



The Able Trust Strategic Direction, Planning Period, CY 2016 - 2018

Summary and overview:

The Able Trust Board of Directors met on June 11-12, 2015 to discuss the strategic direction for the organization for the next three years. The Board, staff, Ambassadors and invited guests met in Tallahassee to begin the planning process which was facilitated by Able Trust President/CEO Susanne Homant and included an extensive training session on the characteristics and work habits of the many generations served by The Able Trust. The generational instructor was Kim Lear of Bridgeworks, Inc. The presentation was important because understanding the populations served by The Able Trust is critical to activities The Able Trust needs to undertake, support, and promote through its many community and youth programs.

The planning group reviewed Able Trust finances, results and outcome reports for youth programs and community grants, results of strategic employment grant awards, research project progress, and statewide communication efforts. Extensive discussion occurred regarding the continuation of current programs, and the possible expansion of the transportation pilot and funded internships for people with disabilities.

Statistics on current job vacancies and projected jobs of the future were also analyzed in the deliberations, with an agreement that career potential connected to future jobs was a critical part of The Able Trust's responsibility to those it serves.

Discussion also focused on whether the Able Trust should continue to manage and fund a variety of messaging activities and communications to better promote knowledge of The Able Trust's mission and its work in that regard. Success of such activities is contingent on identifying the audiences that are most important to reach, and to use the research and available metrics as benchmarks in measuring success. The group affirmed past planning period direction that a mission-centered theme for future communications is critical for change, as opposed to a focus on events.

The following general concepts will be developed into strategies and tactics for the 2016 – 2018 planning period, to be further refined during Committee meetings over the summer and at the September 2015 Board meeting.

1. Grant awards should continue at two levels, with more emphasis on larger, multi-year grants that are directly linked to advancement of the mission of The Able Trust. The Able Trust should embark on a grant initiative pilot that deals with internships.
2. The organization should continue its two transportation pilot programs, one each in Orlando and Miami, gathering outcomes to be used in developing funding sources that would allow for expansion of the transportation pilot, if outcomes justify such expansion.
3. The Able Trust should continue its internal, youth programs, contingent upon obtaining outcome data that supports the resources dedicated to the programs and evidence that the programs continue to contribute to the mission.
 - Florida High School High Tech, which should be expanded at a 1 – 2 new site level per year, provided state matching funds are available to help support the expansion.
 - Florida Youth Leadership Forum: Goal of 45 – 50 new students each year.
4. The Able Trust should continue its efforts to expand work experiences for job seekers, which might include job shadowing, mentoring, internships, or other related activities. Additional Internship Seminars should be conducted in cooperation with regional business groups, trade associations and Chambers of Commerce.
5. The Able Trust should implement its 3rd year statewide communications plan, directed towards business, and designed to change misperceptions and increase the number of people with disabilities who are successfully employed.

In the process of developing and implementing the strategic direction for The Able Trust for the next planning period, the following three questions will guide tactical decisions.

- I. How does this activity and use of our resources advance our mission -our litmus test? (Disproportionately Influential)
- II. Is this investment of our resources, an investment in the change we desire? (Catalytic Philanthropy)
- III. Does this activity promote The Able Trust as a key player in Florida in a greater national movement of equal opportunities for successful employment for all people with disabilities?

Tactical activities for the five strategic areas will be created in more detail over the summer, 2015. The three year plan will be implemented for the calendar years 2016 – 2018.