



Opening Doors to Work

# Opening Doors to Work

FALL 2009

UTAH'S MEDICAID INFRASTRUCTURE GRANT

*“People with disabilities who work find they are just like everyone else and discover a sense of accomplishment and dignity that comes with contributing to society.”*

*~Worker with a disability*

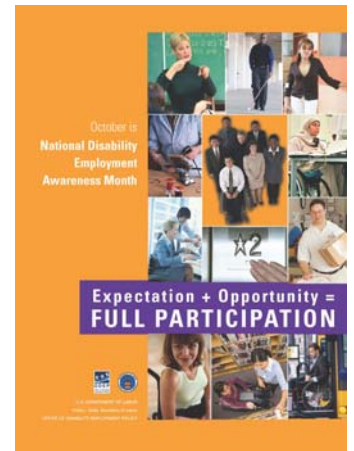
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## National Disability Employment Awareness Month

The theme for the 2009 National Disability Employment Awareness Month is “Expectation + Opportunity = Full Participation”. Each year, since 1945, America recognizes October as National Disability Employment Awareness Month. This year’s theme emphasizes the vision of ODEP (Office of Disability Employment Policy): a world in which people with disabilities have unlimited employment opportunities. October continues to be a time to recognize the talents and contributions of Ameri-

cans with disabilities. It is acknowledges our nation’s commitment to advancing employment opportunities for all citizens. As they fill positions, employers are urged to consider America’s diversity by considering the talents and skills of all workers, including those with disabilities. Utah is celebrating National Disability Employment Awareness Month with many activities, workshops, discussions and a film! Check the included calendar, or online at [www.workabilityutah.org](http://www.workabilityutah.org).

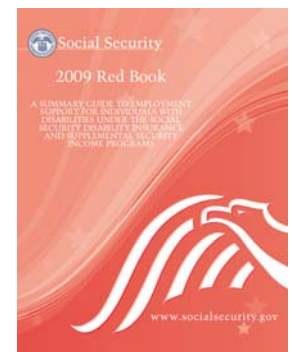


By reducing barriers and false perceptions, Utah continues to advance employment of its diverse citizenry, including people with disabilities.

## The Red Book

SSA (Social Security Administration) has developed procedures for people with disabilities who receive benefits and who want to work. Both SSDI and SSI have employment supports called work incentives. These work incentives help people test becoming part of the workforce. The Red Book is Social Security’s publication to explain these work incentives. It contains gen-

eral descriptions of SSA’s disability policies. There is information about applying for benefits, what documentation is needed, how income is counted and each of the work incentives, for example, IRWEs (Impairment-Related Work Expenses), SEIE (Student Earned Income Exclusion) and TWP (Trial Work Period). The Red Book is available online at



[www.socialsecurity.gov/redbook](http://www.socialsecurity.gov/redbook). It is also available in Spanish. You will still want to contact SSA to learn how these work incentives apply to you.

*“Congress acknowledged that society’s accumulated myths and fears about disability and disease are as handicapping as are the physical limitations that flow from the actual impairment.”*  
 ~William J. Brennan, Jr.

# Think Beyond the Label

In the next few months, a national media campaign dedicated to encouraging employers to hire people with disabilities will begin. In over 40 states, MIGs (Medicaid Infrastructure Grants) have come together to fund and create a set of marketing tools. This new campaign will provide employers with important information about hiring from this largely untapped talent

pool. The MIGs will also focus on enhancing public/private partnerships to ensure information and supports are available for employers to successfully

recruit, hire and retain people with disabilities. A digital hub will anchor the campaign and connect employers with key resources and information in each state. More information can be found beginning in January at [www.thinkbeyondthelabel.com](http://www.thinkbeyondthelabel.com). For more information in Utah, contact Leah Lobato at (801) 538-7964 or Carol Ruddell at (801) 887-9388



## Golden Key Awards



Each year, the Utah Governor’s Committee on Employment of People with Disabilities, local Chambers of Commerce and partners recognize contributions that promote employment of people with disabilities. The award categories and 2008 winners are:

- Employers of the Year: outstanding contributions and practices that improve employment opportunities

for people with disabilities - **Sears Grand** and **Affiliated Computer Services**

- The Ace Award: actively promote efforts to achieve equal employment -

**Ryan Berube** and **Stephen Ehrlich**.

- The Media Award: public awareness and promotion of opportunities for people with disabilities - **KSFI FM100**.

- The Freedom Award:

hiring and retaining recently returning Veterans - **Northrop Grumman**

Congratulations to the 2008 winners! The 2009 winners will be announced at the annual ceremony on October 14. For more information on the Utah Governor’s Committee on Employment of People with Disabilities contact: Leslee Hintze at (801) 887-9392 or at [lhintze@utah.gov](mailto:lhintze@utah.gov)

## Utah Works

**Our Vision**—A future where it is usual and customary to hire people with disabilities

Since July 2007, Utah Works and The Purchasing from People with Disabilities Advisory Board, has reviewed upcoming state contracts for possible set-asides for employment of people with disabilities. What are the results?

### Highlights for Fiscal Year 2009

- Contracts obtained for employment in janitorial services, document destruction and recycling, and document digitization
- 194% increase in hours worked between 2008 and 2009
- 45% increase in number of people employed between year one and two, 93 and 145, respectively

- In the two year period, wages paid to workers with disabilities was \$433,459, allowing them to become taxpaying citizens
- These results achieved without any funds appropriated by the Legislature

For a copy of the full report, and for additional information, go to <http://uacs.org/utahworks.php>, or call (801)261-3300.



# Work Incentives

## **Do you want to work and keep your Medicaid?**

The MWI (Medicaid Work Incentive) program is for people with disabilities who are working. This Medicaid program is for people who earn more money and are willing to pay a monthly premium (up to 15%) of his or her countable income, to remain eligible for Medicaid. Other incentives include increased assets and retirement accounts. To enroll or learn more call 1-877-246-9675, or contact your local Department of Workforce Services (DWS) Office.

## **Do you want to know about Social Security benefits and going to work?**

The BPAO (Benefits Planning Assistance and Outreach) program and WIPA (Work Incentives Planning and Assistance) program gives beneficiaries of Social Security disability information on how working impacts benefits. This service considers other benefits, food stamps, health care and housing. With accurate information you can make an informed choice about working and other benefits. To learn more call (801) 887-9530, or toll free 866-454-8397.

## **Need help with personal care to be able to work?**

EPAS (Employment Personal Assistance Services) is for people with disabilities who are eligible for Medicaid, and need personal services to maintain employment. A licensed agency or qualified personal care assistant can provide services at home, work and/or in the community. Services may include bathing, cooking, housecleaning, money management, transportation for work and more. Call (801) 538-6165 to learn more.

*“One of the most important measures of any society is how well it enables each person to live up to his or her potential...but providing you with the supports and services so you can succeed goes beyond that—it goes to the heart of our nation’s future.”*

*~President Barack Obama*

# Working and Social Security Benefits

## **What do working people with disabilities say?**

Recently DBTAC (Disability and Business Technical Assistance Center) interviewed people with disabilities about working. All of the people were eligible for government benefits. They reported that work had made their lives better. Some of their comments included: “work gives me the freedom to enjoy life,” “work provides satisfaction,” and “it connects me to others, and work empowers me and makes me a good role model.” Work improved their

self image and they discovered that they were just like everyone else. Find out something new about yourself—work! To see the complete article go to <http://www.ada-infonet.org/Doc/workbooklet.doc>.

**WISE (Work Incentive Seminar Event)** is an event for people receiving SSDI and SSI who are interested in working. Each event includes information about Ticket to Work, work incentives, service providers and other resources in the community. When you choose to work, there

are many opportunities open to you. With the right supports and work incentives, you can navigate career development and enter the workforce. Join the beneficiaries who know about the options available to reach their employment goals. . To learn more or to sign up for a free WISE event in your area, visit [www.cessi.net/wise](http://www.cessi.net/wise) or call 1-877-743-8237 (V/TTY).



*“Few people have ever spent their way out of poverty. Those who escape do so through saving and investing for long-term goals.”*

*~Michael Sherraden*

# Individual Development Account (IDA)

IDAs (Individual Development Accounts) are ways to save money. The matched savings accounts are designed to build wealth and achieve economic independence. When you save \$1, the program matches it with \$3. An account can be

opened with as little as \$15.00. You can save money, up to \$1500 to purchase a first home, to begin or capitalize a small business, or pay for higher education. In 2009, the state legislature changed to law to include assistive technology. People with dis-

abilities can now save for work-related technologies. Assets provide people with more options and can help working families move out of poverty. For income qualifications, to learn more, and to apply, contact [www.uidian.org](http://www.uidian.org) or 1-877-787-0727



Opening Doors to Work

## Work Ability Utah

Utah Department of Health  
1595 West 500 South  
Salt Lake City Utah 84104  
Phone: (801) 887-9529  
Toll Free: 1-877-2GO-WORK

**Check out our Website!**

[www.workabilityutah.org](http://www.workabilityutah.org)

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# Work Ability Utah

Since 2000, the Utah Department of Health has received a grant from the Centers for Medicaid and Medicare Services. Work Ability Utah is a Medicaid Infrastructure Grant—a MIG. The purpose of the MIG is to create a comprehensive system of work incentives and supports that will increase employment and healthcare outcomes for individuals with significant disabilities.

To that end, Work Ability Utah collaborates with public and private partners to improve and sustain the infrastructure of employment supports, including benefits planning, personal assistance and health care benefits for people with disabilities who work.

The primary goals are:

- Provide training and outreach to individuals with disabilities, their families, agency personnel and the general public;
- Build networks among employers, job seekers and provider supports to ensure successful employment for individuals with disabilities;
- Conduct policy analysis and research to enhance employment and health care for people with disabilities; and
- Develop infrastructure within the state systems to improve quality services supporting employment.

This newsletter is funded by the Work Ability Utah, Utah's Medicaid Infrastructure Grant 1QACMS030319 through the Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services. Work Ability Utah is a project of the Utah Department of Health.



**WORK  
ABILITY**

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# October 2009

## National Disability Employment Awareness Month

### *Plan now to attend!*

If you need accommodations, please make your request two weeks in advance. Thank you!

<i>Date</i>	<i>Event</i>	<i>Location</i>	<i>Contact</i>
October 7	<b><i>Supported Employment</i></b> Join the University of Utah Disabilities Studies class for one night to learn about Supported Employment, its past, present and future impact on employment opportunities for people with disabilities	4:30 PM – 7:00 PM Health Professions Education Building University of Utah 420 Wakara Way Room 338A Salt Lake City	Space is limited. To register contact Liz Cerna, (801) 887-9529 or ecerna@utah.gov
October 7	<b><i>Brain Injury Association of Utah 2009 Family and Professionals Conference</i></b> Featuring Michael Collins, Chief Clinical Officer, ImPACT Applications, Inc. and Craig and Stacy Lynne Zabriskie, Survivor and Author	All Day Event Salt Lake Community College, Larry H. Miller Campus, Sandy	Contact the Brain Injury Association of Utah (801) 484-2240 (800) 281-8442 www.biau.org
October 13	<b><i>Legislative Advocacy</i></b> Learn how to advocate for the issues important to you. The Legislative Coalition for People with Disabilities (LCPD) provides a network of support, experience and training.  TWO EVENTS! Pick the time that's convenient for you!	3:00 PM – 5:00 PM Judy Ann Buffmire Building 1595 West 500 South Salt Lake City <b>OR</b> 7:00 PM – 9:00 PM South Valley School 8400 S. Redwood Road West Jordan	Presented by Kris Fawson and LCPD colleagues Co-sponsored by UAPSE and People First  To register contact Liz Cerna, (801) 887-9529 or ecerna@utah.gov
October 14	<b><i>Golden Key Awards</i></b> The Governor's Committee on Employment of People with disabilities recognizes employers!	2:30 PM – 4:00 PM Noah's South Jordan 322 West 11000 South South Jordan	Leslee Hintze (801) 887-9392 lhintze@utah.gov To attend contact Leslee. To nominate, go to www.goodworkutah.com
October 14	<b><i>Veteran's Employment Workshop</i></b> Learn the skills to conduct your job search, write resumes, interview and apply for jobs.	8:00 – 1:00 PM Department of Workforce Services 1290 East 1450 South Clearfield	Seating is limited. To register call (801) 626-0300
October 15	<b><i>Being a Representative Payee and utilizing Work Incentives</i></b> Learn the responsibilities, resources for Rep-Payees and how to use work incentives	9:00 AM – 4:00 PM Uinta Basin Applied Technology Center 1100 E. Lagoon Street Roosevelt	To register contact Liz Cerna, (801) 887-9529 or ecerna@utah.gov

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October 19 and 20	<b><i>Supported Employment Specialist's Training</i></b> Core training for people who wish to be Employment Specialists (Job Coaches) <a href="http://utahsupportedemployment.org">http://utahsupportedemployment.org</a>	9:00 AM – 4:00 PM Pioneer Adult Rehabilitation Center 485 PARC Circle Clearfield	To register, contact Tim Riesen, PhD (801) 585-3154 <a href="mailto:Tim.riesen@ed.utah.edu">Tim.riesen@ed.utah.edu</a> Dept. of Special Education, University of Utah
October 20	<b><i>Assistive Technology and Individual Development Accounts</i></b> People with disabilities now have the opportunity to match savings to buy assistive technology for work!	Watch the Utah Individual Account Network website for more details. <a href="http://www.uidan.org">www.uidan.org</a>	For more information contact Martha Wunderli: toll free 1-877-787-0727
October 21	<b><i>Disability Mentoring Day</i></b> High School Students explore the many career options for them. This year's event is hosted by Questar	9:00 AM – 1:00 PM Questar Offices Salt Lake City	For further information, contact the Governor's Committee on Employment of People with Disabilities: (801) 887-9392
October 21	<b><i>BLINDSIGHT – a film</i></b> Six Tibetan teenagers attempt a dangerous journey to climb a mountain in the shadow of Everest. This seemingly impossible challenge is made all the more remarkable by the fact that the teenagers are blind.	7:00 PM Utah Museum of Fine Arts 410 Campus Center Drive University of Utah Campus, Salt Lake City	Presented by the Salt Lake Film Center in conjunction with the Disability Law Center.  For further information please call: (435) 797-3811
October 22	<b><i>Acronym-mania Jeopardy!</i></b> Do you find acronyms and agency names confusing? Come have fun and learn exactly what they mean for youth with disabilities moving from school to adult living.	7:00 PM – 9:00 PM Division of Services for the Blind and Visually Impaired 250 North 1950 West Salt Lake City	Everyone welcome!  For more information, contact Liz Cerna, (801) 887-9529 or <a href="mailto:ecerna@utah.gov">ecerna@utah.gov</a>
October 28	<b><i>Veteran's Employment Workshop</i></b> Learn the skills to conduct your job search, write resumes, interview and apply for jobs.	8:00 AM – 1:00 PM Ogden Employment Center 480 27th Street Ogden	Seating is limited. To register call (801) 626-0300
October 28	<b><i>Work Ability Job Fair</i></b> Employers are recruiting job seekers with disabilities for positions in their companies. Job Seekers – come prepared to apply and interview!	10:00 AM – 2:00 PM Sanderson Community Center f/t Deaf and Hard of Hearing, 5709 South 1500 West, Taylorsville	Participation open to all  Employers wanting to recruit, contact Leah Lobato, (801) 538-7964 or <a href="mailto:leahlobato@utah.gov">leahlobato@utah.gov</a>
October 28	<b><i>WISE – Work Incentives Seminar Event</i></b> Come learn the incentives from Social Security to support going to work! Meet staff who can assist you in meeting your employment goals.	11:30 AM – 12:30 PM Sanderson Community Center f/t Deaf and Hard of Hearing, 5709 South 1500 West, Taylorsville	Call or sign up online at 1-877-743-8237 or <a href="http://www.socialsecurity.gov/work/wise.html">www.socialsecurity.gov/work/wise.html</a>
October 29	<b><i>Medicaid and Beyond: Health Care and Working</i></b> Learn about health care programs that are available for people with disabilities to maintain healthcare and go to work.	2:00 PM – 4:00 PM Judy Buffmire Building 1595 West 500 South Salt Lake City	Presenters: Health Care Experts  To register contact Liz Cerna, (801) 887-9529 or <a href="mailto:ecerna@utah.gov">ecerna@utah.gov</a>

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