



MaxAbility Employment Taskforce: *Highlights from the 2018* *Southern Minnesota Disability Employment Network (SMDEN)*

SMDEN kicked off the 2018 network meetings with **Culture First: Building an Inclusive Workplace Workshop** on February 14th. We had 52 learners with a passion for advancing diversity and equity in our community. Our presenter, Anne Phibb, PhD, was engaging and expanded our minds surrounding implicit bias. She opened our eyes to things we all bring with us to work each day.

The first annual **Reverse Job Fair** was held on April 25. In a typical job fair, candidates rotate to employers to learn more about the employer and what positions they have available. In a Reverse Job Fair, the candidate sets up a booth and the employers rotate around the room to come talk to YOU. We had 20 candidates in the driver seat showcasing their abilities with 38 employers seeking top talent to join their workforce. Post event, several candidates were invited to interview and to date 4 have been offered positions as a result of the connections they made at this hiring event.



The **Workplace Mental Health: Creating a Culture that Promotes Healthy Dialogue** panel discussion in June was informative, enlightening and impactful! The attendees walked out of the room with a stronger comfort level than they entered the room. Panel members shared so many great takeaways that participants could put into action in everyday interactions. We had 58 people register for the network meeting with 61 actual attendees.

Celebrating 2nd Annual International Day of Persons with Disabilities

Celebrate diversity in our community by joining us for activities between 12:00 pm-6:00 pm at the Rochester Civic Theatre on Monday, December 3, 2018. The Rochester event is inspired by the UN Enable Day celebration held around the world. Allowing flexible attendance, the event schedule is designed to allow you to spend a lunch break or a half day celebrating our disability community. Participate by connecting with a Human Library living book for a conversation. The Diverse Ability Lab will offer hands on disability experience to take a walk in someone else's shoes. Short films and artwork will be on display throughout the event. The keynote speaker will share his personal story of humor and resilience of living with a prosthetic leg. Networking, 'experience' a disability firsthand, and local musicians will follow the speaker.