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Mayor's Office for People with Disabilities Held Largest Employee Recruitment Event for People with Disabilities Ever Held in New York City

In honor of National Disability Employment Awareness Month, nearly thirty businesses participated in recruitment event for people with disabilities at the Microsoft Technology Center in Times Square.

NEW YORK—Today, in celebration of National Disability Employment Awareness month, the Mayor's Office for People with Disabilities (MOPD) collaborated with Microsoft to hold the largest ever recruitment event for people with disabilities in New York City. MOPD's employment initiative, ***NYC: ATWORK***, worked extensively with these jobseekers over the past several weeks in preparation. Nearly 30 businesses and over 150 jobseekers with disabilities participated at the Microsoft Technology Center in Times Square.

"Tackling employment issues for the disability community requires innovative solutions and the de Blasio Administration has led the way through programs like ***NYC:ATWORK***," said **Deputy Mayor for Strategic Policy Initiatives J. Phillip Thompson**. "From resume workshops to adaptive gaming equipment demonstrations, the wide range of work that the City has showcased this week reflects our deep and ongoing commitment to making New York City fairer and more equitable for all."

"The only way to increase the employment rate for people with disabilities is to work with both businesses and jobseekers," said **Victor Calise, Commissioner of the Mayor's Office for People with Disabilities**. "I am incredibly proud of the work the ***NYC:ATWORK*** team in my office has done and am thankful for the resources and partnership that Microsoft has offered to make this day and week a reality."

"At Microsoft we strongly believe in building a diverse and inclusive workforce," said **Jenny Lay-Flurrie, Chief Accessibility Officer at Microsoft**. "We are committed to working with employers – across industries – to share our learnings and work together towards creating a more inclusive world for everyone, where people with disabilities

have the same opportunities as everyone else. We are proud to support the MOPD collaboration to empower New York City residents.”

This collaboration with Microsoft is part of “Access and Employment Week” featuring programming across the city including resume workshops, LinkedIn trainings, accessible document creation and demonstrations of assistive technology and adaptive gaming equipment. This event went beyond the traditional job fair model to connect a specific group of qualified candidates with disabilities to an array of open positions in their respective fields of interest. Microsoft has also been working closely with District 75 within the Department of Education to train students, parents, and faculty with assistive software that can assist people with disabilities in both their academic and future professional careers.

“Our collaboration with Microsoft helps us to create a strong connection between access, education, technology and employment,” said **Ketler Louissant, Superintendent of District 75 for the Department of Education**. “Microsoft’s learning and accessibility tools empower our students, staff and parents and create opportunities for innovative learning and collaboration throughout District 75.

To learn more about “Access and Employment Week,” please see the [full schedule of public events](#).

“People with disabilities in New York City face stark disparities in employment rates and wages,” said **State Comptroller Thomas P. DiNapoli**. “When businesses embrace disability inclusion, it greatly benefits those companies. This job fair is a great way to assist people with disabilities in the job market. These are very capable people who will add value to the companies they are being recruited to work for. I applaud Mayor de Blasio, Commissioner Calise of the Mayor’s Office for People with Disabilities and Microsoft for joining together to make this happen.”

“Addressing the employment gap for New Yorkers with disabilities is a critical component of ensuring that the City is fair and inclusive for everyone,” said **Council Member Diana Ayala, Chair of the Committee on Mental Health, Disabilities, and Addiction**. “I commend the Mayor’s Office for People with Disabilities for hosting today’s recruitment event and all of their important work to ensure that the disability community can have access to living-wage jobs and accessible services throughout the City.”

“Disability rights are human rights, and this of course applies to employment. I commend the Mayor’s Office for People with Disabilities for its extensive and innovative efforts to engage private and public sector employers in opening up employment opportunities to all New Yorkers. I especially congratulate MOPD on today’s highly successful joint event with Microsoft, the largest ever recruitment fair for people with disabilities in New York City, and look forward to many others to come,” said **Council Member Helen Rosenthal, Chair of the Committee on Women & Gender Equity**.

"At TD, we believe individuals of all abilities deserve meaningful opportunities to fulfill their professional potential," said **John Patton, U.S. Head of Diversity and Inclusion, TD Bank**. "As part of TD's commitment to inclusive hiring, we are excited to support New York City's Mayor's Office for People with Disabilities' (MOPD) career recruitment event on October 23."

"Northwell Health is honored and excited to participate in the upcoming career event and connecting with people with disabilities," said **Judy Howard, Head of Talent Acquisition at Northwell Health**. "People with disabilities represent an essential segment of the Northwell workforce, the population we serve, and are integral to our ability to successfully meet the increasing workforce demands in the healthcare industry. They offer value, innovation, and expertise to our culture and a wide range of unique contributions and insight that support our relentless focus on providing compassionate, life-changing care to our patients and their families."

"Everyone has a talent, and Spectrum is here today to seek out those who want to use those talents to help New Yorkers," said **Rodney Capel, Spectrum Vice President for Government Affairs in New York City**. "We welcome job candidates with all kinds of life experiences. A workforce with diverse abilities and backgrounds strengthens our business and enables us to better understand and respond to the needs of our customers and the communities we serve. We're pleased to partner with the Mayor's Office for People with Disabilities to connect with those individuals who have disabilities and bring value to our company."

"Thanks to **NYC: ATWORK**, we have been able hire dozens of qualified and engaged staff over the past two years," said **Jean Shein, Global Director of Sustainability at Uniqlo USA**. The majority of whom are still with us and growing. **NYC: ATWORK** is a great program. I only wish all large cities could have something similar."

"The Access and Employment Week events held throughout the city have provided a wonderful opportunity for job seekers who happen to have disabilities and employers to meet and explore real job possibilities," says **Robert Lindsey, Director of Vocational Services at NYU Langone's Rusk Rehabilitation**. "We are excited to participate in events that showcase the talent people with disabilities bring to the workplace."

"VISIONS is very honored to have been selected by the Mayor's Office for People with Disabilities to host one of these events designed to better prepare individuals with disabilities to enter the workforce," said **Mike Cush, Senior Director of Workforce Development at VISIONS**. "VISIONS would like to thank Microsoft for their commitment to making their products and services accessible to all users, thus increasing the odds for those with disabilities to become gainfully employed."

"The de Blasio Administration should be commended for consistently seeking to expand opportunities for those facing the largest hurdles to meaningful employment," stated **Helen Keller Services President and CEO Kim Zimmer**. "We are honored to partner with the Mayor's Office for People with Disabilities to expand job recruitment among the

blind, low vision, and deaf-blind communities. Together we can help spread the word that these enthusiastic, hard-working individuals not only deserve to be hired by employers, but contribute so much to the workplace."

"As an employer and service provider of people with disabilities we understand firsthand the exceptional talent people with disabilities bring to the table," said **Brett Eisenberg, Executive Director of Bronx Independent Living Services (BILS)**. "BILS is excited to be a part of this initiative being held by MOPD and Microsoft. Initiatives and collaborations like this are the key to increased hiring of people with disabilities and with the exceptional advancements in assistive technology we are hopeful for an even brighter future for the employment of people with disabilities."

"Independence Care System (ICS) supports the independence of people with physical disabilities and understands the importance of our members having employment opportunities," said **Danny Perry, ICS Director of Community Engagement**. "We're thrilled to have hosted a Microsoft Accessibility Software Demonstration at our Brooklyn office in support of National Disability Employment Awareness Month."

"Thanks to the Mayor's Office for People with Disabilities, The Staten Island Center for Independent Living will be hosting a LinkedIn Rock Your Profile Session on October 24, 2019 from 1:00 pm – 3:00 pm," said **Michelle Sabotino, Director of the Staten Island Center for Independent Living**. "This event is open to our disability community to come in and learn about how to create a profile on LinkedIn and to help them create a professional profile to gain employment."

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