

In this Issue: **Recent Trainings, Inclusive Holiday Parties & More**

## EARN IN ACTION

### **Educating Employers in the Show-Me State**

On November 9, 2018, EARN was in Missouri to present at a “Disability and Veteran Inclusion Summit” jointly hosted by Society for Human Resource Management of Greater St. Louis and Disability:IN Greater St. Louis. Held at the headquarters of Fabick CAT in Fenton, MO, the event attracted employers across the region interested in recruiting and retaining people with disabilities, including disabled veterans. EARN helped contribute to the conversation with a session on mentoring as a disability inclusion strategy. [Learn more about mentoring.](#)

### **Exploring Service and Emotional Support Animals in the Federal Workspace**

In early November, EARN, in collaboration with the U.S. Department of Labor’s Office of Disability Employment Policy (ODEP), the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) and the U.S. Office of Personnel Management (OPM), hosted the Federal Exchange on Employment and Disability (FEED) quarterly meeting. The discussion topic was use of service and emotional support animals in the federal workplace. FEED is an interagency working group focused on increasing disability representation in the federal workforce. Any federal employee committed to inclusive hiring and retention is encouraged to join. [Learn how to join FEED.](#)

### **Best Practices in Inclusive Employment**

On November 13, 2018, EARN was pleased to present about “Best Practices in Inclusive Employment” during a webinar for employers sponsored by the Great Lakes Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Center. This webinar centered on EARN’s Inclusion@Work employer policy framework, which outlines seven core components of a disability-inclusive workplace and provides a menu of strategies for achieving them. If you missed the webinar, don’t fret! An archive of the entire session and its related materials are now available. [Watch the archived webinar.](#)

### **EEOC and OPM Memo Highlights EARN as Resource for Federal Agencies**

The U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) and U.S. Office of Personnel Management (OPM) recently issued a joint memo highlighting revisions to the SF-256 (Self-Identification of Disability) form used by federal agencies. The memo also includes resources to assist agencies in their efforts to encourage self-identification, among them EARN and the Federal Exchange on Employment and Disability (FEED). The revisions to SF-256 make it easier for applicants and employees with disabilities to self-identify by simplifying terminology, better defining medical conditions listed and allowing for indication of a disability without specifying a diagnosis. [Read more about the memo.](#)

### **Accolades for EARN**

EARN is pleased to announce that its employer policy framework web tool, “Inclusion@Work: A Framework for Building a Disability-Inclusive Workplace,” recently earned a MarCom “Platinum” award in the category of “Web Element Microsite.” The MarCom Awards is an

international creative competition that recognizes outstanding achievement by marketing and communication professionals. About 6,000 entries were submitted by applicants ranging from individual communicators to media conglomerates and Fortune 500 companies. [Access Inclusion@Work.](#)

## DISABILITY EMPLOYMENT IN THE NEWS

### **Working Works**

The Campaign for Disability Employment (CDE)—of which EARN is proud to be a member—recently launched its latest public service announcement (PSA). “Working Works” features four individuals sharing why they work and the important roles different people, including their employers and health-care professionals, played in helping them continue to do so after injury or illness. Among these individuals is Cal Ripken, Jr., who holds Major League Baseball’s record for most consecutive games played. The CDE is funded by the U.S. Department of Labor’s Office of Disability Employment Policy. [View the PSA.](#)

### **Accommodations for New and Expecting Moms**

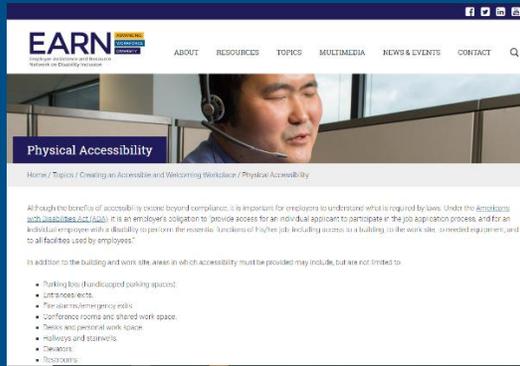
During and after pregnancy, some women may be limited in their ability to perform certain tasks, for example, heavy lifting or climbing ladders. Furthermore, some may develop complications, such as diabetes, back impairment or high blood pressure. In such cases, employees may be entitled to accommodations under the Pregnancy Discrimination Act and/or Americans with Disabilities Act, which also extends protections to women experiencing postpartum depression. The Job Accommodation Network (JAN) offers guidance on both scenarios. Learn more about accommodations for [pregnancy](#) or [postpartum depression](#).

### **Solution Showcase Videos**

The Job Accommodation Network (JAN) recently launched a new series of videos showcasing various common job accommodation solutions for workers with a variety of disabilities. Topics for the first three aptly named “Solution Showcase” videos include smartpens, speech recognition and telephone amplification. The videos were developed with assistance from the Florida Alliance for Assistive Services and Technology. Like EARN, JAN is funded by the U.S. Department of Labor’s Office of Disability Employment Policy. [Access the videos.](#)

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## ASK EARN



**Q: We want to make sure our holiday party is inclusive and accessible. Do you have ideas to help?**

**A:** Yes! With the holiday season now upon us, many businesses are planning parties to celebrate the past year and toast to success in the one ahead. When planning such events (at any time of year) you are right that it's important to ensure ALL employees, including employees with disabilities, can join in the festivities. For help doing so, check out our [webpage on accessibility](#) as well as the Mid-Atlantic Americans with Disabilities Act Center's "[Guide to Accessible Events and Meetings](#)," which offers tips on everything from venue selection to catering to food allergies and sensitivities.

## MARK YOUR CALENDAR

**January 11, 2019**

### **Deadline: Disability Equality Index**

The deadline to register for the 2019 Disability Equality Index® (DEI) is January 11. Sponsored by the American Association of People with Disabilities and EARN partner Disability:IN, this confidential benchmarking tool offers employers an opportunity to receive an objective rating on their disability inclusion policies and practices. Companies that score 80 percent or higher are named "DEI Best Places to Work." Once registered, companies will receive access to the survey to begin their submission. [Learn more about the DEI.](#)

**March 1, 2019**

### **Deadline: Disability Employment Tracker**

The deadline to complete the 2019 Disability Employment Tracker™ is March 1. Sponsored by the National Organization on Disability (NOD), this tool provides companies a confidential assessment of their disability inclusion policies and practices. Completion is required to be considered for DiversityInc's annual list of *Top 10 Companies for People with Disabilities*, and top scorers have the opportunity to earn an NOD "Leading Disability Employer Seal." [Learn more about the Tracker.](#)

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## EMPLOYER SPOTLIGHT

## Idaho National Laboratory

*You may not know that both private companies and public entities can participate in the Disability Employment Tracker™ and earn a “Leading Disability Employer seal” from the National Organization on Disability (NOD). In fact, this year, the Idaho National Laboratory (INL) was among the 52 organizations to earn this recognition. INL is one of the U.S. Department of Energy’s national laboratories, with day-to-day management and operation handled by Battelle Energy Alliance. [Learn more about INL’s efforts.](#)*

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The Employer Assistance and Resource Network on Disability Inclusion (EARN) is a resource for employers seeking to recruit, hire, retain and advance qualified employees with disabilities. It is funded by the U.S. Department of Labor's Office of Disability Employment Policy under a cooperative agreement with The Viscardi Center. For more information, visit [AskEARN.org](http://AskEARN.org)

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