



## **USBLN<sup>®</sup> Awarded a Two-Year National Renewal Grant from the Mitsubishi Electric America Foundation**

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WASHINGTON, DC (January 20, 2015) – The US Business Leadership Network (USBLN) announced today that it received a two-year national grant from the Mitsubishi Electric America Foundation to support its vision of empowering youth with disabilities to lead productive lives through increased employment.

This 2015-2016 grant extends the initial funding provided by Mitsubishi Electric America Foundation in 2013 and 2014 for the Career Link Mentoring Program, a collaborative project between the USBLN and the Employment and Disability Institute (EDI) at the School of Industrial and Labor Relations of Cornell University. The Career Link Mentoring Program assists college students and recent graduates with disabilities, including veterans with disabilities, by connecting them to business professionals from the USBLN’s member companies.

“We thank the Mitsubishi Electric America Foundation for this additional two-year grant to continue to help us build upon the success of the Career Link Mentoring Program. The Career Link Mentoring Program aims to provide 70 to 75 mentees with a 6-month career mentoring opportunity along with the chance to attend the USBLN Annual Conference,” said **Jill Houghton**, USBLN executive director. “The program will enable them to meet and interact with business professionals in their field of study or area of interest to whom they would not otherwise have access.”

During the mentoring relationship, participants will engage in various activities that can positively impact their future employment prospects. A goal of the mentoring program is to support employers’ increasing demands for science, technology, engineering and math professionals, as well as their focus on hiring veterans. To that end, the mentoring program places special emphasis on students and recent graduates meeting these criteria.

“Mentees are primarily sourced from the Workforce Recruitment Program (WRP) which connects federal and private sector employers nationwide with highly motivated college students and recent graduates with disabilities,” said **Judy Young**, grant manager for EDI. “The 2015 WRP database includes more than 1,800 pre-screened candidates interviewed at more than 300 college campuses.”

### **About the Mitsubishi Electric America Foundation (MEAF)**

The Mitsubishi Electric America Foundation, based in the Washington, DC area, was established in 1991 by Mitsubishi Electric Corporation and the Mitsubishi Electric U.S. companies, which produce, sell and distribute a wide range of consumer, industrial, commercial and professional electronics products. The Foundation has contributed more than \$13 million to organizations that are empowering young people with disabilities to lead more inclusive and productive lives.

To learn more, visit the Mitsubishi Electric America Foundation's website at [www.MEAF.org](http://www.MEAF.org).

**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<sup>®</sup> (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 Employment and Disability Institute (EDI) at the School of Industrial and Labor Relations of Cornell University**

EDI conducts research and provides continuing education and technical assistance to employers on disability inclusion in the workplace. Since 1968, researchers and practitioners at the Cornell University Industrial and Labor Relations School with expertise in disability and employment have helped companies, labor organizations, government agencies, schools, and communities throughout the United States and abroad to accommodate and integrate individuals with disabilities in the workplace. <http://edi.cornell.edu/>

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