



USBLN® 2011 Annual Conference & Expo Success in Louisville, KY

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WASHINGTON, DC (October 27, 2011) – The 14th Annual US Business Leadership Network (USBLN®) Annual Conference & Expo held in Louisville, Kentucky last week was a resounding success. Attendance was strong with nearly 400 corporate, government, disability-owned businesses and BLN affiliates attending the conference, held Sunday, October 16th through Wednesday, October, 19th at the Louisville Marriott Downtown hotel.

“The overall conference synergy and excitement continues to grow and we are very proud of the overwhelming positive responses we are receiving,” shared **Jill Houghton**, Executive Director of the USBLN® and host of the annual event. “This conference is vital to our mission to ensure that people with disabilities are fully included and play an integral role in the workplace, marketplace and supply chain. Our event provides valuable and practical information to corporate, government, and other employers on how to successfully prepare, hire, promote, retain, and develop employees who have disabilities, in addition to attracting customers with disabilities and increasing the number of disability-owned businesses in their supply chains.”

The 2011 USBLN® Annual Conference & Expo, “**Unlocking Key Business Drivers: Disability in the Workplace, Marketplace and Supply Chain - Strategies for Business Success**” is the preeminent national business to business event that taps into the vast economic potential of the full inclusion of people with disabilities. This conference focuses on bringing attendees together to create workplaces, marketplaces, and supply chains where people with disabilities are fully included as professionals, customers and entrepreneurs.

The 2011 USBLN® Annual Conference & Expo highlights included:

- Over 40 interactive educational sessions by leading speakers and community luminaries along with solution-sharing, enhanced networking and opportunities to meet USBLN® certified Disability-Owned Business Enterprises (DOBE®s);
- Announcement by the USBLN® Board of Directors of their appointment of Jill Houghton as the Executive Director of the US Business Leadership Network®;
- Three tracks including Workplace, Marketplace and Supply Chain to best accommodate the varied professional experience levels and educational needs of the attendees;
- An opportunity to earn up to 11.75 credit hours towards PHR, SPHR and GPHR recertification through HRCI, plus CDMS certificants and ADMS designees were eligible to receive continuing education (CE) units;
- Sunday evening Welcome Reception & Mixer with attendees making strong connections and enjoying relationship building;
- Monday evening Homeless Veterans Service Project where kitchen start-up packages for homeless veterans transitioning into housing through the Kentucky VA Veterans Transition Program were created by attendees making a contribution to the Louisville community while learning about service as a road to employment for people with disabilities;
- Tuesday morning Expo Opening Event featuring the “Power of Partnerships” Exhibit Hall with exhibitor partners featuring products, services and technologies that attending companies were encouraged to collaborate with to develop strategies for business success across their workplaces, marketplaces and supply chains.; and

- The 2011 USBLN® Annual Leadership Awards Dinner, a Black Tie Optional Event, held Tuesday evening to celebrate the Leadership Award recipients that embody the highest ethical standards and values in the disability community.

Save the Date for the 2012 USBLN® Annual Conference & Expo

Interested parties are encouraged to mark their calendars for the 15th Annual USBLN® Conference & Expo to be held in sunny Orlando, Florida on **October 1 - 4, 2012** at the Renaissance Orlando at SeaWorld by Marriott. This event will kick-off National Disability Employment Awareness Month and is the perfect venue to mix business with pleasure. Event details will be made available at: www.usblnannualconference.org.

About the US Business Leadership Network (USBLN®)

The US Business Leadership Network (USBLN®) is the national disability organization that serves as the collective voice of over 60 Business Leadership Network affiliates across North America, representing over 5,000 employers. The USBLN® promotes the business imperative of the preparation and inclusion of people with disabilities in the workplace, marketplace, and supply chain while supporting the development and expansion of its BLN affiliates. The USBLN® recognizes and supports best practices in hiring and advancing employees with disabilities, marketing to consumers with disabilities, and encourages contracting with vendors with disabilities through the development and certification of disability-owned businesses. www.usbln.org

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