

National Campaign Challenges Public to Improve Disability Employment Landscape

Source: *Campaign for Disability Employment*

What can YOU do to help change attitudes and improve employment opportunities and outcomes for people with disabilities? Quite a bit, say the organizers of the Campaign for Disability Employment (CDE), and it all begins with promoting positive messages to employers and others about the skills and talents that people with disabilities bring to America's workplaces and economy.

Funded and led by the U.S. Department of Labor's Office of Disability Employment Policy (ODEP), the CDE has been trumpeting such messages to the masses since 2009. It is the force behind the award-winning *What Can YOU Do? Campaign*, and three powerful public service announcements (PSAs) that have aired hundreds of thousands of times on television stations nationwide.

If you watch TV, there's a good chance that you've spotted one of the CDE PSAs. Its flagship production, "I Can" features seven people with disabilities stating what they *can* do at work when given the opportunity. "Because" targets those who influence the career aspirations of youth with disabilities, demonstrating that all of us have a crucial role to play in helping young people set goals and dream big. And "Who I Am," the campaign's most recent PSA, showcases nine people who are not defined by their disabilities, reinforcing that for many, if not most people, work is fundamental to identity.

Of course, there's much more to the CDE than its PSAs. Its website, WhatCanYouDoCampaign.org—available in both English and Spanish—features a range of tools and tangible ideas for supporting the campaign's goals, such as CDE support badges that users can display on their own websites, posters, and ready-to-publish news briefs and ads they can run in their own publications. The CDE also engages its followers through regular Twitter chats, photo-sharing campaigns and a robust social media presence on Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn and Instagram.

While ODEP leads the CDE, the campaign is a highly collaborative effort among leading business and disability organizations who urge employers to capitalize on the talents of people

with disabilities through inclusive employment practices that benefit everyone. CDE members include the American Association of People with Disabilities (AAPD), Disability:IN, the Employer Assistance and Resource Network on Disability Inclusion (EARN), the Job Accommodation Network (JAN), the National Business and Disability Council (NBDC), the National Gay and Lesbian Chamber of Commerce (NGLCC), the National Organization on Disability (NOD), the Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM), and Special Olympics (SO). These groups meet regularly to shape and steer the campaign and are currently in the process of strategizing the CDE's next media products.

Learn more by visiting WhatCanYouDoCampaign.org.