



Illinois Inroads to Inclusion

By Lois Barnhart, Illinois Disability Outreach Coordinator

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Illinois Disability Inclusion Team

In May, 2011, Serve Illinois Commission Executive Director, Ted Gibbs gave the go-ahead to begin formulating a Statewide Inclusion Team in Illinois. The Illinois Disability Inclusion Team (IDIT) will develop policies pertaining to the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS) program members with disabilities, specifically the inclusion, recruitment, disclosure and accommodation policies regarding members with disabilities. The IDIT's objective is to increase the number of persons with disabilities who participate in the CNCS programs. The IDIT will look at ways to develop a continuum of service for people with disabilities throughout their life span, promoting an ethic of civic engagement. We will begin to formulate a plan for "Life after AmeriCorps" with input from NextStep, CNCS funded grant to establish best practice for marketing AmeriCorps alumni. It is hoped to have the initial team established by mid June.

In the first two weeks of the Employment Survey for people with disabilities, posted on illinoisworknet (see the link below) nearly 200 people submitted a completed survey. Data for May will be forthcoming with a report to follow in June. It is our hope that the survey will give us a clearer picture of what the issues are in regard to barriers to employment/service/volunteerism in Illinois with regard to people with disabilities. As we increase our awareness we can build and strengthen the supports that are lacking.

In other news, the National Conference for Volunteerism and Community Service will be held in New Orleans, LA from June 4 through 8. Scott McFarland, Resources and Information Manager, Serve Illinois Commission and myself will be in attendance. This conference supports a disability inclusion tract as well as a full day Pre-conference during which Disability Coordinators from across the country gather to pool thoughts, define best practice and formulate plans for their perspective states. We look forward to learning new strategies and implementing them in Illinois!

<http://www.illinoisworknet.com/VosSurvey/survey.aspx?surveyid=54>

Look for a new issue of the Inroads to Inclusion in June.

Illinois Disability Outreach

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LINKS OF INTEREST:

Inclusion:

NSIP (National Service Inclusion Project)
www.serviceandinclusion.org

Volunteerism:

Opportunities in Illinois
www.serve.illinois.gov
AmeriCorps
www.americorps.org

Self-Disclosure:

www.zurinstitute.com/selfdisclosure..html

