

# DiscoverAbility NJ

WORK. EARN. THRIVE.

---

New Jersey believes that people with disabilities are an integral part of the labor force and are active and valuable participants in the economic growth and vitality of the state. That is why we have created DiscoverAbility NJ, New Jersey's Strategic Plan to create a comprehensive employment system for people with disabilities.

DiscoverAbility NJ was originally created in 2008. The plan is based upon seven strategic goals. Listed below are the 2010 strategic activities that support the seven goals of DiscoverAbility NJ. The page numbers associated with each goal make reference to where the original goal appears in the 2008 publication.

**GOAL 1** **(Page 41)**  
**Increase public understanding and awareness of the employment-related assets of individuals and disabilities and their ability to work**

**DiscoverAbility Learning at Work Symposium**

The Learning at Work Symposium was held in November with presentations on "Workplace Tours, Job Shadowing and Informational interviews", "Internships, Mentors, and On-the-Job Training," "Registered Apprenticeship," and "Experiences and Programs for Teachers/Staff."

Approximately 80 people attended this event, with representation from disability employment service providers, state agency staff, consumers and the public workforce system.

**GOAL 2** **(Page 42)**  
**Improve information and communication to, about, and for people with disabilities**

**Disabilities at Work Radio Show**

Through the New Jersey Business Leadership network (BLN), DiscoverAbility NJ produces a weekly internet radio show spotlighting businesses that support people with disabilities in employment. The show also highlights people with disabilities, service providers, research and promising practices in helping people with disabilities get to work.

Nineteen 30 minute shows have been taped and aired this year.

**Social Media**

[www.discoverabilitynj.org](http://www.discoverabilitynj.org) continues to meet the employment needs of individuals with disabilities through the use of the DiscoverAbility NJ blog, Twitter, LinkedIn, Facebook fan page and an email newsletter.

# DiscoverAbility NJ

WORK. EARN. THRIVE.

---

The website also contains a calendar which is updated on a regular basis. The website has had 1,355 visits from 741 unique visitors; has 30 Facebook fans and 256 Twitter followers.

## **GOAL 3**

**(Page 43)**

### **Engage, educate and assist the employer community**

#### **Disabilities at Work “Back the Plaque” Campaign**

Part of a national effort, this initiative allows businesses in New Jersey and nationally to acquire and display a symbol of their support for people with disabilities while providing advocates with an opportunity to reward and patronize businesses that display the “Disabilities at Work” (DAW) logo.

#### **Expanding Employment Networks (EN’s) in New Jersey**

Discoverability NJ has been engaged in local WIBs and One Stop Career Centers about becoming employment networks and is planning to invite CESSI to come to New Jersey for direct outreach in spring 2011.

## **GOAL 4**

**(Page 44)**

### **Provide people with disabilities with better preparation for work and offer more effective connections to jobs**

#### **Garden State Employment and Training Association (GSETA) Scholarships**

DiscoverAbility NJ sponsored ten scholarships for disability employment service providers to attend the GSETA Fall Conference.

#### **Economic Development Pilot**

Discoverability NJ and the National Organization on Disability (NOW), is implementing a model for building a stronger “disability workforce connection” with New Jersey employers, state economic development officials, and regional workforce intermediaries that looks to better connect employers looking to diversity their workforce with qualified workers with disabilities.

## **GOAL 5**

**(Page 46)**

### **Offer supports for working people with disabilities**

#### **Disability Supplier Diversity Program**

With the United States Business Leadership Network (USBLN) and the New Jersey BLN, DiscoverAbility NJ is working to officially certify disability-owned businesses and prepare them to be suppliers for large corporations. Four businesses have been certified as Disability-Owned in 2010.

# DiscoverAbility NJ

WORK. EARN. THRIVE.

---

## **Improved Web Site & Materials Accessibility**

DiscoverAbility NJ has contracted with TecAccess and is working with their technical consultants to develop an action plan for State Web sites and training sessions for State Web site administrators.

## **Marketing & Training on Disability Benefits**

DiscoverAbility NJ has partnered with the World Institute on Disability (WID) to improve the capacity to figure benefits and support for better employment outcomes by upgrading the current New Jersey Benefits Calculator (DB 101) and translating it into Spanish.

DiscoverAbility NJ has partnered with the Family Resource Network to provide a NJ DB101 training program to 17 ARC Directors, 26 One Stop Directors, 9 Center for Independent Living Directors and 19 Vocational Rehabilitation offices. [www.njdb101.org](http://www.njdb101.org) is a powerful internet based tool that can help job seekers with disabilities carefully plan for the transition to work through enhanced knowledge about health care coverage and other public benefits.

DiscoverAbility NJ supports this effort and is working to increase knowledge and use of the customized disability benefits website.

## **Travel Training & Information Series**

DiscoverAbility NJ partnered with the Alan M. Voorhees Transportation Center at Rutgers University to pilot a travel/ training and information series is designed to inform job coaches/employment counselors of a variety of transportation options and how to access them.

Progress to date includes the initiation of a review of federal, state, foundation/non-profit funding programs to determine additional opportunities for para-transit funding, planning for key informant listening sessions, and a data sharing agreement from NJ Transit.

## **GOAL 6**

**(Page 47)**

**Increase the state's leadership, management, and coordination efforts in the employment of people with disabilities**

## **The State Employment and Training Commission (SETC)**

The SETC conducts regional meetings with public workforce officials around the goals of DiscoverAbility NJ. The SETC facilitates knowledge exchange from partnerships between regional colleagues.

# DiscoverAbility NJ

WORK. EARN. THRIVE.

---

## **Disability Issues Committee**

The Disabilities Issues Committee provides a disability perspective to State workforce policy. The meetings are open to the public and are held monthly.

## **Capacity Building in New Jersey's Workforce Investment Boards (WIBS) and One Stop Career Centers**

DiscoverAbility NJ is working with the State Employment and Training Commission, to enhance the capacity of local WIBS and One Stop Career Centers to provide better access and services to individuals with disabilities seeking employment and re-employment services.

WIBS and One Stop Career Centers can apply for special targeted technical assistance through a dedicated portal available on the DiscoverAbility NJ Webiste; <http://www.discoverabilitynj.org/wibone-stop-technical-assistance.html>  
Two WIBS have accessed this service this year.

## **DiscoverAbility NJ Leadership Academy**

DiscoverAbility NJ has partnered with Rutgers University's Center for Nonprofit Management and Governance at the School of Social Work to provide an intensive Leadership Academy for rising professionals in the field of disability employment.

New Jersey is currently developing a framework as well as identifying curriculum for the Leadership Academy to be implemented in 2011.

## **GOAL 7 (Page 48) Strengthen disability and employment research, evaluation, performance measurement, data collection and data analysis**

### **Study of Employment Service Providers**

DiscoverAbility NJ is partnering with TransCen, Inc. to explore employment service provider characteristics, attitudes and beliefs toward employers and the employment process in order to determine how these beliefs and values contribute to successful employment outcomes for individuals with disabilities.

TransCen, Inc has identified focus group participants, developed focus groups protocols and planned four focus group meetings.

### **Postsecondary Improved Access and Career Awareness Model Pilot**

DiscoverAbility NJ has engaged the Rutgers University offices of Disability Services and Career Services to form closer working relationships to lead to better employment options for students with disabilities. An internship program with the New Jersey Department of Human Services is currently being planned.