

**The Alliance for Full Participation  
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**ALLIANCE SETS GOAL OF DOUBLING EMPLOYMENT AMONG PEOPLE WITH DEVELOPMENTAL  
DISABILITIES**

**WASHINGTON, DC**—The Alliance for Full Participation has announced that the goal of its new campaign, “Real Jobs – It’s Everybody’s Business,” is to double the employment rate for people with disabilities by 2015. The Alliance has also outlined the issues that will guide the work of stakeholder teams in each state and the District of Columbia, leading up to the 2011 Summit.

The employment rate for typical Americans is 79.7%, while the employment rate for people with developmental disabilities is only 22%. The campaign seeks to close the employment gaps by doubling that figure to 44% within five years. According to Chester Finn, President of Self Advocates Becoming Empowered, “This goal is important for people with disabilities because we want to work, make money and accomplish our goals and aspirations. Furthermore, when we work, we’re contributing valuable skills and assets to our communities.”

"Setting a goal to double the employment rate for those with developmental disabilities is the only way we can move towards our actual goal of full participation for all people in community life," said AFP chair James F. Gardner, PhD.

The effort to improve employment outcomes in communities across the country will be led by a team in each state. The state teams, comprised of people with developmental disabilities, employers, coworkers, business organizations, service providers, government officials, family members, advocacy organizations and members of the general community, have already begun forming. The teams will advance their shared agendas through a series of activities organized by theme:

- Having Clear Goals
- Service and Services Innovations
- Learning from Employers and Self-Advocates
- Creating Incentives and Removing Barriers
- Interagency Collaboration
- Community Partnerships

“State teams are evolving using existing coalitions, collaborations or from those individuals interested in achieving real and lasting change,” says Karen Flippo, AFP Liaison to the State Teams. “Our belief is that change can occur if there is ‘buy-in’ by the community and a shared value about competitive employment for people with developmental disabilities.”

The Alliance for Full Participation will support state teams by hosting a series of interactive webinars, issuing an informative newsletter for each theme, and will provide state teams with a tool kit for holding meetings in their communities on these topics, with particular emphasis on how to implement the strategies discussed in the webinars. The results of these activities will frame the program and related activities for the 2011 Summit.

The archive of the campaign's "kick off" webinar, "Employment Today: Understanding the Current State of Employment for People with Developmental Disabilities," held May 7, 2009, can be accessed from the Alliance website, [www.allianceforfullparticipation.org](http://www.allianceforfullparticipation.org).

Those interested in connecting with the team in their state should contact Karen Flippo at [kfflippo@aol.com](mailto:kfflippo@aol.com).

### ***About the Alliance for Full Participation***

The members of the Alliance for Full Participation are:

- [American Association on Intellectual and Development Disabilities \(AAIDD\)](#)
- [American Network of Community Options and Resources \(ANCOR\)](#)
- [APSE: The Employment Network](#)
- [Association of University Centers on Disabilities \(AUCD\)](#)
- [Autism Society of America \(ASA\)](#)
- [Best Buddies International](#)
- [National Association of Councils on Developmental Disabilities \(NACDD\)](#)
- [National Alliance for Director Support Professionals \(NADSP\)](#)
- [The Arc of United States](#)
- [The National Association of State Directors of Developmental Disabilities Services \(NASDDDS\)](#)
- NISH
- [United Cerebral Palsy \(UCP\)](#)
- [The Council on Quality and Leadership | CQL](#)
- [Self-Advocates Becoming Empowered \(SABE\)](#)

For more information on AFP go to: <http://www.allianceforfullparticipation.org>

While each organization represents distinct populations within the developmental disabilities community, all are united in a commitment to the successful inclusion of people with developmental disabilities into the mainstream of American life. By bringing together the many voices within these organizations and throughout the developmental disabilities community dedicated to this common cause, the Alliance for Full Participation will work together to make the vision of full participation a reality.

In 2005, more than 2,500 disabilities advocates gathered in Washington, DC to dream, plan and organize around a shared vision of a world where people with developmental disabilities can realize the promise of integration, productivity, independence and quality of life choices.