



Florida Disability Mentoring Day October 21, 2009

Final Report

Submitted by:

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Introduction

Florida Disability Mentoring Day (DMD) is part of a large-scale national effort to promote career development for students and job seekers with disabilities through hands-on career exploration, on-site job shadowing, and ongoing mentoring leading to internship and employment opportunities. DMD is commemorated on the third Wednesday of October in conjunction with Disability Employment Awareness Month. Participating students and job seekers have the opportunity to visit an employer mentor's job site and learn about his or her day-to-day job experiences in an effort to better prepare themselves and sharpen their skills for that particular career path. Employer mentors gain access to a pool of emerging talent, potential interns, and demonstrate positive leadership in their community.

Hosted and sponsored nationally by the American Association of People with Disabilities (AAPD), the largest national cross-disability membership organization in the United States, DMD connects nearly 20,000 job-seekers with disabilities with thousands of employers in more than 300 locations in every U.S. State and Territory and in more than 24 countries worldwide each year.

2009 Florida Statewide Planning Committee

In the State of Florida, DMD is organized by a collaborative partnership of The Able Trust/Florida Governor's Alliance for the Employment of Citizens with Disabilities (FGA), the Agency for Person's with Disabilities, the Florida Department of Education Division of Vocational Rehabilitation and other statewide agency partners. The committee provides support to a network of Community Liaisons across the state who coordinate the local matchmaking experience between mentors and mentees.

The Florida Statewide Planning Committee is engaged in DMD planning throughout the entire year. Its responsibilities include:

- Raising sponsorship dollars to underwrite statewide DMD activities (\$26,250 raised in 2009);
- Recruiting and updating Community Liaisons with toolkits, conference calls and email correspondence;
- Developing support materials for Community Liaisons, such as mentor/mentee recruitment brochures, save the date postcards, sample applications and website;
- Coordinating promotions through radio, television and print media activities;
- Recruiting statewide business partnerships for mentor recruitment;
- Planning and organizing a statewide DMD kickoff event; and
- Creating mentor and mentee recognition materials.

The 2009 Florida DMD Statewide Planning Committee:

Susanne Homant, President/CEO	The Able Trust
Sally Ash	The Able Trust
Dr. JR Harding	Agency for Persons with Disabilities
Melanie Etters	Agency for Persons with Disabilities
Rachel Smith	Division of Vocational Rehabilitation
Paul Martell	Volunteer Florida
John Irvine	Commission for Transportation Disadvantaged
Amy Albee	Florida Department of Education, Division of Community Colleges
Stacia Woolverton	Governor's Commission on Disabilities
Nanette Schimpf	Moore Consulting, Inc.
Cat Keen	The Able Trust
Natalie Lamb	The Able Trust
Ray Ford	The Able Trust
Paula Roberts	Advocacy Center for Persons with Disabilities

Florida Statewide Planning Committee Headquarters

The Able Trust
Florida Governor's Alliance for the Employment of Citizens with Disabilities
3320 Thomasville Road, Suite 200
Tallahassee, FL 32308
850/224.4493 (Voice/TDD) or 888/838.2253 (Toll-free)
850/224.4496 (Fax)
Contact: info@abletrust.org Website: www.floridadmd.org

Local Community Liaisons

Community Liaisons facilitate matching experiences between mentees with disabilities and business mentors. These experiences may include One-to-One Job Shadowing activities, which individually pairs a mentee with a workplace mentor to learn more about a typical day on the job and how to prepare for that particular career, or Group Visits to Worksites, in which mentees tour a workplace or meet with various employees on the job and learn first hand about different types of jobs and related opportunities within that career field. In addition, DMD activities may also take place at career or job fair settings, and through employability skills workshops.

The principal eligibility requirement for becoming a Community Liaison is being affiliated with a local organization that supports DMD. Individuals that do not represent an organization that is not confirmed by the Florida Committee nor AAPD may not serve as a Community Liaison (based on experience that organizational backing makes a significant difference in enabling individuals to fulfill the responsibilities.) Community Liaisons have included High School/High Tech project site directors, staff members of nonprofit and state agencies that serve people with disabilities, school district transition specialists, workforce development boards, Business Leadership Network members, disability advocates as well as private sector employers.

High School/High Tech (HS/HT) is a transition program that provides high school students with disabilities the opportunity to explore career options in the fields of science, math, engineering and technology. HS/HT partners with companies to provide students with corporate site visits, career shadowing, summer internships and part-time employment opportunities. This year, HS/HT coordinators were invited to participate in DMD 2009. In doing so, **1,300** HS/HT students or alumni participated in DMD throughout the state of Florida, and DMD activities were coordinated by **37** HS/HT Project Directors or Coordinators in 33 of Florida's 36 HS/HT Programs.

119 Community Liaisons Represented 56 Counties & 200 Cities!

Counties covered by a DMD liaison in 2009 were: Alachua, Baker, Bay, Bradford, Brevard, Broward, Charlotte, Citrus, Clay, Columbia, Dixie, Duval, DeSoto, Escambia, Flagler, Franklin, Gadsden, Gilchrist, Glades, Hamilton, Hillsborough, Hendry, Jefferson, Lafayette, Lake, Lee, Leon, Levy, Liberty, Madison, Manatee, Marion, Martin, Miami-Dade, Monroe, Nassau, Okaloosa, Orange, Osceola, Palm Beach, Pasco, Pinellas, Polk, Putnam, Santa Rosa, Sarasota, Seminole, St. Johns, St. Lucie, Sumter, Suwannee, Taylor, Union, Volusia, Wakulla, and Walton.

The Florida DMD Statewide Planning Committee plans to conduct extensive outreach to the 11 counties that were not covered by a DMD coordinator in 2009, for DMD 2010's mentoring activities, including: Highlands, Calhoun, Holmes, Jackson, Washington, Gulf, Hernando, Indian River, Hardee, Okeechobee, and Collier.

Local Committees

Year after year, results have shown that the teaming of local committees across city and county lines can indeed enhance the success of DMD. It allows for partnership and collaboration, which leads to mentor and mentee recruitment success. The team structure allows for activities to operate more efficiently and enhances the use of available resources.

Planning committees reported over **3,000 staff hours** and nearly **2,000 volunteer hours** dedicated to providing the DMD experience for their students and jobseekers. That is an average of 5 weeks of full-time work per committee, based on the reports of 30 committees.

One hundred percent of the counties participating in Florida DMD had local organizing committees that included representatives from organizations that serve consumers with disabilities. **Fifty-seven percent** of participating counties involved a Florida HS/HT Program representative on their committee. **One-third** of counties involved a Florida Division of Vocational Rehabilitation employee and **64 percent** of counties were covered by area employees of the Agency for Persons with Disabilities. **Twenty-five Florida APD staff** served as mentors themselves. Other agencies involved included school district representatives, employer partners, diversity development specialists, employment agencies, workforce board representatives, Centers for Independent Living, Florida Independent Living Council, Association of Retarded Citizens, and Division of Blind Services, among others. These committee members worked together to pool resources for mentees, recruit mentors, promote DMD job shadow activities, host successful kickoff events & job fairs, and provide transportation to workshops and group job shadows.

As one possible function of local committees, **37%** opted to host a **DMD kickoff event**, which included spokespersons such as political dignitaries, including Mayors, television news anchors, School Board

Representatives, as well as County Commissioners in the following areas: Flagler, Orange, Duval, Hillsborough, Palm Beach, Columbia, Leon, Volusia, Escambia, and Santa Rosa. DMD local kick-off events featured past employers, students, parents, and other noteworthy attendees. Some committees chose to host a kickoff breakfast or luncheon that served as an orientation and information sharing time for DMD employers and/or mentees. Community Liaison respondents reported that their DMD 2009 kick-off events were supported by in-kind donations from **Publix Supermarkets, Olive Garden, Red Lobster, Longhorns, Buffalo Rock, Honey Baked Ham, VSA Arts, Wal-Mart, Zaxby's, The Able Trust, Panera Bread, and The Houseini Center**. Community Liaisons reported over **\$12,000 in cash donations** were received and used to enhance local DMD activities.

New for 2009! Funding Opportunities for DMD

During the Spring and Summer planning phase, liaisons were invited to apply for the first ever **DMD 2009 Financial Award** and the new **DMD ~ AmeriCorps Partnership Award**. Liaisons responded to questions about their plans for enhancing and expanding their DMD events and partnering with AmeriCorps National Service sites to provide exposure to careers related to service. Six stipends were awarded to the following programs by the Statewide Planning Committee and five stipends were awarded by Volunteer Florida, based on the criteria of past exemplary performance as well as innovative plans for DMD 2009 activities.

DMD 2009 Financial Award Recipients

Jacksonville Area DMD	Polk County DMD
Palm Beach County DMD	Tallahassee/Leon County Area DMD
Hillsborough County DMD	Bay County DMD

DMD~AmeriCorps Partnership Award Recipients

Okaloosa/Walton DMD	Jacksonville Area DMD
St. John's County DMD	Florida Crown Workforce Board DMD
Lee County DMD	Palm Beach County DMD

Following their events, liaisons leading the above committees reported that the funds were extremely helpful in providing the following program enhancements, enabling them to serve additional mentees and provide exposure to new career areas:

- Purchasing mentors' luncheon supplies/food
- Venue rental for career fairs/kickoff events
- Providing transportation for mentees
- Purchasing activity/workshop materials
- Paying for workplace accommodations (such as interpreters, etc.)
- Providing mentee stipend for internship with mentor organization

Mentee Participation

More than **3,000** mentees participated in Disability Mentoring Day (DMD) 2009. High school students, college and technical school students and adult job seekers (including veterans) all had the opportunity to participate in DMD through the matchmaking support of local Community Liaisons. The following figures represent reports provided by **100%** of Florida's Community Liaisons through a web-based survey tool and follow-up email and telephone interviews.

- **1** pre-high school student with a disability
- **2,124** high school students with disabilities
- **183** college, technical school, or graduate students with disabilities
- **616** adult job seekers with disabilities (including approximately **60** veterans)
- **78** individuals with disabilities from other sectors

Mentor Participation

More than **1,300** employer mentors supported DMD activities in 2009 by providing one-to-one job shadowing, group industry shadowing, or representing their company at a career fair or workshop. This is an increase of nearly 400 employer mentors since DMD 2008! Mentors representing the following industries supported statewide DMD efforts:

23%	Retail
16%	Government Jobs
14%	Hospitality & Food Service
9%	Education
9%	Nonprofit Sector
6%	Healthcare
6%	Other Careers
5%	Technology
3%	Arts
3%	Media & Communications
3%	Law
2%	Banking/Finance
1%	City Works (Utilities, etc.)

Total Mentee Participation: 3,002

Total Mentor Participation: 1,348

TOTAL PARTICIPATION: 4,350

Participant Feedback

Testimonials were gathered about the DMD experience from Community Liaisons, mentors and mentees. A snapshot of some perspectives of DMD participation is provided below.

Mentor Feedback

- *In the past, maybe no one has ever believed in them or given them an opportunity, so it's really about building loyalty, a bond, and a relationship. I would recommend to other employers to be open minded and realize that there is someone out there who has a disability that may very well fit the needs of your organization. - Leon County DMD Employer Mentor*
- *I can't thank you enough for giving us the opportunity to serve this group! - Central Florida DMD Employer Mentor*
- *We are so glad to have finally been able to do DMD in Miami-Dade County. The managers and staff put in a lot of planning and effort to create a good experience. I think it was successful. - Miami-Dade County DMD Employer Mentor*
- *I see DMD opening up new doors for our children's futures. – Central Florida DMD Employer Mentor*
- *If every business owner could focus on people's abilities, they would find jobs for many more people. In our paths we all face challenges, and mentoring can help people climb these walls. Disability is just another wall. – Miami-Dade County DMD Employer Mentor*

Mentee Feedback

- 100% of 247 students who participated in DMD in Central Florida reported that their job shadowing experience helped them to think about their career options and 100% "Agreed" or "Strongly Agreed" that they learned about the skills needed to perform a job and about what the company expects from their employees. 100% of students reported that "Yes," they would like to participate in DMD again next year.
- *Thank you for offering me the opportunity to investigate a local workplace. Previously, I avoided and feared these type of events but these experiences afford me the opportunity to test and reinforce coping mechanisms for my psychological disability, so I can be successful in job searches and interviews. The more exposure I get, the better and stronger I get. - Hillsborough County DMD Mentee*
- *I can definitely use the things I learned and experienced today in my career as a writer. It all applies somehow. It was also nice to actually see how things work on a daily basis. It is so hard to believe how much work that the staff does every day to keep things running smoothly. – Leon County DMD Mentee*

- *Thank you for setting me up with the marketing team at Clark Construction for mentoring day. Their expertise was invaluable and most helpful in clarifying my questions about pursuing a career in marketing. After observing the operations I am further convinced that I would really like to go into a professional career in marketing.* - Hillsborough County DMD Mentee

Liaison Feedback

- *We are hopeful that DMD has inspired the mentees to actively pursue employment, as well as motivate prospective employers to offer more opportunities to people with disabilities.* – Area 2 Agency for Persons with Disabilities DMD Coordinator
- *The DMD experience gives the mentees a chance to exercise basic social skills like introducing yourself and shaking hands. Learning about the roles of employers and elected officials can help mentees learn more about their communities.* – Flagler County DMD Coordinator
- *DMD is not only a chance for students to learn about the workplace but for businesses to learn about how much people with disabilities have to offer as reliable resourceful workers.* – Central Florida DMD Coordinator
- *Feedback from our mentees was positive and included a boost in self esteem as well as increased interest in pursuing a particular career path.* – FL Crown DMD Coordinator
- *Our students had a great experience visiting the mayor for disability mentoring day. They had many questions about her job and she was gracious and patient. She was very informative and the students got an idea of the many responsibilities required of a mayor.* – Hillsborough County DMD Coordinator

DMD Workplace Activities

Workplace activities for Disability Mentoring Day 2009 included one-on-one job shadowing activities and group site visits to various organizations, which depended primarily on the number of mentees that participated, the type of business being shadowed or the transportation available within the local area. In addition, local committees were encouraged to attend or organize career/job fairs, workshops and mock interview sessions by inviting employer mentors to offer employment-based information sessions to mentees. Below are the types of career mentoring activities that were reported by local Community Liaisons. Most liaisons reported providing more than one type of activity during DMD:

- 77 % provided one-to-one mentee/mentor matching.**
- 67 % provided group shadowing.**
- 43 % either hosted or attended a kickoff/awards event.**
- 26 % provided employability workshops.**
- 23 % either hosted or attended a career/job fair .**

Feedback about Workplace Activities

- *We had 2 mentees who are deaf job shadow at Evolution Media. They were both interested in video/media production, so they made a video documentary of their day while learning how to use the equipment! The mentees used a sign language interpreter to interview participants for their video.* – Florida DMD Coordinator
- *DMD was a really cool experience for me because I know I want to work with animals, and I got to spend the day at a veterinarian office! I got to spend time with patients, in surgery prep, surgery and post surgery, and in the kennels. I even got to watch a cat being treated for heart worms and a dog being spayed!* - FL Crown DMD Mentee
- *My favorite part of DMD was visiting ABC Action News and being a meteorologist for a few minutes and standing by the green board, seeing myself and all the maps on the monitor. It was like magic!* - Hillsborough County DMD Mentee

- *Thanks to CVS Pharmacies and especially to the store manager, for being an outstanding mentor in Seminole County. One of the best things our mentees were able to do was to develop and print their own photos. – Seminole County DMD Coordinator*
- *One of our mentees was invited to sit in on an actual job interview at Hyatt hotels. – Central Florida DMD Coordinator*
- *One of the highlights of our activities was an experience that was quite “hands on.” A group of mentees job shadowing at the police department went out on a robbery call to a local restaurant while another group of students got to meet and speak with the Mayor. - Hillsborough County DMD Coordinator*
- *At the Boca Raton Publix, a couple of our students shadowed the employee in charge of the Aprons cooking demonstration. The students got to participate in making the sauce and slicing strawberries with the chef. The students were most impressed to be featured on flat screens viewed by the customers. Most importantly, they got to experience being a “chef’s assistant” for a day. - Palm Beach County DMD Coordinator*
- *During our day with AmeriCorps at O’Leno State Park, our mentees were offered demonstrations about controlled burning, path clearing, path building, park safety, use of safety equipment, removal of non-indigenous plant species or nuisance plants, and replanting of native plants. The AmeriCorps Service Members were informative and a lot of fun! - FL Crown DMD Coordinator*
- *The physics department at Florida State University offered great activities during our DMD tour. Students were involved in hands-on activities in a series of science labs, each offering a demonstration about a different physics-related topic. - Madison County DMD Coordinator*
- *Our mentees were impressed by the alligators and snakes during their job shadow experience at Florida Fish and Wildlife, where they were taught about the jobs people perform to protect the environment. One of the students was able to handle an alligator! - Palm Beach County DMD Coordinator*
- *Wachovia went out of their way to provide each mentee with a bag that had things in it that would be used by an employee at the bank. The mentees were allowed to take the bags with them! – Florida DMD Coordinator*

Ongoing Mentoring & Employment Outcomes

This year, many workplace mentors expressed the desire to not only participate again during Disability Mentoring Day 2010, but to maintain the relationships of the mentees that they met while participating in this year’s activities. As a result, a number of mentees have gained a new mentor, internship or even a job opportunity.

- *At Edible Arrangements the mentees made a fruit sculpture, and based on the DMD experience, Edible Arrangements will be hiring 3 of the mentees who were in the group! – Florida DMD Coordinator*
- *Home Depot started with one store our first year by bringing the mentees in for one hour...now we host DMD in five stores for an entire week! We have hired several of the students who were introduced to us by the program. – Home Depot, Florida DMD Employer Mentor, Palm Beach County*
- *One of our mentees asked me to assist him in requesting an internship with his DMD mentor at a collegiate athletic department. I had him write out what he would say, and we role played the conversation several times. He then called his mentor from my office and inquired about the possibility of a volunteer or internship opportunity. The mentor was so impressed, he agreed to both of the mentee’s requests! The mentee starts volunteering in December and has been invited to apply for a paid internship. - Leon County DMD Coordinator*
- *One of our mentees is legally blind and has always wanted to work at a radio station. I paired him with an employer at a local radio station, where he made such a good impression he has received a job offer! - Florida DMD Coordinator*

- *The Hyatt Orlando International Airport was pleased with their DMD experience and see DMD as a pool to locate possible future candidates.* – Central Florida DMD Coordinator
- *We had two employment outcomes this year, an internship provided by Bay Medical Center and an employment opportunity at a local restaurant.* - Bay County DMD Coordinator
- *One of our students completed an internship this past summer (2009) which was a direct result of her DMD experience in 2008.* - DMD Coordinator
- *Great outcomes this year! Red Lobster Restaurant hired a previous mentee and Terremark Worldwide offered their internship program to the mentees who shadowed there.* - Florida DMD Coordinator
- *The OCPS Transportation Department will host several summer internship positions. The Orlando Mounted Police have offered our students the opportunity to participate in an ongoing Community Based Vocational Education program. Five Guys Burgers & Fried has agreed to host an ongoing year-round mentoring program. The Disney Entrepreneur Center will be involved in a series of trainings for Entrepreneurship in 2010. And Orlando Health and Lockheed Martin are in the process of setting up a program for internships with Beacon College students as a result of conversations started at our DMD Kickoff/Career Fair event!* - Central Florida DMD Coordinator
- *Many of our mentors expressed wanting to participate next year, and said they wanted to be included in our HS/HT activities year round.* – Florida DMD Coordinator
- *I have asked our mentee to get back with me afterwards with his ideas of how I can make my company more disability friendly.* – Florida DMD Mentor
- *Publix called me after our kickoff event and said, “We are hiring right now if you have candidates please let us know.”* - Palm Beach County DMD Coordinator
- *Red Lobster expressed an interest in wanting to hire one of our mentees, so she is now going through the application process. What makes this particular story even more significant and touching is that she is a single mother with a disability who lives just around the corner from the restaurant, and she has wanted to work in a restaurant close to her home for some time now. This may be the opportunity she's been waiting for! She was so proud that they let her keep her apron and name badge after her job-shadowing experience.* – Polk County DMD Coordinator
- *One of our student mentees spent the day at a transmission shop since his goal is to become a certified mechanic. The mentor at the transmission shop trained our mentee on how to change a fuel pump. Following his job shadow experience, he told me he had been busy all week, because he had changed his mom's, his aunts, and his own fuel pumps!* – Lake County DMD Coordinator
- *One hundred percent of employers who participated in the Central Florida DMD activities rated their overall DMD experience as “Good,” “Very Good,” or “Excellent.” 78 % of those employers said they would consider hiring someone with a disability based on their DMD experience and 22% said it is “A definite maybe.”*

Improvements for Florida DMD 2009

Last year, liaisons expressed the need for the promotional materials contain a place where their local contact information & an event date could be placed (for events not taking place on the date DMD is officially commemorated). As requested, an electronic materials templates were provided to liaison organizations in order for the marketing materials to be altered with local event information.

Also requested in 2008 were DMD “giveaways” offered as incentives and rewards for event participation. In response to this request, The Able Trust provided mentor/mentee gifts, bags, and additional marketing materials that displayed the program logo, statewide committee logos, and the web address for Florida Disability Mentoring Day. Branded items included were mechanical pencils, coasters, magnets, market bags, drinking cups, notebooks/pens, mints, and balloons.

Finally, liaisons expressed the desire to learn more about local fundraising. In order to assist in these endeavors, Dr. J.R. Harding, Chair of Fundraising for the DMD Statewide Planning Committee, gave an informative conference call presentation and offered individual assistance to liaisons following the call. In order to fill the gaps in program costs, members of the Statewide DMD Committee offered the first ever funding opportunities for DMD through the *DMD 2009 Financial Award*, and the *DMD 2009~AmeriCorps Partnership Award*, which together totaled more than \$6,000.00 used across the state for DMD program enhancements.

Recommendations for Improvements of Florida DMD 2010

This year, liaisons made the following recommendations for improvement in 2010:

- 52 % of liaisons requested support in the area of Transportation.
- 5 % of liaisons requested support in the area of Funding.
- 25 % of liaisons requested support in the area of Mentor Recruitment/Involving More Employers (most often asked was how those in rural communities could connect with Darden restaurants, Wal Mart, and Publix.)
- 5 % of liaisons requested Promotional Support; Specifically video and audio PSAs, a web-based video for DMD presentations, and training on how to pitch stories to the media.
- 10 % of liaisons requested support in connecting/collaborating with APD and VR partners locally.
- Other requests for improvement or conference call topics were: Sharing of ideas for weekend or after-school participation, mentee recruitment strategies, recruiting volunteers, larger posters with area for local contact labels, employer databank for mentor recruitment, more access to other Community Liaisons so experiences can be shared, an online application system, more support of school districts early in the year (recommended statewide committee perform marketing and outreach), holding statewide kickoff in central Florida area so that more people can attend, recommendations on how to work with employers who contact coordinators at the “last minute” (when unable to accommodate their interests so close to the event), how to be flexible when employers are not willing or able to participate in the way the local community is hosting the event, how to increase communication so that National and Statewide sponsors/partners are on board earlier in the planning phase, gaining state level DOE support in order to coordinate with school bus transportation departments earlier in the year, tying travel/mobility training into DMD activities, and continued support in the same areas as previous years.

DMD 2009 Publicity and Promotions

The Able Trust, Vocational Rehabilitation, and The Agency for Persons with Disabilities donated the services of their public relations staff and consultants to organize promotional activities, media relations and event planning support for Disability Mentoring Day. Publix Supermarkets displayed posters in their stores, and each state university and community college displayed posters across their campuses. Governor Charlie Crist served as the 2009 Honorary Chair for DMD and was featured on this year’s poster and website, which echoed his administrations dedication to the employment of Florida’s citizens with disabilities. His Cabinet also issued both a Resolution and a Proclamation, and provided signed and sealed copies of the Proclamation to each community liaison and statewide committee member organization. Governor Crist also provided signed certificates, which went to every mentee, mentor, liaison, sponsor and planning committee member in Florida.

A *Public Relations Toolkit* was shared among Community Liaisons statewide to aid them in gaining local media coverage for their local DMD activities. The *Public Relations Toolkit* provided Community Liaisons with “Tips on Working with the Media,” sample media alerts, news releases, a guide to planning a kick-off celebration and other public relations resources. Community Liaisons were able to readily access the *DMD Public Relations Toolkit* and other sample press materials through the Florida DMD website- sponsored by The Able Trust. (www.floridadmd.org) As a result of combined publicity efforts, **57% of liaisons** reported various forms of media attention and coverage! To request a portfolio of some of the publicity obtained, please contact info@abletrust.org.

Newspapers: 37% of programs received coverage in The Daytona News Journal, The Flagler News, Boca Raton News, The Miami Herald, Orlando Sentinel, Orlando Business “Biz” Journal, South Florida Sun Sentinel, Lake City Reporter, Tallahassee Democrat (front page news), Madison County Carrier, Charlotte Sun Herald, The Pensacola News Journal, Gulf Breeze News, and The Florida Times-Union.

Television and radio: 30% of programs received TV coverage and 17% of programs received radio news coverage or time to run PSAs on WXEL, WUFT-PBS for North Florida, other PBS stations, Power Country 93.3, Big John in the Morning, News Channel 13, FOX 35, Bay News 9, Palm Beach County Government

Channel 20, WFTL Ft. Lauderdale, ION Media TV (5 channels across the state WPXC 21, WPXM 35, WOPX 56, WXPX 66, & WPXP 67), Jacksonville Library Channel, WCTV, WTXL, The Florida Channel, WEAR-TV, NPR, and “The South Florida Forum” on 90.7 FM WXEL.

Other: 27% of liaisons reported other media outlets spotlighted their DMD activities. Some of those were The Phoenix Rising, Facebook, Twitter, www.examiner.com, ILRC website, Palm Beach County Commissioners web site, Home Depot National News Letter, Darden Restaurants National Newsletter “The Communicator”, The CIL of Central Florida website, the APD “Champion” Newsletter, The Able Trust Grantor, Deltona APD newsletter, the CIL Broward Newsletter, and the Goodwill Industries of Southwest Florida Newsletter.

DMD Promotional Materials

The Able Trust worked with members of the statewide committee to develop promotional materials that were made available to local Community Liaisons free of charge and were also used to recruit mentors and mentees. Thanks to a partnership with the Governor’s Commission on Disabilities, all of the materials were also available in alternative formats and double-checked for accessibility. Ninety-two percent of committees reported the top five most useful materials were: Promotional Literature (Mentee/Mentor Brochure & Poster), Resources Website www.floridamd.org, Mentor/Mentee Incentive “Goody” Items, Statewide Liaison Conference Calls, and Governor’s Certificates/Proclamations. The following materials were created or maintained for DMD 2009:

Website	Florida DMD Posters
DMD Fact Sheet	DMD save the date card
DMD mentor/mentee recruitment brochures	DMD proclamation signed by Governor Charlie Crist
DMD mentee/mentor recruitment letter	DMD promotional video
DMD promotional power point	Mentor/Mentee ‘goody’ items
DMD recognition certificates signed by Governor Crist, Honorary Chair of DMD 2009	

National & Statewide Kick-off Celebration

This year, a representative of the Florida DMD Statewide Planning Committee traveled to Duluth, MN, to attend the National DMD 10th Anniversary Gala & Kickoff/Career Fair for students with disabilities. In Florida, The Able Trust sponsored the Disability Employment Awareness Month Kickoff & Employer Awards which was co-hosted by The Agency for Persons with Disabilities, Vocational Rehabilitation, and the Agency for Workforce Innovation. The event took place in the Capital City at the Tallahassee City Hall Mezzanine & Commission Chambers on October 1, 2009. During an awards program following a resources fair and networking breakfast, Board Members of The Able Trust excitedly kicked off Florida’s October DEAM events and a PSA prepared by the Executive Office of Governor Charlie Crist was presented. Members of the Florida DMD Statewide Planning Committee were represented at the event, and DMD community liaisons from across the state were also able to attend.

Fundraising Efforts

Fundraising efforts were led by staff of The Able Trust & Dr. J.R. Harding of The Agency for Persons with Disabilities, who notably secured sponsorship dollars for this year’s DMD activities. In addition, The Able Trust donated additional dollars and in-kind support to cover the remaining expenses not covered by the sponsorship dollars. Through partnerships with Wal-Mart, Sam’s Club, Darden Restaurants and Publix Super Markets, Inc. the Florida DMD Statewide Planning Committee had the opportunity to connect Community Liaisons with these companies to obtain in-kind donations for local events.

Florida DMD’s 2009 Sponsors included: ***The Able Trust, The Agency for Person’s with Disabilities, Florida DOE Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, American Association of People with Disabilities, Publix Supermarkets, Inc., Volunteer Florida/AmeriCorps, ISES Corporation, MV Transportation, Walt Disney World Company, WeLocalize, Gulf Power, Family Network on Disabilities of Florida, ADAAG Consulting Services, Capital City Consulting, LLC, Capital City Bank, Florida Commission for the Transportation Disadvantaged, Governor’s Commission on Disabilities, Pittman Law Group, Congo River Golf, Good Wheels, P. Adam Kelly, and Advantica Eyecare. DMD “Friends” included: Clear Channel Radio, Marriott, Doubletree (Hilton Family), Ritz Carlton, Rosen Centre Hotel & Resort, Gaylord Palms Hotel, Embassy Suites, CVS Pharmacies and Darden Restaurants.***

Employer Partners Summary

For the 3rd year, **Publix Supermarkets, Inc.** was involved with 20 DMD programs at more than 50 store locations statewide! More than half of the liaisons reported a local partnership with one or more Publix Supermarket locations. Publix was also a key State level sponsor for the program, participated on conference calls, collaborated with the Business Leadership Network, and volunteered at local kickoff activities. Publix continued to be a leader in providing opportunities for jobseekers with disabilities by sponsoring the program at the state level, offering to market the program in every store location, providing in-kind donations to the local sites, and providing the support of a statewide diversity specialist and a network of district managers who made arrangements for group tours or mentorships at the local stores.

Walmart and **Sam's Club** provided workshops, tours, mentorships, or supplies to DMD program coordinators in 15 locations. Other retailers who were involved in DMD activities included **Winn Dixie, Walgreens, CVS Pharmacies (6 locations), Best Buy, Lowe's Home Improvement, Home Depot (6 locations), Kohl's, Target, JC Penny, Belk, Books-A-Million, IGA, Big Lot's, Cato Fashion, and PetsMart.**

SunTrust Bank was involved in mentoring activities with 4 DMD committees across the state. **The Federal Reserve Bank, Capital City Bank, Edward Jones Investments, Navy Federal Credit Union, Wachovia,** and **Merrill Lynch** were also involved in various communities.

Darden Restaurants (Red Lobster, Olive Garden, Capital Grille, Longhorns, Seasons 52 and Bahama Breeze) involved 15 locations in DMD activities statewide. This was the 4th year in which Florida DMD Community Liaisons have joined with Darden Restaurants. Through this partnership, Darden Restaurants took part in DMD activities by hosting a mentee for a shift, hosting a committee for a lunch meeting, or donating food to DMD events. Other notable hospitality and food/beverage industry employers included: **Hyatt Hotels (3 locations, 14 mentors), Holiday Inn, Marriott, Ramada Inn, Wyndham Resorts, Burger King, Edible Arrangements, McDonald's, Zaxby's** and **Bob Evans Restaurant.**

Various broadcast/journalism mentors came forth to join in job-shadow activities. Among those included: **ABC, ClearChannel Radio, Opus Broadcasting, Brighthouse Communications, Fox News, Pensacola News Journal, Wakulla News, Power Country 93.3, WEDU TV, Charlotte Sun Herald, Evolution Media, WEAR TV,** and **WMNF Radio.**

Aside from offering their expertise in co-hosting successful DMD experiences for their consumers, several non-profit organizations also served as mentor sites, exposing mentees to the diversity of careers available in the non-profit sector: **Goodwill Industries, ARC, Governor's Commission on Disabilities, Clearinghouse on Disability Information, Division of Blind Services, Vocational Rehabilitation, Easter Seals, Enable America, Florida Disabled Outdoors Association, Humane Society, Independent Living Centers, Jewish Federation, Lighthouse, Workforce, Worksource, The Advocacy Center, Agency for Persons with Disabilities, CARC, FAAST, Inc., United Cerebral Palsy** and **AmeriCorps.**

City and County Governments were active in the following municipalities: Cities of **Tampa, Gainesville, Pembroke Pines, Jacksonville, Miami, Deltona, Coconut Creek, Orlando, Palm Coast, Temple Terrace, Punta Gorda, Trenton, Daytona, Flagler Beach, Alachua,** and **Tallahassee;** Counties of **Flagler, Glades, Miami-Dade County, Palm Beach, Putnam, Volusia, Wakulla, Broward, Hillsborough,** and **Leon.** School boards supported DMD activities and/or allowed students to shadow teachers and education professionals in the following counties: **Alachua, Columbia, Lake, Wakulla, Orange, Charlotte, Polk** and **Volusia.** Additionally, various private or alternative education settings opened their doors to mentoring activities (arts centers, Montessori, early childhood centers, Literacy Academies, etc.)

The following Federal and State Government organizations were involved as employer mentors such as **Florida Fish and Wildlife, Florida State Parks** (Anastasia and O'Leno), **Hurlburt Air Force Base, Pensacola Naval Air Station, Supervisor of Elections** offices, **Office of US Citizenship & Immigration, The Federal Aviation Administration** (FAA), and the **Florida Department of Transportation** (DOT).

Once again in 2009, **The State University System of Florida** was a key player and involved various departments on the following campuses:

Daytona State College	Westside Technical Center
Florida International University	Charlotte Technical Center
Florida A & M University	First Coast Technical College
Florida State College of Jacksonville	Northwest Florida State College
Florida State University	State College of Florida
Miami-Dade College	University of Florida
Santa Fe College	University of West Florida
Tallahassee Community College	University of Miami
University of North Florida	

The additional involvement of hundreds of other companies and small businesses made DMD a success, especially in rural or outlying areas of the state. Other notable companies who participated at the local level included: **Tropicana, Terremark Worldwide, New Horizons, AmeriGroup Community Care, Disney Entrepreneur Center, The LPGA Tour (Ladies Professional Golf Association), CSX, The International Speedway Cooperation, Amtrak, Delta, Pep Boys, Sun Tire, Busch Gardens, Marineland, Gulf Power, Progress Energy, Gerdau Ameristeel**, and **9 major hospitals** from across the state.

Community Liaison Contest

With the assistance of Dr. J.R. Harding of The Agency for Persons with Disabilities, the Florida DMD Statewide Planning Committee sponsored a contest among Community Liaisons to encourage mentor and mentee recruitment. The state was divided into three divisions based on population size: small, medium and large sized-markets. Under these categories, Community Liaisons competed with others from similar populations to secure the highest numbers of mentee and mentor participants in their market. There were three winners in each of these markets. Each Community Liaison winner received prize packages, which consisted of resort accommodations at attractive locales across the state.

This year's grand prize winner for the most extensive DMD Program expansion was **Okaloosa/Walton Counties DMD**, experiencing a program growth from 123 to 425 participants in just one year. The large market 1st and 2nd prizes for participant recruitment went to Rose Lee Archer, coordinating 610 mentor/mentee participants in **Palm Beach, Broward, and Martin counties**; and April Baker, coordinating 451 mentor/mentee participants in **Duval, Clay, St. Johns, Baker, and Nassau counties**. The medium market 1st and 2nd Prizes went to Darlene Maynard, coordinating 366 mentor/mentee participants in the **Panhandle Area**; and Emily Kennelly, coordinating 164 mentor/mentee participants in the **Tallahassee/Leon County area**. The small market 1st and 2nd prizes were given to Mary Coody, coordinating 53 mentor/mentee participants from **Madison County High School**; and Pepper Anderson, coordinating nearly 20 participants from Palatka High School (**Putnam County**). This year, an Honorable Mention prize was awarded to the most motivated new community liaison. This award went to **Rogue Gallart** who lead the **Central Florida DMD Planning Committee** (CIL Orlando, Seminole County Public Schools, Orange County Public Schools, and Osceola County) for their first year of DMD activities. Together, this team hosted a kickoff /career fair and worked with nearly 450 mentor/mentee participants during October's activities.

Conclusion

With nearly 4,400 mentees and mentors participating in this year's DMD (an increase of almost 1,400 since last year), Florida DMD continues to make an impact on the employment outcomes of Floridians with disabilities, as well as an impact on attitudes toward members of the disability community and the hiring practices of employers. The Able Trust and Florida DMD Statewide Planning Committee will continue to seek new ways to enhance DMD activities in order to reach more individuals with disabilities and to successfully impact more communities in 2010, Florida DMD's 10th Anniversary.

***Save the date for National Disability Mentoring Day 2010:
Wednesday, October 20, 2010!***

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