



USBLN[®] and U.S. Chamber Summit Highlights Employers' Corporate Disability Initiatives

*Releases Joint Booklet on Successful Strategies Businesses Can Use to
Create an Inclusive Workplace, Marketplace, and Supply Chain*

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WASHINGTON, DC (April 15, 2011) - The US Business Leadership Network[®] (USBLN[®]) with the U.S. Chamber of Commerce hosted a half-day summit entitled, “**Corporate Disability Employment Summit: Leading Practices on Disability Inclusion**” on April 12, 2011. During this event, senior leadership from Fortune 500 companies, small business, financial services, marketing, media and the U.S. Congress highlighted policies, programs and practices that employers can embrace to improve their workforce and increase their customer base. A new USBLN[®]/U.S. Chamber publication, “Leading Practices on Disability Inclusion,” was released at the summit.

“The US Business Leadership Network[®] is delighted to collaborate with the U.S. Chamber to present this exchange of corporate strategies that will benefit small, medium and large businesses as they develop or expand their diversity initiatives to include people with disabilities in the workforce, market place and supply chain,” said **Jill Houghton**, Acting Executive Director of the USBLN[®].

While businesses sometimes encounter serious challenges as they seek to implement inclusion strategies, many employers have overcome these hurdles with robust and creative practices. Tuesday’s summit was an opportunity to highlight those successful practices.

“Many employers are still not aware of the pool of qualified disabled workers, do not know how to reach them, and are concerned about the perceived cost and challenge of providing accommodations,” said **Thomas J. Donohue**, President and CEO of the U.S. Chamber. “Individuals with disabilities make great employees. In fact, employers report that the work ethic of disabled employees has a positive effect on the morale and production of other employees. Without a doubt, the employer community as a whole has made great progress in removing stereotypes and misperceptions and successfully implementing diversity and inclusion strategies.”

The newly released “[Leading Practices on Disability Inclusion](#),” highlights 20 successful corporate strategies that can be used by businesses of all sizes to create a more inclusive workplace, marketplace, and supply chain. Real-life examples, such as those outlined in the booklet, are important to help businesses realize the wide range of opportunities available and the potential for replicating success. The companies and leaders featured in the publication provide valuable insights on the successes they have realized through the inclusion of people with disabilities in all aspects of their corporate enterprises as

well as in their marketing. In addition to these effective strategies, an assessment is included as a tool to initiate or enhance employers' disability-friendly corporate practices.

In addition to several speakers from the business and disability communities, **Congressman Jim Sensenbrenner** (R-WI) and **Senator Tom Harkin** (D-IA), provided the historical Congressional perspective on disability issues.

“Building upon the synergy and enthusiasm of this half-day summit, we highly encourage our stakeholders to attend our [2011 USBLN® Annual Conference & Expo](#) taking place on October 16 -19 in Louisville, Kentucky,” continued **Jill Houghton**. “This conference will deliver enhanced networking opportunities, offer exciting interactive sessions, and feature respected thought-leaders and industry luminaries on an even deeper level over the course of the four-day event. Programming will focus on effective strategies for business success that will increase your company's revenues while strengthening corporate disability inclusion practices.”

“Leading Practices on Disability Inclusion” is available here:
http://usbln.org/leading_practices_on_disability_inclusion.html

About the 2011 USBLN® Annual Conference & Expo

October 16 -19 | Louisville, KY | Louisville Marriott Downtown Hotel

The US Business Leadership Network's (USBLN®) 14th Annual Conference & Expo entitled, "**Unlocking Key Business Drivers: Disability in the Workplace, Marketplace and Supply Chain - Strategies for Business Success**" is the preeminent national employer-to-employer event that taps into the vast economic potential of people with disabilities. This conference brings corporate, government, disability-owned businesses and BLN Affiliates together to create workplaces, marketplaces, and supply chains where people with disabilities are fully included as professionals, customers and entrepreneurs. For a limited time, they are offering early-bird registration at \$495 per person through July 1, 2011. To register, please visit 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 business enterprises.

www.usbln.org

About the U.S. Chamber of Commerce

The U.S. Chamber of Commerce is the world's largest business federation representing the interests of more than 3 million businesses of all sizes, sectors, and regions, as well as state and local chambers and industry associations. www.uschamber.com

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