



Alabama

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New York

SUMMER 2008

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Our Mission

Abilities, Inc. is a non-profit agency dedicated to facilitating integrated employment and full participation of persons with disabilities in their work and living communities. Employment is accomplished through direct service to youth and adults with disabilities and to employers, insurance carriers, schools and colleges and other rehabilitation programs. Services are delivered, when possible, in diverse community settings in response to consumer and business needs and legislative mandates. Abilities, Inc. is committed to developing and demonstrating programs and services of national excellence.

The End of an Era

By Judy Young

This is our last newsletter. I know that to some of our "contributors" it is a relief they will not have to write articles anymore. For me, this is a sad occasion in many ways. First, this means the end of my working partnership with organizations and people that I had the privilege to know. Second, this truly is the LAST newsletter because we will no longer have the opportunity to partner with multiple organizations under the new PWI initiatives.

As many of you may know, Abilities, Inc. was one of only three organizations funded through a demonstration project in 1968 designed to establish collaboration between vocational rehabilitation professionals and the business community. This idea was appropriately named Projects With Industry (PWI). The demonstration was a great success. The Rehabilitation Services Administration of the US Department of Education continued to fund these projects ever since on a competitive basis, first in five-year cycles, and more recently for three-year periods.

Thousands of persons with disabilities obtained jobs and gained independence as a result of these great projects. Hundreds of employers had participated via their involvement as active Business Advisory Council (BAC) members and gained valuable, productive workers who demonstrated that a disability is no barrier to successful employment.

Abilities, Inc. has been the only organization in the country that successfully competed for funds since 1968 and is completing its 40th year of operating a PWI program. In 1984, Abilities, Inc. put its knowledge and expertise in managing PWIs locally and launched programs nationally. Over the years, Abilities established partnerships with organizations in a wide variety of locations around the country from Battle Creek, MI to the U.S. Virgin Islands; from San Antonio, TX to Puerto Rico and many others from the Midwest to New York City. About 20 years ago, Abilities created a new model for the delivery of PWI services; initiating projects at Centers for Independent Living



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(CIL). For many CILs this was the first venture in the field of job development and placement. Most recognized that offering employment services to their constituents will enhance their role and visibility while assisting those who are interested in working to gain self-sufficiency and independence. It was a win-win for all.

To share knowledge and disseminate information, this newsletter – Partnering for Placement – was established. We decided on the topics, contributed articles and kept in touch with staff, consumers and employers. Sometimes it was a struggle to get the information in but I sincerely hope that our audience found it interesting and valuable. Which brings me to the “End of an Era”. As most of your know, Abilities, Inc. will no longer be able to operate national projects. Funding priorities change and it is time to move on. Our new PWIs, if funded, will be local and as such, we will not need the type of information sharing and dissemination vehicle as the Partnering for Placement newsletter. Those of you who applied for your own PWI grants, I wish you great success. We will all know the results by the end of September. Regardless of the type of funds you may be able to secure, I hope that you will all continue to do

good work of making a difference in people’s lives and ask you to keep in touch with each other and with me. I thank you for taking this journey and I can only hope that you enjoyed it as much as I did.

This final article would not be complete without my expression of appreciation to Cindy Hansen. No, Cindy is not leaving, but you may not hear from her as much as you used to. As you all know, Cindy has been the primary contact for all of you in matters of reports, teleconferences, check requests, and much more. Cindy was also the “publisher” of this newsletter and the one to continuously remind you and I when articles were due and keep at it until the last one was received. I do not believe I could have run these remote-site projects without her. Thank you Cindy!

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CAREER OPTIONS

Career Options: A Three-Year Reflection

By Vivian Ouziel

During the past three years, the Projects With Industry PWI program, Career Options, has provided opportunities for consumers seeking employment to be referred for training or to assist them with direct placement services. Career Options, Abilities Inc.’s placement program partners with community agencies and businesses, which assist us in providing a host of services to consumers in New York City and Nassau and Suffolk County. Agency partners namely, the State

Vocational Rehabilitation Agency (VESID), and the Department of Veterans Affairs, provides funding for evaluations, training, transportation, assistive devices, and job coaching. These agencies identify consumers who are potentially job ready, and refer them to Abilities for training and PWI placement services. Abilities, Inc. staff works with individuals to develop and focus on their unique abilities that can be applied to the career of their choice. Placement Counselors also work directly with

consumers who do not require additional training. These job ready folks, with the assistance of their placement counselor jointly create credible resumes, hone interviewing skills, conduct massive job searches, and ultimately find part time or full time employment in their chosen field.

The nature of business partnerships and the manner in which they evolve are a vital part of the PWI program. As placement professionals, we know that we must nurture our business partners, because they are the backbone of our program. Continuous communication either on the telephone or through e-mail, as well as follow-up is critical to the success of our business relationships. We can rely on business partners to provide employment services for the participants in our training and placement programs and also expect that this partnership will change or grow. Over the past three years, solid relationships have been maintained and referrals to new participants have created a large number of active business partners.

Challenges are ever present during the job search; often stimulating creativity for both placement counselors and job seekers. Different skills and development of consumers necessitate a placement plan designed to increase the number of individuals with disabilities who secure competitive employment. Economic changes, health issues, downsizing, layoffs, sometimes create an atmosphere of negativity and despair. These

feelings are generally short-lived due to support for the consumers by business partners, placement specialists and other program participants. Activities such as mock interviews, mentoring, networking workshops, technical reviews, and job hunt clubs, bring energy and motivation to all those looking for work.

For more than 50 years, Abilities, Inc. has trained people with disabilities in the skills needed to find employment and to perform at industry standards to meet current workforce demands. During the past three years, Abilities, Inc., through the PWI Program, Career Options, placed approximately 119 job seekers into competitive jobs. Its track record is unsurpassed in the excellence of our placement specialists, the unwavering support of our business partners and the success of our participants in finding jobs. We look forward to continuing our work through the PWI program for many years.

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AT YOUR SERVICE

*A three-year reflection:
Challenges, Achievements, Future Plans".*
By Rogue Gallart

As people with disabilities continue the struggle to obtain meaningful employment in the face of an enormously high unemployment rate, we

should continue to focus on the building of relationships with businesses to break down the communication gap. Of course, we can say that

placement was a challenge in itself, but the true challenge was making sure that the businesses retained that consumer. We often look at the general immediate picture and not the long-term platform. As we all would like to place our consumers in a timely manner we should take a step back and consider is this the right match for the consumer? In essence, the consumers need to market themselves to the fullest of their abilities. One of the great collaborations we had was the Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) program, which played a critical role in assisting people with disabilities gaining integrated employment. This inclusion is important because it shows that an adverse labor market, within the limits described above, is not necessarily a barrier limiting the employment opportunities of persons with disabilities. It makes sense because here we have a general grouping of accessibility to consumers. Walk-ins, we found out, were not the most successful in serving the public in obtaining a set goal of placements. Why wait for the opportunity to present itself to you when it was behind you all along. Branch out!

A major achievement we see is the Business Advisory Council of Central Florida, which we created in 2005. While many people are involved in the effort to improve this employment picture, much of the responsibility for helping people with disabilities secure employment falls on the shoulders of employment specialists. The employment specialist or job developer acts as the bridge between employment services, job seekers, and businesses seeking qualified employees. Good employment specialists need knowledge, persistence, creativity, and a superior ability to build relationships. A successful placement specialist knows how to collaborate and network with others. Toward that end, one strategy involves networking with fellow placement professionals working at other provider agencies or for the state (VR). Referred to as an employment networking group or Business Advisory Council, this model offers job developers the opportunity to significantly increase their networking base and be more productive. This can be said such as with the

Business Advisory Council. Whether you already belong to a council or would like to start one of your own, this summary will provide you with important information about how to format a Business Advisory Council to work best for you. Remember gaining trust from a business is 90 percent of the finished battle.

Why start a business advisory council?

For the most part, job development can be a difficult and challenging job (no one said it would be easy). Working with consumers who have multiple barriers to employment, reaching out to employers, and making quality job matches are challenging tasks. Because disappointments and frustrations are a reality, you need patience, flexibility, and you must think out of the box. And the major challenge? Job development is many often times done by a single individual. While some agencies have several employment specialists, smaller organizations might only have one person assigned this responsibility. It can be helpful to know other employment specialists (from another agency) with whom you can talk and collaborate on placement projects. Joining or forming a Business Advisory Council provides just such an opportunity. In employment networking groups, professionals can come together to discuss current employment trends, labor market issues, share leads and ideas, and collaborate on securing employment for their consumers. Getting a fresh perspective from an outside point of view can be eye opening to new ideas.

Many employment specialists, however, are reluctant at first to join networking groups due to time constraints. In a field that relies on placement numbers for funding, competition is strong. Job developers often worry that collaboration could lead to the loss of their best-kept secrets, namely, their employers and job leads. However, job developers are finding that the benefits of networking far outweigh the risks. Collaboration is key and the secrecy factor with other resources will just hold back your consumers' best efforts to find gainful employment. We

eventually all cross the same paths. In the end, the goal of every job developer is to secure placements.

Creating or joining an employment-networking group has a number of benefits for employment specialists. Business Advisory meetings allow for group problem solving in challenging situations, broadening of networks, and most importantly the building of relationships with others in similar professional roles. Employment specialists with varied levels of experience can participate in brainstorming and problem-solving discussions. Those who have been in the field for a while bring stronger contacts and experience, while newer job developers bring fully charged enthusiasm and fresh ideas. It is always interesting to learn how other agencies operate. Lastly, connecting with other agencies can be helpful in identifying your own agency's strengths and weaknesses.

What should you expect from the BAC?

- Members contribute their ideas to the Council
- Meetings are regularly scheduled, and they meet the expectations of the Council
- An atmosphere of trust and sharing

Diversify your Council

Successful Councils encourage a wide variety of agencies and or businesses to join them. Mentoring relationships can also develop. When good ideas and thoughts are the focus, you should see memberships increase in your council. The members of a Council can serve as resources, support, and partners in planning events.

By forming or joining a Business Advisory Council you will reap the benefits that have helped many to do their jobs better. Ultimately, when agency links to businesses and contacts with those in a position to hire, it had accomplished 75% of its task.

Start up kit:

To maintain a networking group, you will need:

- Mission statement
- An executive committee (usually consists of 4-5 business leaders)
- An agenda or meeting format
- A location and schedule for meetings
- Lists or email distribution lists
- Affiliations with employers
- A system for rotating administrative duties (Executive committee)
- Send a reminder/attendance confirmation prior to meetings
- Have a typed agenda (solicit items from the group & distribute it with the meeting reminder)
- Take minutes & distribute them to all members
- Notate tasks and persons responsible, and send reminders
- Recruit new BAC members
- Key note presenters at meetings (via Government official, Representative, Business Leader or Agency)

As for the future, we should all look at this partnership with Abilities, Inc. as a great learning experience. It is safe to say that we all saw where weaknesses and strengths were as agencies. Whatever the future holds for further collaborations with PWI, I can sincerely say it has shown me how to expand new horizons and ideas for placing our clients/consumers.

"We thought that we had the answers, it was the questions we had wrong" - [Bono](#)

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“A Three-Year Reflection: Challenges, Achievements, Future plans”

By Robert Saunders

Having a “Projects With Industries” located in Las Vegas, Nevada has been a great benefit to our local disabled community. Working in conjunction with The Bureau of Vocational Rehabilitation, Desert Regional Center, Catholic Charities, AARP, Las Vegas Parole and Probation, Las Vegas Sex Offenders Unit, Southern Nevada Mental Health, Clark County School District, The Las Vegas National Rehabilitation Association, and many, many other agencies and employers, the Las Vegas PWI has been able to make a positive contribution to our many disabled citizens.

We have been able to provide a wide range of job development services; job placements, job seeking skills classes, job coaching, follow-along, advocacy, and job readiness preparation to name some. We have worked with consumers who cover the spectrum of disabilities; visually challenged, very blind, psychosocial, mental health, and mobility issues from the wheel chair bound to those with missing limbs. MS, felons, sex offenders, literally any form and level of disability one can imagine. We were able to service consumers either whom could not get service in a timely manner

from traditional providers or who were excluded from receiving service at all.

Special Employment Services, Inc. considers it a privilege to be the agency entrusted with providing these valuable and needed services to our community. The three years we served in this capacity allowed us to put our best efforts forward in our goal to provide service to the disabled and to give that community a caring and meaningful source of assistance.

Due to the change in the National RFP for PWI services, Special Employment Services, Inc. will not have the privilege of continuing its rewarding association with PWI through the Abilities project. We hope that if Southern Nevada is fortunate enough to have a PWI program to replace our participation in the new five-year cycle, we will be able to pass on the many wonderful individuals, agencies and employers who came together to contribute to the success of PWI in Las Vegas.

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EXPERIENCE COUNTS

The Complete Puzzle

By Carolyn Agee

A puzzle can sometimes take long to put all the pieces together. When seeking employment for individuals all the pieces must come together to complete the puzzle.

These pieces include documentation, referral materials, and the willingness to work as a team. Often I review skills, past employment, and speak with individuals about hobbies and areas of interest.

I can often find appropriate placement by just gathering these pieces. These pieces include scanning the jobs papers, calling on employers and resume preparation.

To complete the puzzle we must agree to work as a team to make a perfect puzzle. Colors must match and the pieces must fit perfectly.

Sometimes vocational rehabilitation and other service providers must take part in making the perfect match. The individuals must dress appropriately and present themselves well to get the perfect job.

The Employment Specialist can sometimes put together a jigsaw puzzle. This puzzle requires a little more work, concentration and sometimes you will have to work harder to achieve the perfect puzzle.

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Looking Back / Moving Forward

By Michael Dolan

Think back: in September 2005, our programs were just awarded a three-year PWI grant to provide services to persons with disabilities in our communities. We were focusing on various industries, the older population of Americans with Disabilities. Three years seemed like so long, but now it seems like it was only three weeks.

Like all good things, they must come to an end. Nevertheless, the good work that we all do will continue. The countless people that we have met over the years will be forever etched in my mind.

One consumer that I assisted comes to mind. He recently thanked me for helping him to get a job. He wrote me stating that from the first moment that he met me, he felt a new confidence in

himself and he believed that he was finally getting help from the right source. That is what we do in one simple snapshot. Give people confidence in themselves to succeed with the job search process, in their careers, and in life.

The letters and calls of thanks from past clients that have succeeded is the fuel that keeps us going. It has been a great ride being on this PWI, and no matter what our future programs hold, I continue to look forward to bringing quality jobs to the persons with disabilities whom we serve.

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When One Door Closes, Another One Opens

By Kathy Herron

When we began three years ago with Projects with Industry, we were optimistic and enthusiastic about our activities we developed to support people with disabilities in finding and obtaining employment. We also faced many challenges with educating our community and building relationships with businesses. We met these challenges head on, had some fun, and ultimately placed people with disabilities in jobs. This is a time for reflection, a discussion of challenges and successes and some words about the future.

First, we learned what our values were about work. For example, we have learned and we believe that it is important to support people in getting their own job. This was done through individual and group coaching in identifying strengths, job search techniques and networking. Our PWI staff worked tirelessly to facilitate access to resources in our community, establishing relationships with local vocational rehab agencies, one-stop job search centers, community college placement offices and all places where our consumers could potentially seek and find employment. Our consumers obtained jobs at

restaurants, bakeries, colleges, computer software companies, government and human service agencies, and many others. We follow the motto "Give a man a fish he eats for a day. Teach a man to fish he eats for a lifetime". We are confident that those who obtained jobs with the help of our PWI staff will be better equipped to get another job as they advance in their careers or choose to change their place of employment.

Second, we found our greatest challenge was creating a Business Advisory Council. We discovered that businesses in our community are uniquely connected to each other yet operate independently. Therefore, in order for us to educate them about hiring a person with a disability, we needed to be connected to them as an employer. So, we did that. We joined our Chamber of Commerce, had booths at job fairs, and linked with employers through electronic networks. After three years, we are finally beginning to enjoy a reputation of being an employment network and experts on disability. We have been asked to speak at workshops and have been invited to connect to public websites as a resource for employers and people with disabilities in businesses. Additionally

we are developing chapters of Business Leadership Networks all over Michigan. It is growing, but it has been a slow process.

Third and finally, we discovered that the changing times require us to change quickly. Michigan was hard hit with plant closings and layoffs these past years. The individuals with disabilities that were seeking employment needed to compete with large groups of people also looking for work. It was sad at times to see our consumers experience much rejection. However, we met this challenge by getting involved. For example, our staff joined a workforce initiative to develop strategies to transform Southeast Michigan's workforce. We will be leaders in designing programs to include people with disabilities in training and utilizing community resources to obtain employment.

We had a great time with PWI. We thank Abilities, Inc. for giving us the opportunity to serve

our community and to be a voice for people with disabilities in employment. We will miss the newsletters and getting to know others around the county serving the same goal. It has been said, "When one door closes another one opens." We are open to all the possibilities. Farewell.

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PARTNERING FOR PLACEMENT

Reflections and Gratitude

By Francis Durbin

It is a challenge to step into providing placement services in an already established program. The obvious problem is that you had no input in to the formulation of the program. However, the rest of the individuals involved, including staff, consumers, referral sources and employers do have a history with the program. Since few employment programs are totally ill-conceived, it is often not clear the reason the program was struggling. Additionally, if the staff member you are replacing was respected and much liked with all parties involved there can be resistance to you and any new direction you will provide. This whole situation is magnified when the change occurs in the late stage of the entire program. There is no time to totally revamp the program; therefore, it is critical to attempt to

identify those areas which do work and modify where possible those which are less successful. There is no time for a learning curve.

Luckily, with the program at disABILITY LINK, I also inherited the one component in this situation, which allowed this program to come close to meeting the goals necessary for the grant and our consumers. This was and is a highly supportive and professional staff at disABILITY LINK. I have done this job for a long time and in numerous settings, yet have never experienced the support I have received, as I have at disABILITY LINK. The best I could hope for has been to be left alone to do the work. However, one thing was always consistent; I was held very responsible for the success or failure of any program. Therefore I think it is important that the others in this situation

receive recognition for the direct support I have been provided. Rebecca Ramage-Tuttle, President and CEO of disABILITY LINK provided an environment of support and allowed me the flexibility I needed to make changes. She also assisted me directly by fostering a relationship with the Department of Vocational Rehabilitation. This relationship will provide the necessary recruiting source for the positive outcome with our Gap program. Hilary Elliott, who has been just as flexible and encouraging, has also provided the foundation for our placement program. Janie Yorker and she have taken over most of all the supportive functions to free up my time to focus on putting our consumers to work. The rest of the staff, though not directly involved with our program, has been open, friendly and encouraging to the program and to me.

This support has not been just local. Judy Young from Abilities Inc. provided any and all assistance requested of her. She is the reason MENA is now on the EEOC Advocacy Board and the initial contact for the Gap and Cox employment programs, which are being developed locally. These programs will provide individuals with disabilities employment opportunities throughout Georgia.

The second critical aspect was to clearly focus on the goal: To put our consumers to work. To provide them with the opportunity to have a paycheck and to gain the independence and self worth that employment can provide. The success of meeting this goal rested on our consumers to overcome their fears and barriers. In the 10 months I have been involved with this program 43 of them have achieved this goal and almost all stayed at least the 90 days. Many started one job then to move to more appropriate jobs later. The idea of employment has become not just a wish or dream but a probability for them based on their determination and ability.

Although the future of this program is unclear and any plans may not come to fruition, it has been an experience on a personal level, which I view for many reasons as one of the most positive and successful in my career. However, of all the factors the key for making this true has been the individuals involved in the program, staff, consumers and employers.

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Ending on a High Note

By Lisa Bullen

Our 2005 – 2008 Projects With Industry collaboration with Abilities, Inc. is coming to a close. Looking back to the beginning of the partnership, the growth that has taken place is apparent. Not only has there been growth in our numbers, but also the quality of services has grown exponentially. We exceeded our service and placement goals three months prior to the final date of September 30, 2008. It has been a pleasure collaborating with the entire Abilities, Inc. staff. In

addition, we have always looked forward to site visits with Judy Young.

The Dayle McIntosh Center has undergone some changes since we began this endeavor, but I believe with change and challenge does come growth. We did meet our goals each year, but this final year was more streamlined and smooth. We were able to provide services more proficiently as well as had a shorter period between intake and job placement. The job matching that ensured

provided us with our positive outcomes. When we look at our overall numbers of individuals with disabilities meeting 90 days of employment, which is proof.

Moving forward we will continue with our best practices that have been developed and grown since the inception of this partnership. Although I have been in this field for over 13 years, I never

close myself off to change and growth. I am thankful for the guidance and kindness that Judy Young has provided to me. As far as our future endeavors, that is still to unfold. I do know that with this partnership, we have developed a life-long bond that I will treasure. Thank you.

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Moving Forward

By Catrina Lian

Over the past three years, Riverhead's PWI has seen its share of challenges in the quest of meeting program goals. Thankfully, most of these were the everyday challenges one faces when working in human services that become so commonplace, they are no longer viewed as challenges but simply as part of the job. However, staff did see a trend toward more referrals with legal histories, which caused us to seek out as much information as possible from the experts to better prepare us to assist both this particular consumer and their potential employer. As a result, we became more familiar with New York State's incentive programs available through the Department of Labor that target individuals with poor work, credit and/or legal histories and in turn were able to educate many hiring managers

unaware of these programs. Because of these incentives and assurances, several consumers were able to better deal with a difficult barrier to employment and move forward in their job search.

Eastern Suffolk County has had the services of a Projects With Industry Grant since 1991. Although it is unknown as to whether there will be yet another PWI in this region after September 2008, Abilities, Inc. will continue to provide quality placement services to residents of Suffolk County.

The staff at the Riverhead, NY portion of Partnering For Placement wish all the best to our colleagues of the past three years.

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News from NBDC

2008 Emerging Leaders Take on the “Big Apple”

Submitted By Laura Francis



Edmund L. Cortez, President and CEO, Abilities! (far left) and Lana Smart, Vice President of Corporate Services (far right) with the Emerging Leaders Class of 2008 at the Emerging Leaders Development Conference, at Lehman Brothers in New York, NY

Emerging Leaders Class of 2008 recently gathered in New York City for the 2008 Emerging Leaders Development Conference. The weekend began on Saturday, June 21st with an orientation to the Emerging Leaders program. Hosting the program for Saturday and Sunday, Lea Degirmenci of American International Group (AIG) welcomed all attendees. Lana Smart of NBDC summarized the program and weekend events, encouraging introductions from all participants. Laura Francis of NBDC made a presentation on the “Disability Timeline” discussing the progress made over a century and the challenges ahead, including a discussion of the proposed ADA Restoration Act of the ADA. Immediately following, Judy Young of NBDC educated interns on the importance of

“Understanding Your Rights and Responsibilities under the ADA”.

Brett Eisenberg of NBDC provided valuable advice to interns on “Dealing with Disability Disclosure and Requesting Reasonable Accommodations”, recommending that employees be straight forward and honest, taking a positive and respectful approach. Robin Adelstein of UBS provided excellent advice to interns on “Resume Writing and Interviews” and included the following points:

- Do Not be late for your interview (prepare to arrive early, not on time)
- Business attire only – presentation is “first impression”
- Be prepared to answer all questions related to the information outlined in your resume
- If you don’t know how to answer a question, just say so – be honest!

After lunch, Minda Dentler, Emerging Leader alumni, and a Management Associate at AIG, spoke to interns on “How to Get the Most from Your Internship”. In 10 steps, Ms. Dentler convinced interns that observing others in the workplace can be the key to better understanding what methods will work for that company.....“*Know what others do, see how they work, see how they communicate with each other, with their supervisors.....watch, listen*”. Minda also encouraged interns to network with their colleagues by asking questions and finding out how others are learning the business.

Terri Dittmann of AIG invited all attendees to learn how to “*Work in Teams*” by providing an

interactive activity. Participants broke into teams and a case scenario was given to each team. While reading, discussing and provide solutions, Ms. Dittman observed each team and the methods used to solve the scenario. The activity was fun and emphasized the importance of being a team player and how team-playing can be effective. In addition, Ms. Dittman provided strategies for teams to consider using when working with others. One of the key learnings was for groups to have a shared understanding of the goal and then to develop a strategy for achieving the desired outcome

Nicole Cooke of Goldman Sachs presented on *“Dealing with Difficult People”* and how to manage difficult people in the workplace. Ms. Cooke discussed the characteristics of a “difficult person”, facts about “workplace bullies”, and tips on how a co-worker should attempt to deal with various types of difficult people, such as, *The Sherman Tank* (classic bully), *The Know it All* (bulldozing expert), *The Micro-manager* (controls work of others), *The Delegator* (passes all work to others), and *The Nice Person* (says “yes” to everyone). Several case scenarios were provided to participants and, after some discussion, Ms. Cooke, with audience participation, provided tips on how to interact with difficult people and shared helpful coping strategies.

Jonathan Glazer of AIG delivered an outstanding presentation on *“Delivering Effective Presentations”*. Condensing what is really more than a one day course into about one hour, Mr. Glazer was able to present valuable tips by demonstrating facial expressions, hand motions, and body gestures to use and those to stay away from in order to give an effective presentation. He also discussed the importance of “pausing” and how it is not an indication that the presenter has not lost their place, but a way to give listeners time to process the information that’s being delivered. He also discussed the importance of where to stand / how to stand / and how and who to look at when presenting. Great information that everyone can use! Ending the day’s program, interns were asked to make their selection from among a human

resource, marketing, or public policy case study, on which they would work in groups on Sunday. Participants concluded their final day with an enjoyable dinner hosted by Booz Allen Hamilton at the Bull Run Restaurant in downtown New York City, at which they were joined by Emerging Leaders alumni.

On Sunday, Myra Mass of MetLife facilitated the day-long case study activity. Ms. Mass provided an overview of learning objectives, outcome and maximizing time, and guidance on the key tasks of problem identification, solution generation, drafting PP presentations, dress rehearsal and feedback, PP revisions and presentation practice. Throughout the day, Ms. Mass consulted with each group to ensure that they were on task to prepare and present an engaging and compelling presentation appropriate to their audience of disability community representatives and senior corporate executives.

Monday’s closing event was hosted by Lehman Brothers, and began with opening remarks by Josh Levine, Vice President, Convertible Securities, Lehman Brothers and Edmund L. Cortez, President and CEO of Abilities!, parent organization of the NBDC and the Emerging Leaders program. Emerging Leaders alumni, Minda Dentler, Management Associate, AIG and Kathryn Hinton, Analyst, Lehman Brothers, were joined by Corporate Partner representatives, Jacqueline McNamee, VP, Financial Lines, AIG; Josh Levine, Lehman Brothers; and Dennis Butler, Vice President, Workforce Solutions, and Liz Claiborne, who shared their experiences with the Emerging Leaders program. There was unanimous positive feedback concerning the contributions of Emerging Leaders interns, both in that capacity and now as employees of the firms and examples of how successful and rewarding it has been for all involved.

Perhaps the high point of the event was the team presentations by members of the Emerging Leaders Class of 2008 who utilized PowerPoint to present the results of the human resources,

marketing, and public policy case studies on which they had worked the day before, responding to questions and engaging in dialog with the attendees who represented major businesses, service providers, and colleges and universities. It was clear that Emerging Leaders interns represent top talent are able to quickly acquire new information and put it into practice - and that they will be valuable assets to the organizations they join in the years ahead.

Following brief closing remarks, each Emerging Leader received a certificate confirming their participation in the Leadership Development Conference. Photos of the event can be found on the Emerging Leaders website,

www.emerging-leaders.com. For information on the Emerging Leaders program and how your business can get involved, please contact Lana Smart at 516.465.1510 or email at lsmart@abilitiesonline.org.

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We Focus on Ability

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**Abilities, Inc. provides employment and training services
for youth and adults with disabilities.**

