



Interview with Douglas Kruse
Professor, School of Management and Labor Relations, Rutgers University
Co-chair, NTAR Leadership Center National Research Panel

[Announcer] This Podcast is presented by the NTAR Leadership Center, helping state leaders help adults with disabilities to employment and better economic opportunities through collaboration, innovation, and change.

[Laurie Harrington] Welcome to Research in Brief, a feature podcast of the NTAR Leadership Center. I am your host, Laurie Harrington. Douglas Kruse is the co-chair of the research panel for the NTAR Leadership Center and a Professor in the School of Management and Labor Relations at Rutgers University, and a Research Associate at the National Bureau of Economic Research in Cambridge, Massachusetts. He received an M.A. in Economics from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln and a Ph.D. in Economics from Harvard University. His research has focused on the employment and earnings effects of disability, and the causes, consequences, and implications of employee ownership and profit sharing. His publications include *Profit Sharing: Does It Make A Difference?*, which won Princeton's Richard A. Lester prize as the year's Outstanding Book in Labor Economics and Industrial Relations, and *In the Company of Owners*, which was co-authored with Joseph Blasi and Aaron Bernstein. In addition, his published articles have appeared in scholarly journals such as *Economic Journal*, *Industrial Relations*, and *Industrial and Labor Relations Review*. He has testified four times before Congress on his economic research, and authored or co-authored three U.S. Department of Labor studies. He was appointed by the Governor to New Jersey's State Rehabilitation Council, served on the President's Committee on Employment of People with Disabilities and is on the Board of Reviewers of Industrial Relations. Welcome to our Podcast Dr. Kruse. First, can you talk about what you refer to as the meaningful connections among economic, political, and social inclusion in your upcoming book, *Sidelined or Mainstreamed Economic, Political and Social Inclusions of People with Disabilities in the 21st Century*?

[Dr. Douglas Kruse] Okay, well, I have been working for quite a while with my colleague Lisa Schur at Rutgers and also with Peter Blanck of Syracuse University on issues of economic, political and social inclusions and we are going to be writing a book that examines that. The economic inclusions we know and from our past research and other past research that people with disabilities are less likely to be employed, have lower income levels. They are about twice as likely to be in poverty. Regarding political inclusion, people with disabilities have lower voter turnout and lower forms of other political activism, are less likely to see the political system's responsive. And even though people with disabilities have made tremendous political gains over the past few decades has still lower turnout in general. And social inclusion, people with disabilities are more likely to live alone and less likely to get out and see friends and socialize with people. So, we are going to review evidence on that and contribute some due evidence, but your question is about the connections and one thing that we are going to do is to explore those connections, in particular the link to employment. Employment is clearly a key factor in economic inclusion. First of all of course employment provides income which is extremely important, but it also provides social connections that are important in social inclusion. And interestingly, employment provides some civic skills as well and decision making in a lot of jobs,



kind of skills that lend themselves to political participation. And we find very interestingly in a couple of studies that people with disabilities who are employed are just as likely as people without disabilities who are employed to vote. There is no gap in voter turnout, but among non-employed people with disabilities, there is a big gap in voter turnout. So, employment seemed to have an, especially important influence on the political inclusion and social inclusion of people with disabilities.

[Laurie Harrington] What evidence will your book present to illustrate your conclusions in your book?

[Dr. Douglas Kruse] Well, what we want to do as we have done in past research is to present both quantitative and qualitative data. That is quantitative data, we have analyzed a lot of surveys in the past, to both surveys collected by the federal government and surveys that we have done ourselves of the U.S. population, people with and without disabilities. So, we will be doing a lot of that looking at trends in employment, income, political participation, and so forth, but we also want to make use of qualitative data. Qualitative data primarily relying on in-depth interviews, in-depth interviews that really give you a much broader picture, much more incisive picture of what people with disabilities experience. We would like to, Lisa has done this in the past, interviewing both political activists and non-activists and we would like to do the same thing here, to analyze both disability leaders to find out what they think of economic, political and social inclusion and what barriers remain and what progress has been made, but also to talk to a number of people who are not disability leaders. Regular people with disabilities to see how they perceive progress over the past several decades and what they think are the remaining barriers. So, we want to use a mix of quantitative and qualitative data to reach very solid and well founded conclusions.

[Laurie Harrington] When do you expect the book to be published?

[Dr. Douglas Kruse] Well actually, we are just getting started on this and books take a long time. I think it is going to be published probably in early 2012. So, it is still awhile until we will be popping the champagne cork on that one.

[Laurie Harrington] In your paper, *Projecting Potential Demand for Workers with Disabilities*, you use a sophisticated methodology for projecting the employment of people with disabilities. Can you describe your methodologies for that paper and highlights on its main findings?

[Dr. Douglas Kruse] What we do in this project, *Projecting Potential Demand for Workers with Disabilities* is two things. First of all, every two years the Bureau of Labor Statistics and the U.S. Department of Labor comes out with occupational projections for the next ten years showing which occupations expected to grow, which ones are expected to decline and how much data on that. I have thought for several years now, we really need to match disability information to that. So, that is what we have done. This is in part based on U.S. government grant. What we have done is to match disability information, so we know for example, five percent of people in occupation x have disabilities, then we find out if occupation x growing or declining. We have merged in all that information to find out are people with disabilities in generally in growing or



declining occupations and the answer to that question is they tend to be in slower growing occupations. That is they are not in the fast growing high tech ones in general. So, the occupational distribution is not favorable. But, the other thing we do, the other question we ask is apart from the projection of what the current trend show, what the current projection show, what is the potential for people with disabilities to be employed. And there we have matched data to the federal government's occupational database called ONET where they have detailed data on what kinds of abilities are used in each occupation, like 52 abilities. Like does this ability--does this occupation require good eyesight, does it require manual dexterity, does it require the ability to do math, you know, a very detailed ability information. So, we break that down by the projections and find that there is a lot of growth in occupations that do not require certain abilities. For example, there is going to be a growth of 3.5 million jobs in occupations that do not require manual dexterity, which is good news for people with cerebral palsy or quadriplegia or other disabilities that limit manual dexterity. As another example, we find there is going to be a growth of over 5 million jobs in occupations that do not require gross body coordination is their term, you know, the ability to move all your limbs. Well, that is good news for people in wheelchairs or who use crutches or something like that. There is going to be over 5 million jobs in occupations that do not--that can be done fairly straightforwardly by people in wheelchairs. The final thing we do is to look at the growth in part-time and home-based work. Part-time and home-based work may be especially appropriate for many people with disabilities and we do find that there will be faster growth in those types of jobs than among jobs in general. So, that is good news for people with disabilities because some people with disabilities, some have limitations that make part-time work or home-based work especially appropriate. People with disabilities should not be limited to those jobs, but for many people with disabilities those jobs may be very appropriate and good ones for them.

[Laurie Harrington] This information is vital for service providers and job counselors and frontline staff who help people with disabilities enter the labor force. How do you intend to disseminate your findings?

[Dr. Douglas Kruse] Well, the good news is that this article has been accepted for publication in the Monthly Labor Review. The Monthly Labor Review is published by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. It comes out every month as implied by the name and as four or five articles each time looking at difference trends in the labor force. This one, this is posted on the BLS website, it is free and it is widely available. People can immediately download the articles and pass them around freely. So, we are very happy this is going to get a high visibility publication like that and we are hoping that as people look over all the results we provide some very detailed results on the different growing occupations and declining occupations for people with disabilities. And also the occupations that are most appropriate for people with different types of disabilities; that is if you have you know limited manual dexterity for example, what are the fastest growing occupations that do not require that manual dexterity. We are hoping that as people look through all that, they will come to us with questions and we can help answer those about what are the promising occupations for people with disabilities. Ideally, we would like to put this into some kind of easily accessible database for career counselors and people with disabilities to use so that they can just plug in their information, you know their level of education, their interest, their particular type of disability they have and it will kick out for them



will produce--the software will produce for them, here are the growing occupations, so the person can have a menu to choose. Here is the one place you look at, this looks interesting, let me try this one.

[Laurie Harrington] Thank you, Dr. Kruse for speaking with us today. I have been talking with Dr. Douglas Kruse, Professor at Rutgers University and the co-chair of the research panel for the NTAR Leadership Center. This is Laurie Harrington for Research in Brief with the NTAR Leadership Center. For more information about the NTAR Leadership Center and its research activities visit www.ntarcenter.org.

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