



**NTAR LEADERSHIP CENTER**  
LEADERSHIP. INNOVATION. CHANGE.

# **Ready and Able: National Research on Partnerships with Employers**

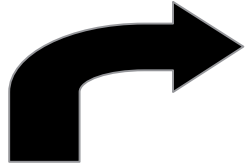
January 28, 2010

**Audio Dial-In Information**

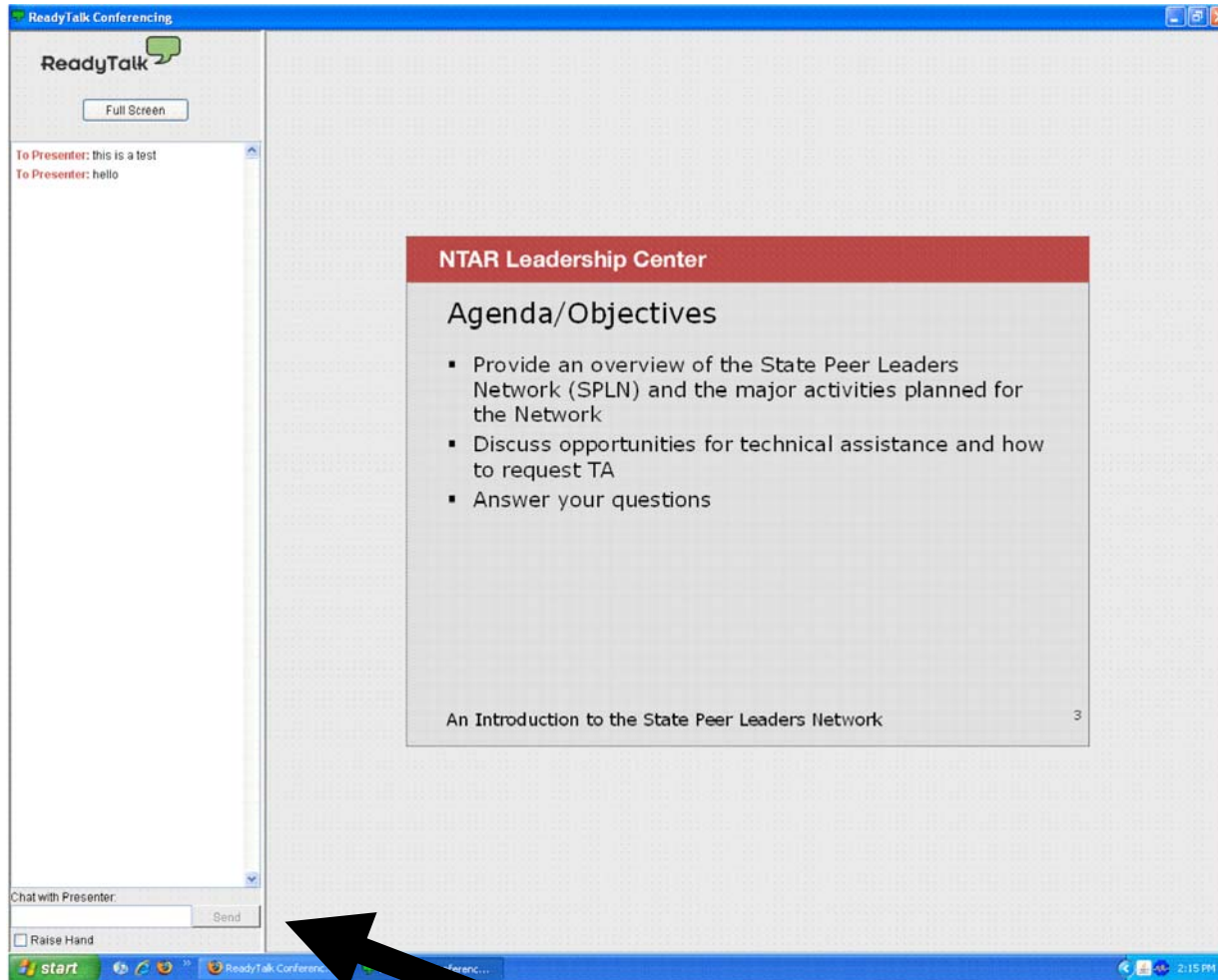
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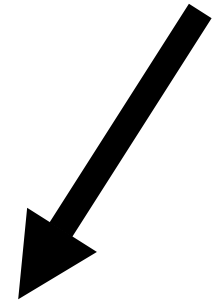
# Webinar Classroom Layout



Select **Full Screen** to maximize presentation; minimizes chat feature



Presentation Slide Area



Use **Chat box** to communicate with chairperson

## Access to Webinar Materials

- A direct link to the webinar materials, including web and audio content, will be posted on the NTAR Leadership Center website by 12:00 p.m. Eastern Time, Friday, January 29, 2010.

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

# The NTAR Leadership Center

- Established in September 2007 through a grant from the U.S. Department of Labor's Office of Disability Employment Policy (ODEP).
- A collaboration of partners with expertise in workforce and economic development, disability employment, financial education and asset building, and leadership development.
- Created for the purpose of building capacity and leadership at the federal, state, and local levels to enable change across workforce development and disability-specific systems that will increase employment for adults with disabilities.

# Guiding Principles

- Increasing partnerships and collaboration among and across generic and disability-specific systems.
- Increasing the use of self-direction in services, and integration of funding across and among systems.
- Increasing economic self-sufficiency through leveraging work incentives, financial education, or other strategies that promote profitable employment and asset building.
- Increasing the use of universal design in employment services and as a framework for employment policy.
- Increasing the use of customized and other forms of flexible work options for individuals with disabilities and others with barriers to employment.

## Presenters

- **Robert Nicholas**, Senior Visiting Fellow for Disability Research, Heldrich Center, Rutgers University
- **Ronnie Kauder**, Senior Practitioner-in-Residence, Heldrich Center, Rutgers University
- **Daniel Baker**, Associate Professor, Elizabeth M. Boggs Center on Developmental Disabilities, University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey (UMDNJ)

*Moderator:*

**Nanette Relave**, Director, Center for Workers with Disabilities

# **Ready and Able: National Research on Partnerships with Employers**

## **Preliminary Findings**

Robert Nicholas  
Ronnie Kauder  
Daniel Baker

# Agenda/Objectives

- National Research Topic
- Results of Literature Review
- In-depth National Research
- Ready and Able Findings
- A Story of Mutual Success
- Implications for the Future

# NTAR Leadership Center National Research

- Focused on employer-initiated and market-driven approaches to recruiting, hiring, accommodating, and retaining employees with disabilities.
- Includes literature review and in-depth case study profiles of market-driven initiatives across the nation.

# Literature Review

Focused on:

- Direct recruitment and hiring initiatives by private-sector businesses as well as the public sector.
- Recruitment and hiring initiatives by staffing companies.
- Partnerships between employers and workforce intermediaries specifically for the recruitment and training of employees with disabilities.
- Entrepreneurial efforts and other initiatives to support people with disabilities to be self-employed and/or own their own businesses.

# Literature Review Findings

- Numerous innovative approaches for recruiting, hiring, and retaining employees with disabilities.
- Recognition by companies of the “business case” = people with disabilities add value to the company’s workforce and positively affect the “bottom line”.
- Partnerships with workforce intermediaries are key in successful employer-driven initiatives.

# In-Depth Research: Partnerships and Collaborations

## Case study research looked at:

- **Large national companies** that organize local partnerships with service agencies.
- **Industry-specific (sector) initiatives** that feature intermediaries coordinating multiple employers and multiple service agencies.
- **Staffing companies** that coordinate outreach and disability services to provide multiple employer customers with qualified employees.

# In-Depth Research: Partnerships and Collaborations

## Case study research looked at:

- **National intermediary organizations** that connect employers with students with disabilities in **higher education**.
- **Local networks** that assist multiple local employers to recruit, train, and retain employees with disabilities.
- **Local organizations that foster and promote partnerships** between employers and service providers.

# In-Depth Profiles

- **Large National Companies**
  - Walgreens Distribution Centers
  - Lockheed Martin’s Seamless Transition Apprenticeship Program
  
- **Industry-specific (Sector) Initiatives**
  - IAJVS and the Financial Services Industry
  - Minnesota’s Digital Imaging Initiative
  
- **Staffing Companies**
  - GoodTemps (New York City metropolitan area)
  - Manpower (Albuquerque, NM)

# In-Depth Profiles

- **National Intermediary Organizations – Higher Education**
  - National Disability and Business Council (Emerging Leaders)
  - Career Opportunities for Students with Disabilities
  - Lime Connect
  
- **Local Networks**
  - New Bedford, MA Chamber of Commerce Supported Employment Network
  - Pittsburgh, PA Start on Success Program
  - Cincinnati, OH and replication sites using Project SEARCH Model
  
- **Local Organizations that Foster and Promote Partnerships**
  - disabilityworks, Chicago and throughout Illinois
  - Oregon Business Leadership Network, Portland and throughout Oregon

## Ready and Able Findings

1. Employers respond to the business case for employing people with disabilities.
2. Innovative collaborations with and between workforce supplying organizations facilitate employers to recruit, hire, train, and support employees with disabilities.
3. Collaborations ensure that workers are qualified and productive.
4. Successful collaborations nurture and reward continuous leadership.

# Employers Respond to the Business Case

- Employees with disabilities possess the skills needed for the job.
- Employers see employees with disabilities as meeting their business and workforce needs.
- Successful experiences with employees with disabilities increase employer openness to hiring, accommodation, and retention.
- Business-to-business marketing of best practices for employing people with disabilities is most powerful.

## Examples from Research

- All types of employers in **Minnesota** are hiring people with disabilities to perform much-needed **digital imaging** work, a growing high-tech field.
- “Best of class” companies, such as Bank of America/Merrill Lynch, PepsiCo, and Target Corporation, are partnering with **Lime Connect** to source talented students with disabilities for full-time, internship, and co-op opportunities. They put talent first, disability second.

## Examples from Research

- **GoodTemps** in New York/New Jersey meets the needs of large and small private- and public-sector organizations through a temporary workforce of qualified individuals, most with disabilities.
- **Walgreens** believes that people with disabilities can perform just as well as anyone else and has staffed one-third of the workforce at its new high-tech distribution centers with employees with disabilities. The experience was so successful, it has been expanded to additional distribution centers, both old-tech and new.

# Innovative Collaborations Facilitate Hiring

- Employers do not want to have to maintain relationships with many varied workforce supplying organizations.
- Employers want a single point of contact to coordinate assistance and support they need to recruit and hire.
- Assistance and supports provided through the collaboration are based on employers' needs and standards.

# Innovative Collaborations Facilitate Hiring

- Partner organizations organize and coordinate supports and provide technical assistance on workforce and disability-specific issues.
- Employers' location and hiring patterns are partially influenced by the effectiveness of public-sector partners.

## Examples from Research

- **Walgreens** partnered with organizations in South Carolina and Connecticut to help it recruit and navigate the disability services landscape. The Anderson, SC distribution center employed nearly 250 employees with disabilities in 2009 that were hired through the partnership, which represents 40% of all employees. The goal for the Windsor, CT distribution center is the same.
- **The New Bedford (MA) Chamber of Commerce** serves as an intermediary between local service providers and more than 250 member employers, many of which are small businesses, leading to employment for 740 people with disabilities since 2005.

## Examples from Research

- **Career Opportunities for Students with Disabilities (COSD)** serves as the hub and point of contact for collaborating universities and employers throughout the nation. Employers are enthusiastic about recruiting higher education students with disabilities and COSD gives them easy access.

# Collaborations Ensure that Workers are Qualified and Productive

- Internships and mentorships facilitate permanent hiring.
- Training in occupation-specific and “soft” skills.
- Provision of needed supports and accommodations to assist employees to be successful once on the job.

## Examples from Research

- In its **Financial Career Pathways** initiative, **Jewish Vocational Service (JVS)** affiliates in Los Angeles, New Jersey, and San Francisco worked with local banks to develop a curriculum that included “Banking 101,” “Workplace 101,” and career development and job search skills so that adults with disabilities could qualify for jobs in financial institutions.
- Through the **Pittsburgh Start on Success (SOS)** program, students with disabilities are matched with paid internships. SOS graduates have a 97% high school graduation rate and 80% are employed and/or in postsecondary education three months after graduation.

## Examples from Research

- **Lockheed Martin** has developed registered apprenticeships in supply chain management and information technology targeted to injured veterans with a high school education and military training.
- Through partnership arrangements, **Manpower, Inc.** in Albuquerque, NM trained people with disabilities for high-demand jobs in the technology sector.

## Examples from Research

- The **Project SEARCH** model addresses a range of skills related to employment preparedness and independent living. It also uses innovative workforce supports that make it possible for persons with significant disabilities to work in a wide variety of jobs.

# Successful Collaborations Nurture and Reward Leadership

- Leaders are willing to develop, coordinate, nurture, and manage the collaboration.
- Leaders have the ability to motivate, inspire, and connect employer leaders.
- Leaders act day in and day out as champions to make things happen.

## Examples from Research

- With high-level, active business leadership, Chicago's **disabilityworks** has acted as a catalyst for educating and connecting employers.
- **Walgreens'** Randy Lewis and Deb Russell have publicized the Walgreens model and conducted information and training sessions for other companies.
- Shamus O'Meara, an attorney who chaired the **Minnesota Council on Developmental Disabilities**, persuaded his law firm to lead by example in becoming involved in digital imaging.

## Examples from Research

- The **Oregon Business Leadership Network (OBLN)** cultivates and promotes leadership through education, training, and awareness.
- **Project SEARCH** offers a licensing agreement so that others can replicate the Project SEARCH model and use its materials. There are several Project SEARCH replications in planning or operational stages.

# A Story of Mutual Success

- Expanded employment opportunities for people with disabilities.
- An underutilized source of valuable employees for employers.
- Opportunities for public and non-profit organizations to be trusted, reliable partners that deliver results for both people with disabilities and employers.

# Implications for the Future

- For federal, state, and local policymakers:
  - Develop strategies for responding to employers that want assistance in the recruitment of employees with disabilities – these strategies should look at the situation from the **employer point of view** and make it **easy** for the employer to work with the public sector and provider organizations.

# Implications for the Future

- For federal, state, and local policymakers:
  - Make workforce training programs more universal and integrated, with inclusive access and services that benefit job seekers and employees with a wide range of learning styles, languages, educational levels, and abilities.

# Implications for the Future

- For disability service and workforce development organizations:
  - Develop strategies such as co-operative education, internships, and apprenticeships that give employers experience employing people with disabilities and that can serve as vehicles to better prepare people with disabilities for skilled, career ladder positions.

# Implications for the Future

- For disability service and workforce development organizations:
  - Foster collaborative relationships among workforce-supplying organizations that make it easier for employers or employer organizations to work with publicly funded programs.

# Implications for the Future

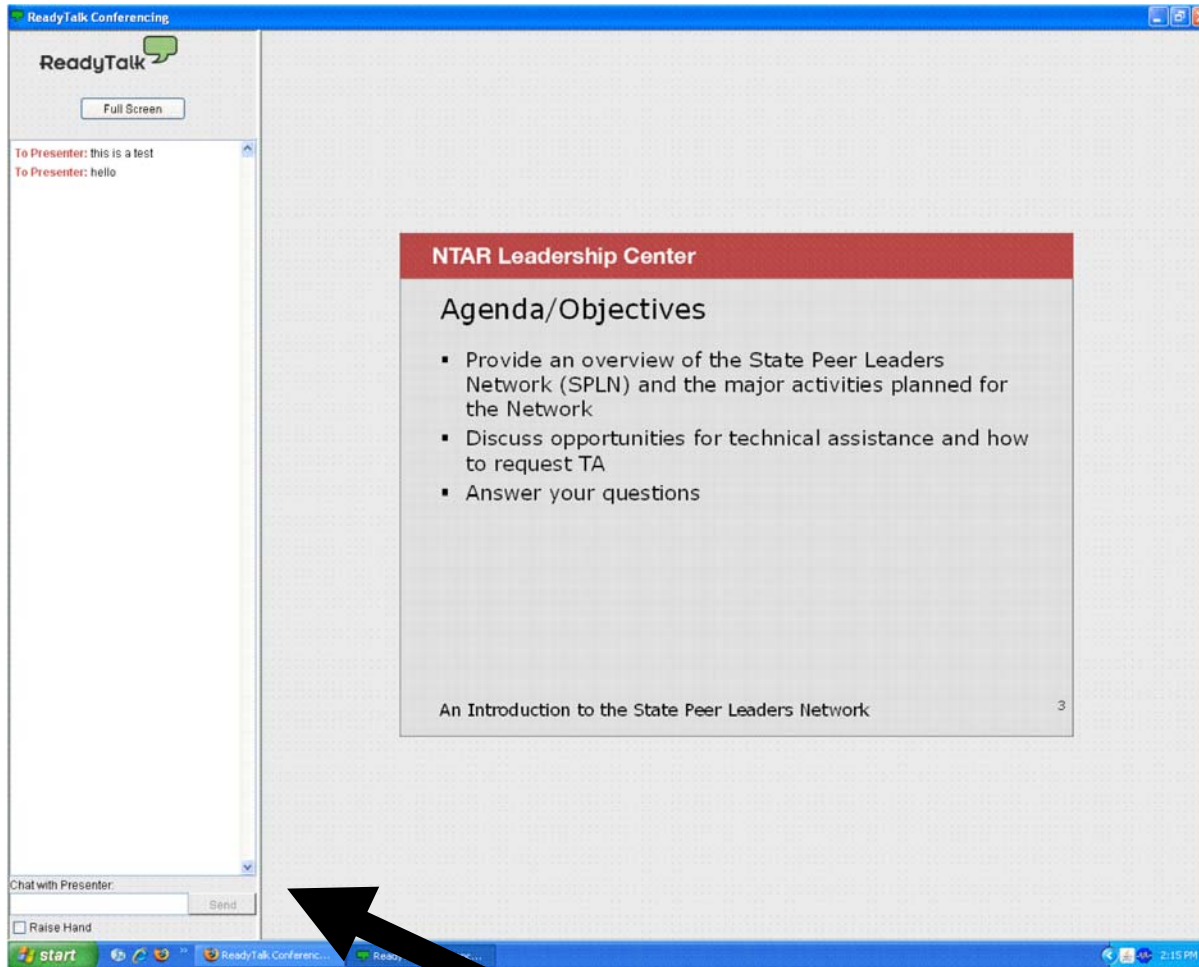
- For business-serving organizations and employers:
  - Recognize that people with disabilities are a valuable resource to meet employer needs for reliable skilled employees.

# Implications for the Future

- For business-serving organizations and employers:
  - Look to engage in partnerships with responsive workforce development, disability service organizations, and other agencies to recruit, hire, train, retain, and support employees with disabilities.

# Question-and-Answer Period: How to Submit Your Questions

Click **Raise Hand** to ask a question; the chairperson will then call on participants in the order that questions were received



The screenshot shows the ReadyTalk Conferencing window. On the left is a chat box with a 'Full Screen' button and messages: 'To Presenter: this is a test' and 'To Presenter: hello'. At the bottom left is a 'Chat with Presenter:' input field with a 'Send' button and a 'Raise Hand' checkbox. The main area displays a slide titled 'NTAR Leadership Center' with the following content:

**NTAR Leadership Center**

**Agenda/Objectives**

- Provide an overview of the State Peer Leaders Network (SPLN) and the major activities planned for the Network
- Discuss opportunities for technical assistance and how to request TA
- Answer your questions

An Introduction to the State Peer Leaders Network 3

At the bottom of the window, there is a 'start' button and a 'Raise Hand' checkbox. A large black arrow points from the 'Raise Hand' checkbox to the text box on the left. Another large black arrow points from the 'Chat with Presenter:' input field to the text box on the right.

*Ready and Able, January 28, 2010*

Use **Chat box** to send your question(s) to the chairperson

# Question-and-Answer Period



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# NTAR Leadership Center Website

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