public accommodations, commercial facilities, employment, transportation, state and local government services, and telecommunications.



Courtesy of the White House

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The effort to educate the American public about disability and employment actually began in 1945 when Congress declared the first week in October "National Employ the Physically Handicapped Week."



Courtesy of the Truman Library

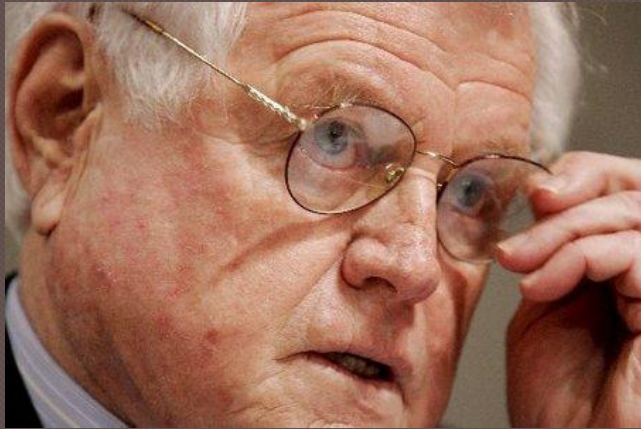
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The word "physically" was removed in 1962 to acknowledge the employment needs and contributions of all individuals with disabilities.

In 1988, Congress expanded the week to a month and changed the name to "National Disability Employment Awareness Month."

National Disability Employment Awareness Month

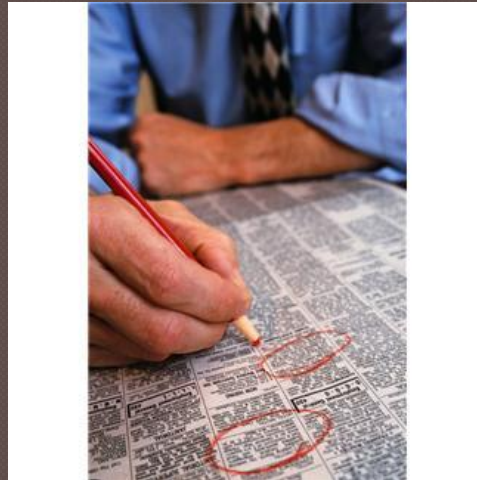
“For generations, society has viewed people with disabilities as citizens in need of charity. Through ignorance we tolerated discrimination and succumbed to fear and prejudice. But our paternalistic approach did no more to improve the lives of people with disabilities than labor laws restricting women in the workplace did to protect women.”



— Senator Edward Kennedy

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Today, for 54 million Americans with disabilities, gainful employment remains out of reach.



More than 70 percent of adults with disabilities want to work – that's an untapped workforce of 18 million people.

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Current Disability Employment Statistics

Labor Force Composition

People with disabilities: 21.0%

People without disabilities: 69.9%

Unemployment Rate

People with disabilities: 16.1%

People without disabilities: 8.8%

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Disability rates rose with age for both sexes, but significant differences existed between men and women.

For people under 65, the prevalence of disability among men and boys was higher than among women and girls.

In contrast, disability rates were higher for women than men aged 65 and older (43 percent for women, 40 percent for men).

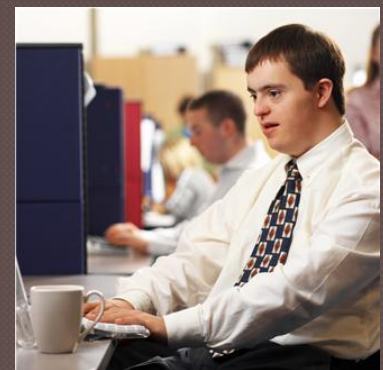
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Despite the strides made in disability rights in the past 20 years, the majority of people with disabilities are poor, under-employed, and under-educated, largely due to unequal opportunities.



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People with disabilities are a diverse group, crossing lines of age, ethnicity, gender, race, sexual orientation, and socioeconomic status.



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People with disabilities constitute the nation's largest minority group and the only group any of us can become a member of at any time.

Thousands of servicemembers have been wounded and disabled while serving our country.



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An estimated one in four soldiers return from Iraq and Afghanistan with service-related disabilities. Common types of injuries include traumatic brain injuries, amputations, and blindness.



Courtesy of Wounded Warriors Project

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The number of veterans rated at 100 percent disabled as of June 30, 2011 was 315,748 according to the United States Department of Veteran Affairs.



Additionally, 3.30 million veterans were receiving VA disability compensation.

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The military and civilian communities are often not adequately prepared with the resources and practical knowledge to help facilitate wounded warriors returning to their communities and, ultimately, to the workforce.



Courtesy of Army Times

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Courtesy of the White House

President Barack Obama said, “Generations of Americans with disabilities have improved our country in countless ways. Refusing to accept the world as it was, they have torn down the barriers that prohibited them from fully realizing the American dream...”

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“...Together, we can ensure our country is not deprived of the full talents and contributions of the approximately 54 million Americans living with disabilities, and we will move forward with the work of providing pathways to opportunity to all of our people.”

— President Barack Obama

Presidential Proclamation--Anniversary of the Americans with
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