



## ***Inaugural Disability Equality Index Survey Results Released***

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**WASHINGTON, DC (June 11, 2015)** - Today, the US Business Leadership Network<sup>®</sup> (USBLN<sup>®</sup>) and the American Association of People with Disabilities (AAPD) officially announced the results of the first annual Disability Equality Index<sup>SM</sup> (DEI<sup>SM</sup>) survey.

The DEI, a joint initiative of the USBLN and AAPD, is a national, transparent benchmarking tool that offers businesses an opportunity to receive an objective assessment of their overall disability inclusion policies and practices. It is an aspirational, educational, recognition tool that goes far beyond legal compliance, helping companies identify opportunities for continued improvement, while building their reputations as organizations that value diversity and inclusion.

The 2014 DEI was completed by 80 Fortune 1000-size companies in early 2015, who were notified of their results in late April. Nineteen of these companies received 100 out of 100 on the survey, which recognizes a broad range of workplace, supply chain and marketplace activities. Points are awarded in four major categories: Culture & Leadership, Enterprise-wide Access, Employment Practices, and Community Engagement & Support Services. Companies receive points in any given category by demonstrating that they embrace a significant portion of the numerous best practices outlined in each section.

The nineteen top-scoring companies for the 2014 DEI were, in alphabetical order:

Ameren Corporation  
AT&T  
Booz Allen Hamilton Inc.  
Capital One Financial Corporation  
Comcast Corporation  
Ernst & Young LLP  
Florida Blue  
Freddie Mac  
Highmark Health  
JPMorgan Chase & Co.  
Lockheed Martin Corporation

Northrop Grumman Corporation  
Pacific Gas and Electric Company  
PricewaterhouseCoopers LLP (PwC)  
Procter & Gamble  
Qualcomm Incorporated  
Sprint Corporation  
Starbucks Coffee Company  
TD Bank N.A.

By scoring 100 points, these companies demonstrated significant business leadership, going far beyond compliance activities, driving their business success through leading disability inclusion policies and practices. Their leadership will be celebrated at a special awards reception on Capitol Hill on July 30<sup>th</sup>, in conjunction with the Washington D.C. celebration of the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the passage of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

"We are thrilled to be able to recognize these business leaders, who are truly setting an example for the business community," said **Jill Houghton**, Executive Director of the USBLN. "We're also tremendously excited by the level of overall participation in, and support for, the DEI," adding that numerous survey participants expressed enthusiasm about improving their practices in the coming months and years, in direct response to their survey participation. "Even in its first year, the DEI is already moving the needle in the disability inclusion arena."

**Helena Berger**, Acting President and CEO of AAPD said, "I am extremely pleased with the results of this ground-breaking collaboration between members of the business and disability communities. It's a real testament to what can happen when people work together toward shared goals." **Berger**, who also co-chaired the DEI Advisory Committee, a diverse group of business leaders, policy experts, and disability-rights advocates that created the DEI on behalf of AAPD and the USBLN, goes on to say, "I really believe this initiative will change the landscape of inclusion practices across the country for years come, and help fulfill the promise of equal employment opportunity for people with disabilities made by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) 25 years ago."

Fellow Advisory Committee Co-chair and former Chief People Officer for AMC theatres, **Keith Wiedenkiller**, added "The truth is, that 25-years after the passage of the ADA, we still haven't effectively leveraged the untapped potential of the disability community as consumers, employees, or suppliers. I'm hopeful that the DEI's focus on encouragement and recognition, while still setting a high bar, will help move the Disability Inclusion conversation from compliance to competitive advantage." **Wiedenkiller** now serves in a consulting role to the DEI project, helping to take the DEI into 2016 and beyond.

An official list of DEI top-scoring leaders, as well as other companies that scored 80 or more points on the 2014 DEI, can be accessed on the DEI web-page, at [https://www.disabilityequalityindex.org/top\\_companies.aspx](https://www.disabilityequalityindex.org/top_companies.aspx), or through links on the USBLN and AAPD websites.

**About the US Business Leadership Network® (USBLN®)**

The US Business Leadership Network® (USBLN®) is a national non-profit that helps business drive performance by leveraging disability inclusion in the workplace, supply chain, and marketplace. The USBLN serves as the collective voice of nearly 50 Business Leadership Network affiliates across the United States, representing over 5,000 businesses. Additionally, the USBLN Disability Supplier Diversity Program® (DSDP) is the nation's leading third party certification program for disability-owned businesses, including businesses owned by service-disabled veterans. [www.usbln.org](http://www.usbln.org)

**About the American Association of People with Disabilities (AAPD)**

The American Association of People with Disabilities is the nation's largest disability rights organization. AAPD promotes equal opportunity, economic power, independent living, and political participation for people with disabilities. AAPD's members, including people with disabilities and family, friends, and supporters, represent a powerful force for change. To learn more, visit the AAPD Web site: [www.aapd.com](http://www.aapd.com).

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