

AN OVERVIEW OF U.S.
CORPORATE PRACTICES IN
THE EMPLOYMENT OF PEOPLE
WITH DISABILITIES:

SPOTLIGHT
ON THE RETAIL
TRADE SECTOR

Prepared by the
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Workforce Development

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METHODOLOGY

In preparing for this study, the Heldrich Center conducted national research on trends and promising practices in hiring and retaining people with disabilities in the workplace, with a specific emphasis on practices in the U.S. retail sector. The central goals of the research were to identify the different types of approaches currently being used by employers, or identified by national experts as best practices, and then identify retail firms that are currently undertaking initiatives and strategies that further promote employment for persons with disabilities.

The methodology for the study included:

- A review of national case study literature that examined leading-edge employer actions, practices, strategies, and thinking in increasing the hiring and retention of people with disabilities within companies.
- A review of national awards given to U.S. employers recognizing exceptional leadership and practices in the hiring and retaining of people with disabilities in the workforce. These included the U.S. Department of Labor's New Freedom Initiative Award Winners 2002-2006, the U.S. Business Leadership Network Exceptional Leadership Award Winners, and Diversity Inc.'s Top 10 Companies for People with Disabilities.
- A review of corporate websites and corporate diversity literature in the 12 Fortune 100 retail industry firms (Best Buy, CVS Caremark, Costco, Federated Department Stores, The Home Depot, Kroger, Lowe's, Safeway, Sears Holding, Target, Walgreens, and WalMart).
- A review of the scholarly literature, newspaper and magazine articles, and published interviews with experts at national associations, academic institutions, federal agencies, and national nonprofits who are knowledgeable about disability and employment programs, policies, and initiatives.

Additionally, interviews were conducted between August and December 2007 and included: Carver Johnson, Group Vice President and Chief Diversity Officer, Kroger; Jodi Julseth, Best Buy; Constance Solomon, Executive Director, Ken's Kids, Inc.; Stephen Wing, Director, Government Programs, CVS Caremark; and Barbara Wray, Program Director, Ken's Kids, Inc.

INTRODUCTION

Since passage of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) in 1991, public policymakers, nongovernment organizations, disability advocates, and the business community have worked to give people with disabilities an expanded role in American public and community life. These efforts include increased participation of people with disabilities in the labor market, and especially competitive employment in the private sector.

To achieve this goal, myriad federal laws, programs, policies, and regulations¹ have been put in place to:

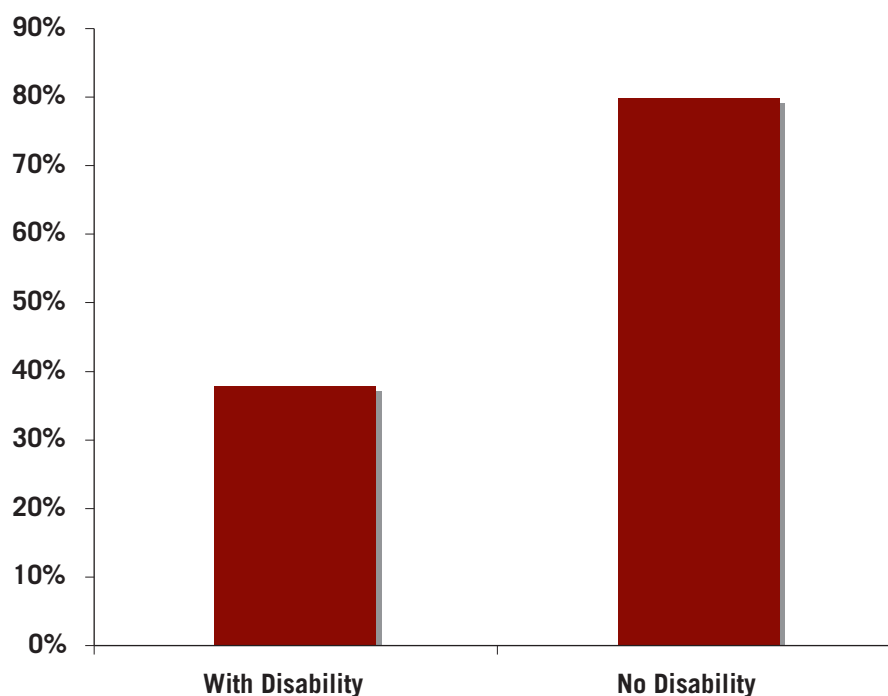
- Remove barriers to employment for people with disabilities,
- Provide greater access to education and vocational training opportunities in preparation for work, and

- Provide needed supports and services (such as health care, transportation, and personal care assistance) to help an individual with a disability get and keep a job.

In addition, considerable research has been disseminated describing solutions to obstacles to employment and economic independence faced by people with disabilities. Information has also been circulated on evidence-based state and local practices that succeed in helping people with disabilities become employed.

Yet, despite these national efforts, the rates of employment for people with disabilities² have not improved and remain unacceptably low. According to the U.S. Census Bureau's 2006 American Community Survey, only 37.7% of Americans with disabilities aged 21 to 64 were employed in 2005, compared to 79.7% of Americans without disabilities.³ (See Figure 1.)

Figure 1. Employment Rate of Working-Age People in the United States



Source: Cornell RRTC, 2006 Disability Status Report for the U.S.

To date, significant policy and research efforts have focused on the **supply** side of the labor market, where the goal has been to better inform and prepare people with disabilities for work. Recently, however, there has been considerable interest in the **demand** side; that is, understanding the needs, issues, and cultures of businesses employing individuals with and without disabilities.⁴ These efforts have included a growing body of “best or promising practices” research that identifies strategies used by American companies that describe how U.S. businesses are hiring and retaining people with disabilities — through case studies, analysis of corporate policies, and publications.⁵ Dissemination of these corporate experiences seeks to encourage improved employment prospects for people with disabilities among companies that wish to hire and/or further diversify their labor pool.⁶

At the same time that disability researchers are beginning to better understand the needs of employers as it pertains to people with disabilities, momentum has been building in state capitols across the nation on how to bridge the gap between the state economic development activities and employer needs for qualified workers. More than ever, governors are focusing greater attention on strengthening their state economies through the strategic cultivation of a qualified, well-trained workforce.

In this regard, several states have made a strategic decision to target various segments of the labor market (such as youth, welfare recipients, or dislocated workers), assess their employability skills, and train for employment in growth industries. This approach to economic development looks to build industry-specific partnerships between employers, training providers, community organizations, and other stakeholders. Overall, these strategies are designed to determine the workforce needs of employers in that industry and match them with the training, employment, and career advancement interests of workers.⁷ With 22 million people with disabilities of working age in the United States, states are beginning to explore how current workforce and economic development strategies can increase the labor market participation of working-age people with disabilities.

The purpose of this report is threefold. First, it provides an overview of the various practices and strategies taking place in U.S. corporations that, according to national experts, are considered promising practices in the recruitment, hiring, and retention of people with disabilities. It then explores the trends and workforce needs of the nation’s largest private-sector industry — the retail sector — and, finally, it examines how retail employers are meeting their workforce needs by hiring people with disabilities.

PRACTICES IN U.S. COMPANIES THAT RECRUIT, RETAIN, AND DEVELOP PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

Major American companies in all sectors of the economy are paying greater attention to the goal of promoting diversity and inclusion. Today, a growing number of employers are grappling with the challenges and opportunities of managing a more diverse and inclusive workforce — actively recognizing that a diverse workforce enhances their competitiveness in the global marketplace.⁸ Companies of all sizes face an increasingly multi-cultural, multi-lingual and multi-generational customer base and workforce. Naturally, business leaders are looking at how diversity can contribute to better market advantages, greater shareholder value, strengthened talent recruitment, improved worker productivity, strong commitments to the communities in which they are located, and improved worker and customer loyalty.

Motivating factors on the part of corporations to embrace a diversity and inclusion agenda include the desire to:

- Attract and retain a workforce that better demographically reflects its current and/or future desired marketplace;
- Develop and retain a workforce that can better relate to and serve its consumers, either through its product development, product mix, or service delivery;
- Attract the buying power of different, perhaps growing, local and/or national demographic groups;
- Enhance competitiveness by exposing workers to a wide diversity of people and cultures in response to increased corporate globalization;
- Develop more effective human resource management strategies, programs, and efforts as a way to improve productivity and reduce turnover and absenteeism; and

- Enhance community relations and build better public perceptions about the company.

Some corporations also seek to position diversity and inclusion principles as part of, and central to, their corporate social responsibility programs and practices.⁹ Others are motivated by a desire to avoid discrimination lawsuits and the negative publicity associated with them.¹⁰

For most American companies, a focus on diversity has historically meant the inclusion of people in terms of race and gender, as well as age, ethnicity, religion, national origin, and sexual orientation. For many employers, however, the inclusion of people with disabilities in company diversity policies, practices, and strategies is relatively new.

This delay in recognizing people with disabilities as potential workers may be due to several factors:

First, it has been less than 20 years — since the passage of the Americans with Disabilities Act — that there has been a formal expectation that people with disabilities should, can, and want to work in competitive employment. Society — both in the United States and internationally — has often imposed physical, financial, and administrative barriers that have hindered people with disabilities from achieving greater social, economic, and civic participation. However, people with disabilities, their advocates, and family members have slowly but surely had a significant impact on national policy and attitudes.¹¹

Second, scholarly research, focus groups, and surveys of employers have shown that many employers and workers have negative or pessimistic attitudes about the competence of disabled workers to be economically independent and productive workers, articulated

Corporate Practices Fall into Five Areas

1. Corporate Interest and Organizational Readiness
2. Targeted Recruitment and Hiring
3. Workforce Awareness and Workplace Accommodation
4. Inclusive Marketplace Practices
5. Measuring Progress

as “fears,” “concerns,” and “discomfort.” Family members, health professionals, teachers, and vocational trainers often share similar attitudes that people with disabilities cannot work. While these concerns may not be well founded, they have been documented as significant barriers to the full economic participation of people with disabilities in the labor market across a broad spectrum of

disabilities, including cognitive, physical, and mental disabilities.¹²

Finally, for many employers, addressing disability as an element of diversity policies and practices is not something that is typically emphasized¹³ or it is seen as very complex. That is, it does not lend itself easily to across-the-board solutions, practices, and strategies. Because of the wide array of different abilities among people with disabilities, developing hiring and accommodation solutions and strategies often becomes a very individualized activity and is at times seen as labor intensive. In addition, because of the legal protections in place against requiring people with disabilities to disclose their disabilities, developing strategies is difficult if employers cannot effectively identify recruits or numerically track employees.

There are, however, a growing number of practices being undertaken by employers and documented by researchers across the nation that offer insight to companies interested in increasing job opportunities for people with disabilities. These practices, many of which have been used to recruit and retain women and minorities in the workplace, are categorized into five areas:¹⁴

- Corporate interest and organizational readiness,
- Targeted recruitment and hiring,

- Workforce awareness and workplace accommodation,
- Inclusive marketplace practices, and
- Measuring progress.

Corporate Interest and Organizational Readiness

Fundamental to any effort to increase workforce diversity, including workers with disabilities, is an organizational environment that is not only ready and interested in recruiting and hiring more diverse employees, but that also implements the policies and practices that will drive change. In the area of increasing the employment of people with disabilities, research has shown that these practices can take the form of:

- Developing disability networks, diversity councils, or affinity groups that include people with disabilities;
- Featuring people with disabilities in company-wide (internal and external) publications and strategies, including photographs of people with disabilities on corporate websites;
- Participating on national, state, or local disability and employment councils such as business leadership networks, program-specific business advisory councils, or government disability and employment systems change efforts;
- Funding national and/or local disability and work/education programs, conferences, research, services, and/or organizations;
- Seeking public awards and/or recognition for company disability and employment efforts;
- Incorporating vendors and suppliers in corporate diversity efforts, including people with disabilities;

- Utilizing vendors and suppliers that are disability-owned businesses;
- Emphasizing people with disabilities in corporate diversity policy statements, initiatives, and strategies;
- Mobilizing senior corporate officers, including the CEO, to support disability hiring policies; and
- Committing publicly to hire people with disabilities.

Some examples of companies that are undertaking several of these practices include:

- **Eastman Kodak, Merrill Lynch, Procter and Gamble,** and **SC Johnson & Son** have employee affinity/resource groups for people with disabilities. The presence of these employee groups was noted by Diversity Inc. in 2007 as a “best practice” common among all companies in its Top 10 Companies for People with Disabilities List.
- **SunTrust Bank, Wells Fargo,** and **Wachovia** demonstrate their interest and efforts by participating on national and/or local groups that support people with disabilities such as the U.S. Business Leadership Network (USBLN) or local Business Leadership Networks.
- Companies also demonstrate leadership and gain recognition through awards, such as the U.S. Department of Labor’s New Freedom Initiative Awards (e.g., **Booz Allen Hamilton, Giant Eagle, Inc., IBM, Manpower, Inc.,** and **Cingular Wireless** in 2003; **A&F Wood Products, Hewlett-Packard Company, MBNA America Bank, Microsoft Corporation,** and **SunTrust Banks** in 2004; **Computer Science Corporation, Merck,** and **TecAccess** in 2005; and **Aetna, CVS Caremark, Highmark, Inc.,** and **Raytheon Missile Systems** in 2006);

the USBLN Exceptional Leadership Awards (e.g., **Citibank of South Dakota** in 2003); or Diversity Inc.’s list of Top 10 Companies for People with Disabilities (e.g., for 2007, **Eastman Kodak Co., Merrill Lynch, PricewaterhouseCoopers, Marriott International, Procter and Gamble, SC Johnson & Son, Wachovia, JPMorganChase, Ernst & Young,** and **Deloitte & Touche USA**).

- Companies also support national, state, and local disability-related programs and agencies, as well as market affiliations with nationally recognized organizations such as:
 - The National Business and Disability Council (**Booz Allen Hamilton, KMPG, Aetna,** and others found at www.business-disability.com);
 - The National Organization on Disability (**Sedexho USA, Marriott International, UPS, WalMart, BusinessWeek,** and others found at www.nod.org); and
 - Easter Seals (**Safeway, Johnson & Johnson, Bank of America, Pfizer, Microsoft,** and others found at www.easterseals.com).

Practice Area #1 Corporate Interest and Organizational Readiness

Creating an environment that is not only ready to recruit and hire more diverse employees, but also puts in place policies and practices that drive change

Targeted Recruitment and Hiring

Corporations and businesses have, for many years, used targeted strategies to recruit and hire a more representative workforce. To create a pipeline of qualified job seekers with disabilities, employers may reach out to individuals with disabilities

directly through website postings, or through trusted partners such as nonprofit agencies and/or schools. In this area, research shows that the targeted recruiting and hiring of people with disabilities can take the form of:

- Partnerships with local high schools/ community colleges to refer, recruit, and/or hire qualified students with disabilities;
- Recruitment at traditional colleges serving students with disabilities;
- Targeted recruitment efforts at colleges with the goal of identifying qualified students with disabilities;
- Partnerships with local community-based organizations or state vocational rehabilitation agencies to train, refer, and/or place qualified candidates with disabilities, including but not limited to the development of sector-specific/job-specific training and placement, customized job and work negotiation to the individual job seeker's abilities, and/or pre-employment work skills training;
- Development of a targeted recruitment pipeline of potential employees with disabilities using various programs and methods such as unpaid/paid internships, co-op arrangements (with high schools and postsecondary schools), job shadowing, career days, scholarships, and corporate visits;
- Placing job advertisements in publications or on websites whose audiences are people with disabilities;
- Posting job openings on websites for job seekers with disabilities;
- Disability recruitment and awareness training of recruiting staff, human resource personnel, and/or other employees with recruitment and hiring responsibility;

- Availability of online resources for recruiting/ hiring staff on such topics as appropriate interview questions and disability etiquette; and
- Creation of specific programs that create a continuum of activities from the preparation of potential job seekers, to their support on the job, to their dedicated career development and advancement.

Examples of these practices in corporate America include:

- **Pitney Bowes** works closely with its local business leadership network and state vocational rehabilitation agency to seek qualified candidates as well as to lend assistance to the preparation of these individuals in the workforce. It also provides internships to students with disabilities from Goodwill's High School/High Tech program and mentors students with disabilities.
- **Cincinnati Children's Hospital Medical Center** and **MBNA** partner with local public and private organizations to recruit employees with developmental disabilities and provide job coaching and ongoing support.
- **Microsoft's** recruitment efforts include interactions with disability advocacy groups, participation in job fairs that target people with disabilities (such as the Hire Disability Job Fair), and recruitment at colleges such as Gallaudet University and the National Technical Institute for the Deaf. The company also places job advertisements in publications targeted to people with disabilities such as *Ability Magazine* and *Careers for the Disabled*.

Practice Area #2 Targeted Recruitment and Hiring

Creating a pipeline of qualified job seekers with disabilities using targeted strategies to recruit and hire

- **Medtronic, Physio Control** has worked in partnership with Trillium Employment Services and the University of Oregon to recruit individuals with disabilities and support their longer-term employment through supported employment efforts.
- **IBM** sponsors the “Entry Point” program that places students with disabilities into company internships with the ultimate goal of permanent, full-time employment.
- **Booz Allen Hamilton, A&E Television, Aetna, Bloomberg, Panasonic, and Sony** are among employers that are national sponsors of the Emerging Leaders program. **Booz Allen Hamilton** founded Emerging Leaders in 2001. The program, which is currently managed by the National Business and Disability Council, places college students with disabilities in summer internships and provides them with leadership training.¹⁵
- **The Marriott Corporation** established a separate nonprofit organization to assist students with disabilities enter work through its Bridges and Bridges Plus programs. These programs seek to prepare youth with disabilities for the workplace by providing assistance with job search and placement, educate employers about the benefits of hiring youth with disabilities, and provide support to employers with recruitment, hiring, and retention. The Bridges Plus program focuses on career development.

Workforce Awareness and Workplace Accommodation

More than ever, American employers are actively promoting the diversity of their workforce as an important corporate value. Faced with a more competitive global marketplace, changing population demographics, and changing societal views on the value of “difference,” U.S. companies

are embracing diversity strategies to increase awareness of people’s differences. Employers also seek to provide better accommodation of these differences, whether they be race, gender, age, religious beliefs, or physical/mental ability.

For people with disabilities, “accommodation” may not only include reasonable physical, environmental, or technical changes that allow someone to apply for, get access to, or perform a job. It may also include a need to change some workplace practices, personnel policies, or the culture of the workplace to make individuals with disabilities able to effectively perform their jobs. Workforce awareness and workplace accommodations practices can take the form of:

- Educating company leaders, managers, and supervisors about company diversity policies and people with disabilities through mandatory training, workshops, orientations, and/or exercises (at the corporate, regional, or local site level);
- ADA/accommodations-specific training of managers and supervisors;
- Dedicated employee training on disability awareness and disability etiquette;
- Involvement in disability-specific projects such as Disability Mentoring Day;
- Installing assistive technology or changing business processes to accommodate workers with disabilities;
- Centralizing a corporate funding pool for financing accommodations across the business;

Practice Area #3 Workforce Awareness and Workplace Accommodation

Promoting workforce diversity as an important corporate value and providing better accommodation in the workplace to allow people with disabilities to apply for, get access to, or perform a job

- Centralizing a corporate disability resource center for managers and employees to access information on accommodations and assistive technology;
- Collaborating with area transportation agencies to help employees with disabilities get to work;
- Implementing more flexible work schedules for workers with disabilities based on individual and workplace needs, especially in sync with public transportation schedules;
- Regular or periodic corporate review of local/site-specific accommodation progress; and
- Partnerships with local community-based organizations to support workers with disabilities while on the job (e.g., job coaches or other support activities available from an agency).

Examples in corporations where these strategies are being implemented include:

- **Darden Restaurants, disaboom.com, Hewlett Packard, Verizon, AIG, American Airlines, SunTrust, Microsoft, Amerigroup Community Care, Wells Fargo, Pitney Bowes, and JC Penney** are among employers that sponsor Disability Mentoring Day, which promotes career development for students and job seekers with disabilities through job shadowing and hands-on career exploration.¹⁶
- **Microsoft** and **SunTrust Bank** provide disability etiquette training for staff, such as managers and supervisors, new employees, and/or recruitment staff. Training usually involves an orientation to the basic rules of etiquette that lay a foundation for respectful relationships and interactions with workers and customers with disabilities.

- **IBM, Microsoft, Bank of America, and SunTrust** have centralized funding for accommodation, finding that maintaining a central budget for this purpose eases the financial burden of local hiring managers to come up with the resources for accommodation within their smaller unit budgets.
- **Hewlett Packard, IBM, Microsoft, and Bank of America** have adopted procedures that assist employers and workers through the accommodation process. These include development of a website about the accommodation process (**Hewlett Packard**), use of an Accommodation Assessment Team to identify and develop necessary accommodation (**IBM**), the establishment of a reasonable accommodation service and accommodations case managers (**Bank of America**), and establishment of an Accommodations Committee that coordinates accommodations throughout the company (**Microsoft**).
- **SunTrust** has established dedicated internal disabilities programs to support workplace accommodation and awareness, including development of a central accommodation budget, sponsorship of an assistive technology fair, mentoring programs, a training program for youth called Project Search, and a dedicated disability resource center that provides job accommodation and related services to employees and job applicants.¹⁷

Inclusive Marketplace Practices

For a growing number of companies, hiring and serving people with disabilities is motivated by the desire to create more business opportunities. According to the U.S. Census Bureau and the U.S. Department of Justice, 51.2 million people have disabilities, and 20.9 million families have at

Practice Area #4 Inclusive Marketplace Practices

Developing strategies that help business better understand the market power of people with disabilities, or finding ways to tap into that power

least one member with a disability in the United States.¹⁸ For employers, this means that one in six people in the United States are potential customers for businesses, and marketing to people with disabilities — as well as their family and friends — presents significant growth opportunities.

Businesses that can make themselves accessible to people with disabilities are looking to tap into the discretionary spending power of people with disabilities and their family members, estimated at anywhere from \$176 to over \$200 billion.¹⁹ For these companies, getting people with disabilities to be loyal customers means developing strategies that helps them better understand the market power of people with disabilities, or find ways to tap into that buying power.

These efforts can take the form of:

- Cultivating and marketing to the disability community (and their families) as consumers of company products, goods, and services;
- Including workers with disabilities in the development of company products, goods, and services to meet the unique needs of customers with disabilities; and
- Developing universal accessibility (equal access) to company products, goods, services, employment opportunities, discounted prices,

and other promotional programs, both through physical accommodation and access as well as through the Internet and Internet access.

Examples in corporate America of these practices include:

- **SunTrust Bank** and **Bank of America** offer accessible services and accounts such as Braille, audio and large print statements, an accessible website, TTY phone numbers, raised line and large print checks, reader services, interpreter services and loans for adaptive equipment, assistive technology, and durable medical equipment.
- **Microsoft** and **Hewett Packard** involve workers with disabilities in the design, engineering, product development, testing, and marketing of product lines as a way to make their products more accessible to users who are deaf or hard-of-hearing, blind or visually impaired, or who otherwise would have difficulty using company products.
- **Honda, McDonalds,** and **Verizon Wireless** feature people with disabilities in mainstream advertising, and new companies such as **disaboom.com** are emerging to help employers advertise directly to the disability population.²⁰

Measuring Progress

While companies continue to put various efforts and strategies in place to hire, retain, and promote people with disabilities, the challenge for many is determining whether these efforts are effective. Companies may not feel their activities are successful because they have not put in place effective ways to collect information, evaluate activities, and measure

Practice Area #5 Measuring Progress

Putting in place effective ways to collect information, evaluate activities, and measure the impact of efforts

the impact of their efforts. This is especially challenging in the disability area, since employees with disabilities are not required to declare they have a disability unless they need an accommodation at work to enable them to carry out their job duties. Collecting data on the number of employees who have a disability requires some creativity, but needs to be done in an environment that protects employee privacy and confidentiality.

The research literature and document reviews have shown that if there are innovative practices, they are generally not well documented. In order to advance effective practices, firms need to collect qualitative as well as quantitative data to evaluate the impact of human resource and/or diversity policies for people with disabilities. In 2005, **Dow Chemical Company** gathered information from former employees who left the company. Dow was better able to assess the impact of its human resource practices on recent employees with disabilities since former employees can be asked legally if they are a person with a disability.

SPOTLIGHT: THE RETAIL TRADE INDUSTRY — OVERVIEW AND OPPORTUNITY

The Industry

The retail trade industry sells goods and services to customers. The industry's function of selling items directly to the public distinguishes itself from wholesale trade businesses, which sell goods that have been purchased from suppliers to industrial or business customers such as retailers, manufacturers, restaurants, or construction companies. Retailers sell durable and nondurable goods. Durable goods include home appliances, cars, furniture, and other items that have a lifespan of three years or more. Nondurable goods include food and beverage items, paper and paper products, and other items that are expected to last less than three years. In general, nondurable goods comprise the larger sales category.²¹ Some businesses that sell goods to customers are not considered as part of the retail industry, such as a produce stand at a farm market. On the other hand, meat and seafood markets or optical goods stores, which sell finished products to customers, are part of the retail industry.²²

Retail trade employers include grocery stores, convenience stores, bodegas, drug stores, furniture outlets, hardware stores, as well as garden and landscape centers. The retail industry also includes large retailers, such as department stores, office supply and computer stores, retailers of building materials and supplies, as well as those known as “big box” or large chain retailers. Retailers are generally classified by establishment size, range of goods, and ownership structure and include:

- Large broad chains with a variety of goods, products, and services (department or general merchandise stores);
- Large specialty chains (stores specializing in appliances or electronics, home improvements, or office supplies);

- Small specialty chains (stores selling specialty food products or designer clothing); and
- Small independent specialty stores.²³

Retailers generally have physical store-based environments in which to display and sell goods — these facilities are predominantly designed for walk-in traffic. However, not all retail takes place in a physical store-based environment. The retail industry also includes those that sell goods via the Internet, television, vending machines, door-to-door sales, in-home demonstrations, mail order catalogs, or other mechanisms.²⁴

Fundamentally, the retail trade sector plays a vital role in the nation's economy. In the United States, the retail industry employs workers in over one million retail establishments. Retail including food service generates more than \$4 trillion in annual sales, and comprised nearly 30% of the nation's \$14 trillion Gross Domestic Product in 2007.²⁵

Employment Opportunities

The United States' retail trade industry²⁶ offers substantial job opportunities. Second only to state and local government in service-producing employment, the retail trade industry is the nation's largest **private-sector employer**. Nationally, the retail industry is expected to grow through 2014, but at a slower rate than the average for all industries (11% versus 13%), yet retailers are projected to add nearly 1.6 million new jobs between 2004 and 2014 (Table 1). According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, increases in population, personal income, and leisure time contribute to employment growth in the industry as consumers demand more goods. Wholesale trade, on the other hand, is expected to increase by 8.4%.²⁷

The retail industry is labor intensive and offers significantly more employment opportunities than

Table 1. Employment in the United States by Major Service-Providing Industry Sectors, 1994, 2004, and Projected 2014 (numbers in thousands)

	Employment			Percent Change	
	1994	2004	2014	1994 to 2004	2004 to 2014
Total Employment	129,245.90	145,612.30	164,539.90	12.70%	13.00%
Service-Producing Employment					
State and Local Government	16,257.10	18,890.90	21,019.10	16.20%	11.30%
Retail Trade	13,491.10	15,034.50	16,683.20	11.40%	11.00%
Professional and Business Services	12,173.90	16,413.70	20,979.90	34.80%	27.80%
Leisure and Hospitality	10,099.80	12,479.10	14,693.80	23.60%	17.70%
Health Care and Social Assistance	10,911.90	14,187.20	18,482.10	30.00%	30.30%
Wholesale Trade	5,247.50	5,654.90	6,130.80	7.80%	8.40%
Educational Services	1,894.80	2,766.40	3,664.50	46.00%	32.50%

Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, November 7, 2007.

the wholesale trade industry whose share of the Gross Domestic Product is slightly higher than the retail industry.²⁸ Fundamentally, there are 2.3 retail jobs for every one job in wholesaling (see Figure 2).

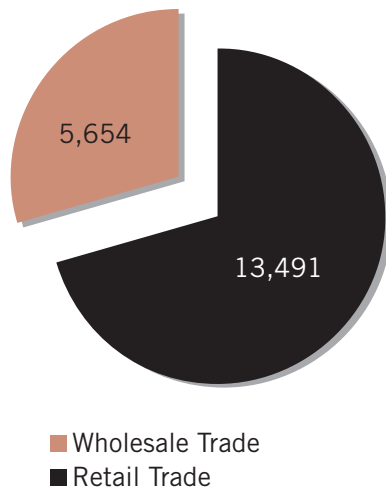
One reason for the high level of employment opportunities is the many jobs that are available within the retail industry, making it one of the most diverse segments of the economy. Job tasks within the industry include a diverse range of activities such as:

- Ordering merchandise
- Assisting customers
- Cleaning stores
- Taking and tracking inventory
- Developing advertising and marketing materials
- Guarding shops and warehouses
- Filling prescriptions
- Training and managing employees
- Selling and preparing food

- Repairing equipment
- Running computer networks
- Taking customer calls
- Loading and driving delivery trucks

Expansion of the nation's retail sector is expected to continue, creating demand for many occupations. In the sector, sales and related occupations are expected to add 1.5 million new jobs by 2014, growing by 9.6%. The majority of these jobs, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, will be among retail salespersons and cashiers, occupations that will add 849,000 jobs combined.²⁹ Yet, while much of retail employment occurs locally within stores, there are other retail functions that operate outside of a store such as telemarketing, warehousing and distribution, and administrative/corporate support functions and professional service activities such as finance, marketing, human resources, information technology, corporate philanthropy, and operations

Figure 2. Employment in Retail Versus Whole Trade in the United States, 2004



Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.

management, which are generally concentrated in regional environments and/or in an employer's corporate headquarters.

As jobs within the industry vary, so do the skill requirements for these jobs. According to the U.S. Department of Labor, education leading to a high school diploma or equivalent is important for entry-level retail jobs, while college graduates (including both Associate's and Bachelor's Degree recipients) fill most new management positions.³⁰ The retail industry offers considerable entry-level opportunities that often require limited educational and skill requirements. For many employers, basic skills like English language; an ability to learn and operate computers, cash registers, or telephones; and acceptable workplace behavior (such as reliability and timeliness) are seen as sufficient skills.³¹ While a high school education or equivalent is not seen as necessary, it is usually preferred.³² In terms of training, the U.S. Department of Labor states that smaller stores tend to provide brief on-the-job training while larger employers tend to provide structured training sessions and, more likely than not, require or make available supplemental training.³³

The retail industry also provides significant employment opportunities for part-time and temporary work. In 2005, retail employees worked approximately 10% fewer hours per week, on average, than workers in other industries (32.6 average hours per week in retail compared with 33.8 average hours per week in all industries).³⁴ Average wages in the retail industry are lower than national averages for all industries. In the United States, non-supervisory retail trade employees earned 23% less in average hourly wages in 2005 than workers in other private-sector industries (\$12.26 versus \$16.11).³⁵ Most job openings in the retail sector are entry level, lower paying, and require limited skills — with the exception of professional and managerial level jobs. High demand for workers combined with entry-level, low-skill requirements and varying work schedules make retail an attractive industry for new entrants to the labor market.³⁶

Retail Industry Workforce Issues

The retail trade industry offers substantial job opportunities for many workers, but broad trends are reshaping and creating transitions within the sector that affect the nature of its jobs and the skill requirements of its workers. These trends are being driven largely by changes in the marketplace and new technologies and include:³⁷

Industry Consolidation. Just-in-time delivery practices and customer demand for high-quality products at bargain prices have led to widespread consolidation. The workforce implications have been significant, with most stores relying on a reduced number of supervisors, thus making the upward career path from the lowest entry-level position to manager more difficult, especially for workers without a postsecondary education.³⁸

Another significant trend has been the development of two distinct business model tracks — one predominantly based on “self service” (emphasizing speed, efficiency, and lower product cost) and the other based on “high touch” (emphasizing high levels of customer contact

and service over product cost and transaction speed). Both models have workforce implications. Workers in self-service firms have less contact with customers, relying more on technology to keep costs low and speed transactions. Workers in companies using the high-touch model have more customer contact, but also rely on technology to perform their jobs more efficiently.³⁹

Increasing Use of New Technologies. U.S. retailers, like other sectors, have introduced technological innovations that are changing the way companies routinely do business. These technologies are generally introduced to increase the quality and efficiency of work, train workers, as well as improve the efficiency of business processes.⁴⁰ Newer technologies in retail include the increasing use of self-service devices (instead of purchasing merchandise from a cashier) and customized marketing that uses software to track customer purchases and suggest items customers might want to consider.⁴¹ The workforce implications are such that the rapidity of technology continues to require workers to readjust their job skills and re-adapt to changing work environments.

The Internet and the Growth of E-Commerce. The effect of the Internet has been wide ranging and is likely to continue to grow. In 2005, U.S. retail e-commerce sales reached a little over \$93 billion, up from a revised \$76 billion in 2004 — an annual gain of 22.2%.⁴² Today, retailers develop e-commerce websites to complement in-store sales, while others are devoted entirely to Internet commerce. Yet, Internet shopping still remains a small share of the retail sales market, only accounting for 2.2% of all retail sales in 2005.⁴³ The workforce implications include a shifting of work requiring basic to advanced technology skills as well as knowledge about customer needs and products.⁴⁴

While these trends affect the structure of jobs and the skill needs of workers, retailers also face challenges that affect their ability to recruit, hire,

and retain qualified workers. These challenges include:

Recruitment and Retention. As large national employers, retailers face competition for workers within their sector, and among other industries looking for entry-level, quality workers. As such, retailers encounter significant challenges in attracting, retaining, and advancing employees — especially in an industry characterized by high annual turnover (industry averages range from 70% to 125% depending on the size and type of company) and frequent labor shortages during peak shopping seasons. Recruitment challenges include perceptions that all jobs are low wage and lack growth potential, that retail is not a viable career option, and that most jobs are predominantly part time and short term. Retailers also note problems with getting access to talent that matches their company culture, and getting employees that can commit to long-term employment.⁴⁵

Career Advancement. Keeping qualified employees in the retail sector through talent development, succession planning, and clear career pathways is another challenge noted by retailers. While the majority of jobs in the industry require lower skills, advancement in the industry requires entry-level employees to gain stronger basic academic, workplace readiness, technical, supervisory, and customer service skills in order to advance and remain in the industry. Increasingly, the professional development of workers and career advancement strategies within the retail industry are seen as a way to counter staff turnover.⁴⁶

Diversity. The changing demographics of the U.S. population affect the retail industry, both in the types of people that are available for work in the industry as well as the industry's customer base. Trends affecting retailers include the aging of the U.S. population and an increasing Hispanic population, both of which present challenges as well as opportunities. Retailers need workers to speak the language of their customer base. Limited proficiency in English is a problem, as

these workers may speak the customer’s language but may lack basic English language and literacy skills to perform basic job functions.⁴⁷ The retail industry’s traditional source of labor — younger workers and women — are not sufficient to meet its needs for jobs such as retail sales clerks and cashiers. Retailers note that they must increasingly look to other potential pools of workers, such as older workers, new immigrants, and people with disabilities to meet their labor force needs.

Retail Workforce Trends and their Implications for People with Disabilities

As retailers strive to hire and replace workers and respond to a changing business environment and labor market, people with disabilities offer the industry a large group of potential workers that can fill the industry’s workforce needs. For people with physical, cognitive, or psychiatric disabilities, employment in the retail sector has advantages as well as disadvantages. For those seeking work in this industry, the retail sector can provide significant advantages and offer job opportunities for people with a range of abilities. For example, the retail sector has always been a point of entry for new workers into the labor market. Similar to young workers and women, people with disabilities should also be able to find entry-level job opportunities in an industry with myriad jobs available, especially in areas that may require less frequent customer interface, more repetitive job tasks, and less “image” consciousness, such as jobs located in distribution and warehousing, call centers, and administrative support. Retail jobs are also predominantly local jobs. For a population that has well-documented access and mobility barriers to getting and retaining work, local employment is critical to long-term job success. Retail employment also can offer flexibility. For many people with disabilities, full-time employment is neither desirable nor viable given their personal, medical, and/or mobility circumstances. Part-time employment may better suit their needs and circumstances. Finally, retail employment can also offer mobility of career opportunities — the skills learned in one retail job

are often readily transferable to another retail firm in the same community or other industries.

In addition, trends in the industry that are affecting the workforce can be an advantage for some workers with disabilities. High turnover and anticipated labor shortages as Baby Boomers retire means that retailers are likely to be more motivated to seek and accommodate people with disabilities. Changes in the types of jobs available, and skills needed, due to technology changes and industry consolidations can also mean greater employment opportunities for some individuals. For example, individuals who might not want or like frequent customer contact in a store can now find employment in jobs that allow them to take inventory, fill Internet orders, or perform other typical administrative tasks.

The workforce challenges that characterize the industry can also serve as a barrier to people with disabilities. First, the viability of long-term economically supportable employment remains questionable in an industry that is increasingly characterized by part-time and temporary jobs, lower-than-average wages compared to other competing service-producing industries such as the health care or finance sectors, and an absence of availability of health care benefits in some firms or when working part time. In addition, the changing nature of work due to industry consolidations and technical advances can also be a disadvantage to some workers who may not be able to respond rapidly to a job that now requires new skills, to adjust to a new workplace or job site, or to

Retail Trade: Advantages for Workers with Disabilities

- Good entry-level job opportunities
- Predominantly local jobs
- Can offer flexibility
- Can offer mobility of career opportunities

Retail Trade: Barriers for Workers with Disabilities

- Viability of long-term economically supportable employment (part-time/temporary work)
- Absence of availability of health care benefits in some firms or with part-time work
- Challenges to navigating established career pathways or advancements

take on different tasks that may not suit their desires or abilities. Finally, some people with disabilities may experience difficulty in navigating established career pathways or advancement that can lead to better wages and thus a greater likelihood of economic self-sufficiency.

For example, an individual who has been hired and is happy and suited to perform the tasks required of one job, may not be suited, desirous, or have the physical, cognitive, and/or mental ability to perform all of the duties of higher-paying jobs within the company and/or industry.

INCREASING THE EMPLOYMENT OF PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES IN THE RETAIL TRADE SECTOR: ISSUES AND PROMISING PRACTICES

In conducting this study, Heldrich Center researchers reviewed company websites and conducted a search of corporate policies and practices in the case study literature to look for evidence of activities and strategies undertaken by the retail companies that are in the 2006 Fortune 100 list (see Table 2) against the list of promising practices from the national literature review. Researchers also developed an interview protocol that sought to document through structured interviews how retail employers had progressed in the area of diversity and inclusion, and how they are implementing various strategies aimed specifically at people with disabilities. Specifically, the web and document review, as well as the interview protocol, looked to identify whether people with disabilities were included in diversity-related activities and job recruitment material and sought evidence of the work that major U.S. retailers have been engaged in the areas outlined in the first section of this report. Finally, researchers examined whether the retailers' websites included people with disabilities in both their job opportunities and/or diversity initiatives. In the course of the review, researchers sought to analyze whether retailers' policies, strategies, and activities included people with disabilities, were discreet or noncommittal, or were absent.⁴⁸

General Observations and Findings

After examining the content of the case study literature and retailer websites, Heldrich Center researchers found that five (42%) of the retail companies expressly include people with disabilities in their diversity and/or hiring strategies. As presented in Table 3, these companies are demonstrating their inclusiveness by seeking public awards, targeting recruitment efforts, displaying people with disabilities in marketing and recruitment materials, and/or by

Table 2. U.S. Retailers on the Fortune 100 List

Fortune 100 U.S. Retailers	Ranking
Best Buy	72
CVS Caremark	51
Costco	32
Federated Department Stores	76
Kroger	17
Lowe's	45
Safeway	56
Sears Holding	38
Target	33
The Home Depot	17
Walgreens	44
WalMart	1

Source: Fortune 100 List, 2007.

having activities and policies specific to people with disabilities.

Some companies, most notably **CVS Caremark**, are seeking to be identified as leaders in promoting the employment of people with disabilities. **CVS Caremark** was a 2006 recipient of the Secretary of Labor's New Freedom Initiative Award for exemplary and innovative efforts in furthering the employment and workplace environment for people with disabilities and recently formed an alliance with the U.S. Department of Labor to encourage and promote the employment of people with disabilities through training and education, outreach and communication, and other efforts. Interviews with **CVS Caremark** reveal that efforts focus

Table 3. Inclusion of People with Disabilities by U.S. Retail Firms

Firm	Inclusive	Non-Committal	Absent
Best Buy	X		
CVS Caremark	X		
Costco			X
Federated Department Stores			X
Kroger		X	
Lowe's			X
Safeway			X
Sears Holding			X
Target			X
The Home Depot	X		
Walgreens	X		
WalMart	X		

heavily on the targeted recruitment of people with disabilities, especially developing partnerships with local nonprofits and One-Stop Career Centers to help prepare/train potential workers, and then provide job supports while they are employed.

Other companies, such as **Walgreens, Best Buy, WalMart, and The Home Depot**, also appear to be showing interest in furthering employment for people with disabilities by publicly discussing strategies, and/or aligning with notable local and/or national efforts and organizations. For example, **Best Buy** is an active member of both the national Business Leadership Network, as well as local business leadership networks. **The Home Depot** has been working with Ken's Kids, Inc., a Philadelphia-based nonprofit organization that works with developmentally disabled youth to get jobs at local Home Depot stores. **CVS Caremark** is working with Ken's Kids, Inc. to adopt their model at local CVS Caremark stores. Both **Walgreens**

and **The Home Depot** participate on the national advisory board of the National EmployAbility Partnership Program (of the National Organization on Disability or NOD) and **WalMart** is part of the NOD CEO Council.

In addition, companies such as **WalMart, Best Buy, The Home Depot, and Walgreens** mention people with disabilities on their corporate websites in areas either pertaining to employment opportunities, or in sections devoted to their commitment to diversity. **WalMart, The Home Depot, and Walgreens** feature photographs of people with disabilities working.

Most notable, however, is the extent to which **Walgreens** has promoted its employment efforts to hire people with disabilities in its distribution centers in South Carolina and Connecticut.

Walgreens launched a website (www.WalgreensOutreach.com) that is accessible to people with disabilities. The website provides information to potential employees with disabilities to help them understand what work is available at their warehouse and distribution sites, the nature of the work, the wages and benefits available, and the list of local partnerships developed to support employment efforts.

Unfortunately, the majority of retailers (58%) either do not discuss their commitments, activities, or strategies, or it is not apparent from their websites, written materials, or other published literature. Unlike the firms that publicly acknowledge directed activities in including people with disabilities, companies in the noncommittal and absent groups either recognize people with disabilities but never describe activities, or do not reference people with disabilities at all. Companies in these categories include **Costco, Federated Department Stores, Kroger, Lowe's, Safeway, Sears Holding, and Target**. It is not

possible to state that these corporations lack an interest or are not engaged in diversity-related activities. All of these firms have stated diversity policies or have a diversity presence on their websites, but most strategies appear to be geared toward other groups such as African-Americans, women, Hispanics, and Asian-Americans. Heldrich Center researchers could not find written evidence of targeted corporate activities for people with disabilities in these firms at the corporate level. The one company, **Kroger**, in the noncommittal category reports that it does engage in targeted practices in the areas of recruitment and training for people with disabilities, but admits that its efforts are new and predominantly local (not corporate).⁴⁹

While retailers are the nation's largest private-sector employer, and it is encouraging that 42% of the large retail firms have taken significant steps to be inclusive of people with disabilities, examinations conducted through this research show that they are not being identified in the research literature as being pacesetters in the recruitment, hiring, and retention of people with disabilities. Of the nation's 12 largest retailers listed in the Fortune Top 100, only one appears in Diversity Inc.'s Top 50 companies for Diversity (**WalMart**). No retail firms are listed in the Diversity Inc. Top 10 Companies for People with Disabilities, and only two retail firms (**CVS Caremark** and **Giant Eagle, Inc.**) have won U.S. Department of Labor New Freedom Awards. In published scholarly research case studies, only one retailer (**Safeway**) has been identified as a company with an exemplary business practice in terms of hiring and retaining people with disabilities yet that practice was being conducted by a local store, and did not appear to reflect corporate policies and practices.⁵⁰

Without a doubt, the top U.S. retailers all share a public goal of promoting diversity and increasing the effectiveness of diversity programs in the industry. This research demonstrates that all 12 top U.S. retailers publicly discuss a commitment to diversity in significant areas but most specifically related to race, gender, ethnicity, religion, and sexual orientation. As the nation's largest private service-based industry, there is considerable evidence that retailers have been actively and publicly promoting their understanding of the need for an inclusive and diverse workforce and environment that reaches their markets.

While there is considerable publicity and promotion of retailers' diversity efforts in mainstream publications⁵¹ and a growing body of case study literature citing business efforts to create better work environments for people with disabilities, little has been written about efforts in the retail sector. Yet, efforts in retail to promote the employment of people with disabilities are arguably more important than some other sectors because of this industry's vital role as the nation's largest private-sector employer. This research has shown that while the majority of the nation's top retailers have diversity programs and efforts in place, their visible activities devoted to including people with disabilities varies widely or are unseen by the public.

Conclusions from this research demonstrate that there is considerable room for improvement in promoting and realizing employment for people with disabilities in the retail sector. There are also opportunities for large retail firms to exert greater national leadership in hiring and retaining people with disabilities. By implementing policies and procedures in their various business units and stores, large retailers can significantly influence the employment prospects for people with disabilities within and beyond the retail sector.

CONCLUSION

Many retail employers recognize that the workforce and workplace are undergoing constant and profound change. Faced with ongoing competition at home and abroad, retail companies are feeling the pressure to develop marketing and human resource plans to meet the needs of new, more diverse markets including providing products and customer service that appeals to different groups. Culturally relevant marketing, more diverse management and workers, and goods that are more appealing and accessible to a wider, more inclusive market are becoming standard business practices. A key finding of this report, however, is that too many of the nation's retailers have appeared to largely ignore the inclusion of people with disabilities in their diversity efforts. While recognition of the value of hiring, and marketing to, people with disabilities is evident in some companies, it is unclear whether real organizational change and practices, or new programs and efforts, have been sufficiently developed and put into place to improve the employment of people with disabilities.

The nation's retailers can play a more significant role in advancing the employment of people with disabilities and reaping economic benefit from improving their economic status. Outlined below are the Heldrich Center's recommendations of how retailers can improve their efforts and be a significant leader in broadening employment and economic opportunities for people with disabilities.

Learn from Like-Minded, Progressive Companies.

Businesses learn best from other businesses. Given the constraints that employers face to get a positive return on their investment of time and resources, it makes sense to learn from others that are looking to improve their activities and strategies. Join groups of like-minded corporations that are looking to learn and make a difference.

Tailor Strategies to the

Retail Industry. What works may not necessarily work in the retail sector. While it is important to learn what other companies are doing, industry trends, skill needs, and employment expectations are different. Learn from others as well as from each other.

Make People with

Disabilities Visible. Include people with disabilities in marketing materials, on websites, and in advertisements. Portray workers with disabilities in the media in a positive way. A visual representation that the corporation supports, encourages, and includes people with disabilities can go a long way to gaining co-worker, customer, and employee comfort and overcome misconceptions about the abilities of people with disabilities in the workforce.

Target Recruitment Efforts and Make Hiring

More Accessible. Targeted recruitment strategies have proven to work with other groups, such as women and African-Americans. Engage the disability community, as well as the many community-based and educational institutions that have access to the community, to design and develop targeted outreach and recruitment strategies that work best for the firm. Make it easier for people with disabilities to apply for work by making online applications and information about careers more accessible.

Support their Success. For many people with disabilities, support on the job can mean the difference between success and failure. Companies should look to embrace proven methods for

Advancing the Employment of People with Disabilities: Recommendations for the Nation's Retailers

- Learn from like-minded progressive companies
- Tailor strategies to the retail industry
- Make people with disabilities visible
- Target recruitment efforts and make hiring more accessible
- Support their success
- Open your market to the disability community
- Promote your success

hiring and supporting people with disabilities on the job such as mentoring, job accommodation, job coaching, as well as partnerships with community organizations, professional groups, and educational institutions.

Open Your Market to the Disability Community.

Appeal more widely and broadly to the disability market. If people with disabilities and their families know a firm is actively seeking their employment and their business, then the recruitment of people with disabilities will likely be more successful.

Harness the purchasing power of the disability community by making use of new technologies to allow consumers with disabilities greater access to your goods and services both online and in stores.

Promote Your Success.

If you are successful, show it. Advance and reinforce your accomplishments by advertising in trade and mainstream media, by highlighting within the corporation and in the media corporate and individual success stories, or by participating in public events, discussions, and forums.

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ENDNOTES

¹ Including, but not limited to, the Americans with Disabilities Act, 1990 (P.L. 101-336) that guaranteed the civil rights of people with disabilities by prohibiting the discrimination against anyone who has mental or physical disabilities in various areas including employment; Federal Executive Order 13078: Increasing Employment of Adults with Disabilities, 1998; Federal Executive Order 13163: Increasing the Opportunity for Individuals with Disabilities to be Employed in the Federal Government, 2000; Federal Executive Order 13164: Requiring Federal Agencies to Establish Procedures to Facilitate the Provision of Reasonable Accommodation, 2000; Federal Executive Order 13217: Community-Based Alternatives for Individuals with Disabilities, 2001 in addition to laws prohibiting discrimination in employment under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and Title 1 of the Americans with Disabilities Act), the Carl D. Perkins Vocational Educational Applied Technology Amendments, 1990 (P.L. 101-392), which included language to ensure students with disabilities access to qualified vocational programs and other services, the Education of the Handicapped Act Amendments of 1990 (P.L. 101-476) that sought the improvement of vocational and life skills of students with disabilities with the goal of better career and work preparation, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act Amendments (IDEA) within P.L. 101-476 that sought to improve support services to students with disabilities in the area of assistive technology and transition services, the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA) of 1991 (P.L. 102-240) that including funds to help meet the special transportation needs of those who are elderly or disabled, the Ticket to Work and Work Incentives Improvements Act of 1999 (P.L. 106-170) that provides health care and employment preparation and employment placement assistance to people with disabilities that enables them, among other things, to maintain Medicare coverage while working and that allow individuals with disabilities to seek services they need to get and maintain employment.

² Median annual earnings for full-time, full-year workers with disabilities is \$30,000 compared to \$36,000 for full-time, full-year workers without disabilities (Cornell RTTC, 2006. 2005 Disability Status Reports).

³ U.S. Census, 2005 *American Community Survey. Disability Status by Sex by Age by Employment Status for the Civilian Noninstitutionalized Population 16 to 64 years.* <http://www.factfinder.census.gov> (accessed October 25, 2007).

⁴ National Council on Disability. *Empowerment for Americans with Disabilities: Breaking Barriers to Careers and Full Employment.* This report provides a comprehensive overview of the issues surrounding the employment of people with disabilities, and presents new information on the demand side of the labor market, including the perspective of employers on the key barriers and facilitators to work.

⁵ See Boni-Saenz, Alexander, Allen Heineman, Deborah Crown, and Linda Emanuel. *The Business of Employing People with Disabilities. Four Case Studies. A Multi-Case Study.* 2004. Lengnick-Hall, Mark L., editor. *Hidden Talent: How Leading Companies Hire, Retain, and Benefit from People with Disabilities.* Westport, CT: Praeger, 2007. Ball, Phoebe, Gregory Monaco, James Schmeling, Helen Schartz, and Peter Blanck. "Disability as Diversity in Fortune 100 Companies." *Behavioral Sciences and the Law* 23:97-121 (2005).

⁶ President Bush announced the New Freedom Initiative on February 1, 2001 as part of a nationwide effort to remove barriers to community living for people with disabilities. The New Freedom Initiative is a comprehensive plan that represents an important step in working to ensure that all Americans have the opportunity to learn and develop skills, engage in productive work, make choices about their daily lives, and participate fully in community life. The initiative's goals are to: increase access to assistive and universally designed technologies, expand educational opportunities, promote homeownership, integrate Americans with disabilities into the workforce, expand transportation options, and promote full access to community life. Information can be found at <http://www.hhs.gov/newfreedom/init.html>.

⁷ National Governors Association. *Accelerating State Adoption of Sector Strategies*. <http://www.nga.org/portal/site/nga/menuitem.1b7ae943ae381e6cfdcb501010a0/?vgne> (accessed November 6, 2006).

⁸ Ball et al., "Disability as Diversity in Fortune 100 Companies," p. 2.

⁹ The Conference Board. *Aligning Diversity and Business Strategy*. Webcast announcement. <http://www.conference-board.org/webcasts/upcomingWebcast.cfm?id=1606> (accessed November 16, 2007).

¹⁰ Ball et al., "Disability as Diversity in Fortune 100 Companies."

¹¹ Silverstein, Robert. "Emerging Disability Policy Framework: A Guidepost for Analyzing Public Policy." *Iowa Law Review*. 85 Iowa L Rev. 1691 (2000).

¹² Lengnick-Hall, *Hidden Talent*.

¹³ Ball et al., "Disability as Diversity in Fortune 100 Companies." National Council on Disability. *Empowerment for Americans with Disabilities: Breaking Barriers to Careers and Full Employment*. October 1, 2007. (137-144).

¹⁴ Kruse, Doug and Lisa Schur. *Case Study Data on Best Practices in Employing People with Disabilities*. Unpublished document. February 12, 2007. Employment and Training Reporter. *ODEP, SHRM to Work in Tandem*. Vol. 38, No. 13 November 20, 2006. Lengnick-Hall, *Hidden Talent*. Boni-Saenz, et al., *The Business of Employing People with Disabilities*.

¹⁵ Emerging Leaders is managed by the National Business and Disability Council. Information accessed at <https://emerging-leaders.com>.

¹⁶ Under the management of the American Association for People with Disabilities (AAPD), local communities around the nation organize their own activities to bring students and employers together for informational sessions about career opportunities and one-on-one mentoring with volunteers at public and private places of employment. Assessed at <http://www.dmd-aapd.org>.

¹⁷ Presentation by Kathleen McCary. SunTrust, New Jersey Governor's Council on Disability and Employment, October 12, 2007.

¹⁸ U.S. Department of Justice. Civil Rights Division. *Expanding Your Market. Customers with Disabilities Mean Business. Facts About Americans with Disabilities.* <http://www.ada.gov/busstat.htm> (accessed November 30, 2007).

¹⁹ U.S. Department of Labor. Office of Disability Employment Policy. *Business Ownership.* <http://www.dol.gov/odep/pubs/business/business.html> (accessed November 30, 2007). Diversity Inc. *Diversity in the Retail Industry* advertisement, October 2007.

²⁰ Newman, Andrew Adam. "Web Marketing to a Segment Too Big to be a Niche." *The New York Times*. October 30, 2007.

²¹ Ibid.

²² Cleary, Jennifer, Maria Heidkamp, and Aaron Fichtner. *Understanding the Workforce Needs of New Jersey's Retail Industry: A Report of the Ready for the Job Initiative.* John J. Heldrich Center for Workforce Development. Summer 2007. Retail and Wholesale Trade. *A Guide to the British Economy and Labor Market.* http://www.guidetobceconomy.org/major_industries/retail.htm.

²³ Schrock, Greg and Judith Krossy. *Report to the Chicago Workforce Board. Career Pathways and Crosswalks in Hotel, Retail, and Restaurant Industries*, p. 9.

²⁴ Retail and Wholesale Trade. *A Guide to the British Economy and Labor Market.*

²⁵ U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.

²⁶ For this report, the retail industry is defined in terms of the North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) category "retail trade" NAICS code 44-45; the wholesale industry is defined in terms of the NAICS system category "wholesale trade" (NAICS code 42).

²⁷ U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics. *Occupational Outlook Handbook 2004-2014.*

²⁸ U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of Economic Analysis.

²⁹ U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics. *Occupational Outlook Handbook 2004-2014.*

³⁰ U.S. Department of Labor. *Retail: High-Growth Industry Profile.* <http://www.doleta.gov> (accessed November 30, 2007).

³¹ Schrock and Kossy, *Career Pathways and Crosswalks in Hotel, Retail and Restaurant Industries*, p. 10.

³² Cleary et al., *Understanding the Workforce Needs of New Jersey's Retail Industry*, p. 7.

³³ Ibid.

³⁴ Ibid.

- ³⁵ U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics. *Industry Outlook Handbook: Retail*.
- ³⁶ Cleary et al., *Understanding the Workforce Needs of New Jersey's Retail Industry*, p. 7.
- ³⁷ Cleary et al., *Understanding the Workforce Needs of New Jersey's Retail Industry*, p. 7. Retail and Wholesale Trade, *A Guide to the British Economy and Labor Market*.
- ³⁸ Cleary et al., *Understanding the Workforce Needs of New Jersey's Retail Industry*, p. 9. Schrock and Kossy, *Career Pathways and Crosswalks in Hotel, Retail, and Restaurant Industries*, p. 10.
- ³⁹ Cleary et al., *Understanding the Workforce Needs of New Jersey's Retail Industry*, pp. 9-10.
- ⁴⁰ Cleary et al., *Understanding the Workforce Needs of New Jersey's Retail Industry*, p. 11.
- ⁴¹ Cleary et al., *Understanding the Workforce Needs of New Jersey's Retail Industry*, p. 12. Hogan, David. National Retail Federation, Association for Retail Technology Standards. Presentation: *Five Key Trends in U.S. Retail*. http://retailindustry.about.com/gi/dynamic/offsite.htm?zi=1/XJ/Ya&sdn=retailindustry&cdn=money&tm=5&gps=466_668_1238_571&f=10&tt=14&bt=1&bts=0&zu=http%3A/www.nrf-arts.org/presents/ris/retailsummit/sldoo1.htm (accessed November 30, 2007).
- ⁴² U.S. Census Bureau. Economics and Statistics Administration. *E-Stats: Merchant Wholesale Trade*. <http://www.census.gov/EOS/www/2005/2005reportfinal.pdf> (accessed May 25, 2007).
- ⁴³ Ibid.
- ⁴⁴ Cleary et al., *Understanding the Workforce Needs of New Jersey's Retail Industry*, p. 11.
- ⁴⁵ Business for Social Responsibility. *Retention and Advancement in the Retail Sector: A Summary of Discussions on the Challenge of and Recommendations for Retail Employment Retention and Advancement. Executive Summary*. August 2003. U.S. Department of Labor. *Retail: High-Growth Industry Profile*. <http://www.doleta.gov> (accessed November 30, 2007).
- ⁴⁶ Cleary et al., *Understanding the Workforce Needs of New Jersey's Retail Industry*, p. 19.
- ⁴⁷ U.S. Department of Labor, *Retail: High-Growth Industry Profile*.
- ⁴⁸ Analysis framework provided by Ball et al, "Disability as Diversity in Fortune 100 Companies," p. 163.
- ⁴⁹ Interview with Carver Johnson, October 24, 2007.
- ⁵⁰ McMahon, Brian, Paul Wehman, Valerie Brooke, Rochelle Habeck, Howard Green, and Robert Frager. *Business, Disability, and Employment: Corporate Models of Success*. <http://www.worksupport.com/research/listFormatContent.cfm5>.
- ⁵¹ Diversity Inc. Magazine. Diversity in the Retail Sector advertisement, 2006 and 2007.