

# Reach out to people with disabilities for jobs

Letter to the Editor

4:42 p.m. EDT October 14, 2014

News this month that unemployment fell to its lowest levels since July of 2008 failed to buoy the spirits of job seekers in the disability community. For them, opportunities for employment and training remain far too limited. Only 30 percent of young adults with a disability participate in the workforce. *Thirty percent.*

That needs to change, but it won't appreciably change until and unless more leaders within our communities make employing people with physical, intellectual and developmental disabilities a priority.

On Wednesday, in Newark, it's a priority. The University of Delaware is hosting the sixth annual Disability Mentoring Day, where more than 25 young adults with disabilities are shadowing and networking with managers and employees at area businesses. Also joining the effort this year are the state departments of Education and Health and Social Services, and the state Division of Vocational Rehabilitation.

Holding jobs and building careers strengthen a person's sense of purpose and community, and can lessen one's need for government assistance. When more people with disabilities have jobs, it makes for more representative and stronger workplaces.

Business, government and community leaders in Newark on Wednesday are showing their appreciation of that. The more others do the same the other 364 days of the year, the better off we'll all be.



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