



Employment Resource Guide for Students with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD)

Notes
From

The Autism & Employment Conference,
February 2011
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INTRODUCTION

Einstein, Van Gogh, Mozart and Bill Gates are all extremely successful people suspected of having Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) or Asperger's Syndrome. They are all "creative, focused, and singular in their pursuit of excellence" and they all "dominate the landscape of innovation and productivity." These people weren't necessarily easy to work with, but the pay-off, obviously, was worth it.

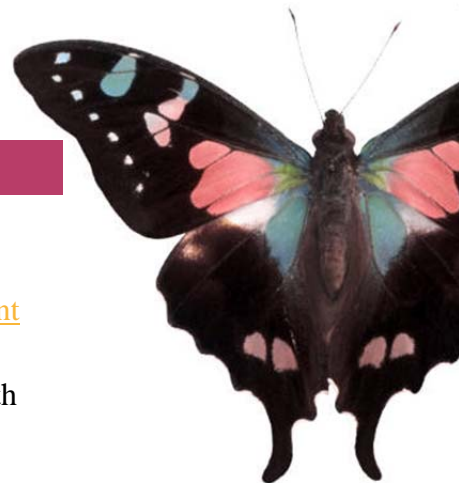
Statistics:

- ASD is growing at a rate of 17% annually in Minnesota
- Only 3% of adults diagnosed with autism work full-time
- According to new statistics from the CDC, 1 in 91 is the national autism rate

The Problem:

- Soon those diagnosed with autism, looking for meaningful employment, will swell and overwhelm our governmental services
- People with autism can't "get in the door"
- It is hard to deal with the social issues of the workplace
- Their gifts (singular focus, loyalty, efficiency, productivity) often remain out of reach for businesses

ORGANIZATIONS OFFERING SERVICES & PROGRAMS



Autism Society of Minnesota: www.ausm.org

Minnesota Department of Human Services: [Pathways to Employment Program](#)

Goal- to increase competitive employment opportunities for people with disabilities and meet state workforce needs

Autism Works: www.autism-works.com

Brings career services to adults and transition aged youth with Asperger Syndrome and high-functioning Autism, moving them toward competitive employment and independence

CCP: www.theccpin.com

Creates customized Home Based Supports and Employment Services to help people with ASD live fulfilling lives in their communities

Courage Center Capable Teens: www.couragecenter.org

Fraser: www.fraser.org

Minnesota-based nonprofit that serves children and adults with special needs through education, health care and housing

LifeWorks: www.liveworks.org

GTS Educational Events, Partners in Policymaking Program:

www.mngts.org

Eight-month internship training program designed for adults with disabilities that teaches leadership skills and the process of developing positive partnerships with elected officials and families

Merrick, Inc.: www.merrickinc.org

Day training and habilitation program that offers a variety of cost effective workforce solutions that engage clients with local businesses. Offers life enrichment and therapeutic programs for clients that have retired or cannot work because of health concerns.

Minnesota Disability Law Center: www.mndlc.org

Provides free civil legal services to people with all types of disabilities on issues related to their disability. Assists individuals in gaining access to employment with an emphasis on working effectively with the state's vocational rehabilitation system

Minnesota Life College: www.minnesotalifecollege.org

Post-secondary vocational readiness and life skills program for young adults with learning differences and other neurological disorders

Minnesota State Council on Disability: www.disability.state.mn.us

Agency that advises, provides technical assistance, collaborates and advocates to expand opportunities, improve the quality of life and empower all persons with disabilities

Phoenix Alternatives, Inc.: www.phoenixalternatives.org

Provides specialized instructional, vocational, behavioral, and support services year-round to adults with an ASD or Developmental Disability diagnosis.

Positively Minnesota: www.positivelyminnesota.com/vrs

Vocational rehabilitation services is Minnesota's primary facilitator of a broad coalition that promotes choice, equal opportunity, employment, self-sufficiency and full community integration for Minnesotans with disabilities

TSE, Inc.: www.tse-inc.org

Provides training, support and employment opportunities for people with developmental disabilities or related conditions

The University of Iowa College of Education, REACH Program:

www.education.uiowa.edu/reach

Freda Marver, Begin Again Coaching: www.beginagaincoaching.com

Career coach working with people with disabilities



SPONSORS OF THE AUTISM & EMPLOYMENT CONFERENCE

These organizations have already begun creating an inclusive and supportive environment for people with disabilities, consider learning more about them and the employment opportunities they provide.

BEST BUY: WWW.BESTBUY.COM

Best Buy is seeking ways to hire and retain individuals with ASD as well as creating methods to alleviate the fear hiring managers might have when considering an applicant with ASD

FACE (Facing Autism in a Caring Environment)

A group formed at Best Buy in response to rising numbers of those touched by ASD which focuses on working through issues related to ASD such as the need to network as parents, family members, friends and coworkers and supporting sustainable employment of people with ASD. They are working on developing various tools to be used by Best Buy hiring managers to tap this valuable resource of individuals.

3M: WWW.3M.COM

Committed to hiring and retaining a diverse workforce

Disability Advisory Committee (DAC)

Employee resource group that serves 3M employees and their families with issues related to people with disabilities. The DAC Educational Series provides education regarding various disabilities, including ASD, ADHD, and Multiple Sclerosis. This group meets monthly to discuss topics of interest around accommodations, outreach opportunities and resources.

CARGILL: WWW.CARGILL.COM

An organization building awareness and understanding of autism. Cargill wants to use the full range of talents and perspective of their diverse employees to ensure that they have the breadth of viewpoints, experiences, and intellectual skills needed to succeed in a global environment.