

To our fellow CEOs, in celebration of National Disability Employment Awareness Month:

Throughout the past 10 years, working-age people with disabilities have participated in the workforce at an average rate of 18.1%, as compared to an average rate of 64.6% for those without disabilities.<sup>1&2</sup> The disparity is especially remarkable during the COVID-19 pandemic, as people with disabilities have lost their jobs at a 42% higher rate than the general public.<sup>3</sup>

The CEO Commission for Disability Employment was originally founded in 2018 by Voya Financial, the Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM) and the National Down Syndrome Society (NDSS) to address this disparity by providing research and information, actionable steps and advocacy opportunities for member companies as they recruit and onboard individuals with disabilities.

We are calling on our fellow CEOs to join us in recognizing and promoting the significant value that people with disabilities bring to employers, including:

- 28% higher revenues,
- 2x the net income, and
- 30% higher economic profit margins<sup>4</sup>

Companies that promote disability inclusion also see higher retention from their employees, as well as greater innovation.<sup>5</sup>

It is our responsibility to ensure that we implement the most effective and meaningful talent acquisition process for our organizations, the economy and society.

We have made some progress through landmark legislation, such as the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and the Rehabilitation Act (Rehab Act). However, there is more work to be done. CEOs and business leaders play an essential role in driving change.

Simply acknowledging the problem is not enough to change the employment landscape for people with disabilities. CEO leadership is needed — our collective commitment and leadership is essential to truly change policy and hiring practices.

As CEOs, we play a pivotal role in breaking down barriers to employment for people with disabilities. This October — during National Disability Employment Awareness Month — join us and the CEO Commission for Disability Employment and [become part of this paramount change](#).

Sincerely,



Kandi Pickard  
NDSS President & CEO



Johnny C. Taylor Jr.  
SHRM President and CEO



Rodney O. Martin, Jr.  
Voya Chairman and CEO



1. "Labor Force Participation Rate - With a Disability, 16 Years and Over." FRED Economic Research. Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis, October 2, 2020. <https://fred.stlouisfed.org/series/LNU01374597>.  
2. "Employment-Population Ratio - With No Disability, 16 Years and Over." FRED Economic Research. Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis, October 2, 2020. <https://fred.stlouisfed.org/series/LNU02374593>.  
3. Allen Smith, J.D. "A Million People with Disabilities Have Lost Jobs During the Pandemic." Society for Human Resource Management, August 28, 2020. <https://www.shrm.org/resourcesandtools/legal-and-compliance/employment-law/pages/coronavirus-unemployment-people-with-disabilities.aspx>.  
4. "Getting to Equal: The Disability Inclusion Advantage." Accenture, 2018. [https://www.accenture.com/t20181029T185446Z\\_w\\_us-en/acnmedia/PDF-89/Accenture-Disability-Inclusion-Research-Report.pdf](https://www.accenture.com/t20181029T185446Z_w_us-en/acnmedia/PDF-89/Accenture-Disability-Inclusion-Research-Report.pdf).  
5. "Investing in People: Job Accommodation Situations and Solutions." Office of Disability Employment Policy. U.S. Department of Labor, n.d. <https://www.dol.gov/odep/pubs/misc/invest.htm>.