

## CEO MESSAGE

March 2022

### PROJECT VENTURE GOES LIVE!

I am excited to announce that our **High School High Tech Project Venture** competition is going live this year. We launched **Project Venture** in 2019 as a business development competition creating a hands-on experience for High School High Tech (HSHT) students.

Currently, 22 teams from our High School High Tech sites are hard at work developing their plans. This year we are holding the Project Venture competition in-person in Orlando and it will be exciting to see the three final teams present their business plans to a panel of judges.

Project Venture enables students to learn-by-doing. They create a plan for a business or product, in any sector they choose. Through participation in the Project Venture competition, students are:

- Introduced to entrepreneurship and the entrepreneurial spirit,
- Work in teams on real-world applications, and
- Develop workplace communication skills and other soft skills that are important to the workforce.

Follow us on one of our social media platforms to see how the competition progresses and we invite you to share our posts to show your support for these students.

A special thank you to our **Presenting Partner FloridaMakes** for their support of Project Venture. If you would like to get involved or have questions about HSHT or the Project Venture competition, please contact our HSHT State Director Coleen Agner at [coleen@abletrust.org](mailto:coleen@abletrust.org).

I look forward to seeing you soon.

Best regards,  
**Allison Chase**



**Allison Chase**



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### PROJECT VENTURE VIDEO



Check out the **Project Venture** video and if you're interested in becoming a sponsor, we have a few opportunities available.

**[Click here for information.](#)**

## VIEWPOINT: BOARD MEMBER MAVARA AGRAWAL

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VIEWPOINTS OPINION

### What labor shortage? Floridians with disabilities are ready to work | Opinion

By MAVARA AGRAWAL  
SPECIAL TO THE SUN SENTINEL | MAR 01, 2022 AT 11:58 AM



As our nation begins to shift policy addressing the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, we know that getting everyone back to work and school is essential to the economic, physical and mental well-being of our nation. Looking back at the Great Resignation — what's also been called the [Great Reprioritization](#) or [Great Reshuffle](#) — we are beginning to see an improvement in the overall unemployment rate. And yet, a stroll past local restaurants and shops reminds us that many employers are still [experiencing a worker shortage](#). These employers should look to one significant group in which unemployment remains high.

Notably, during the third quarter of 2021, the unemployment rate for people with a disability was 10.6%, which is [more than twice that](#) of people with no disability (4.9%). This is the opportune time for us to think about how we engage with these individuals. It's a win-win situation: quality jobs that provide financial security and professional growth for employees, and an untapped population of potential workers for the employer. We have a ready, willing and able workforce within our nation and in our communities: individuals whose success is



To view the complete article, [click here](#).

## RESEARCH PARTNERS JOIN INCLUSIVE FLORIDA

**Inclusive Florida: Powered by The Able Trust** is a new initiative that will incorporate a combination of research, outreach, and capacity building to expand our relationship with businesses, partners and community leaders across Florida.

As we begin the research phase, we are excited to announce new partnerships with labor market data expert **Emsi Burning Glass** and economist **Dr. Jerry Parrish**. Their expertise and insight will ensure the Inclusive Florida initiative is informed by the best data available.

Through Inclusive Florida, The Able Trust will expand our work with local organizations and other partners to provide job development resources and strengthen relationships with employers, as we work to close the workforce gap that exists between persons with disabilities and the general public without disabilities.

If you would like information on Inclusive Florida research, contact Dr. Jerry Parrish at [jdparrish@abletrust.org](mailto:jdparrish@abletrust.org).

## SESSION HEADS INTO LAST WEEK



As Florida's Legislative Session comes to a close this week, The Able Trust team would like to express our appreciation to Florida legislators for their leadership. We appreciate their support of The Able Trust, our commitment to inclusive employment and our belief that every individual should have the opportunity to live up to their full potential.

### HR Magazine: How Managers Can Help People With Disabilities Advance



Whether an employee with a disability is afforded the same leadership development opportunities as other employees often depends on the individual's manager.

Leaders “need to look for ways to give people with disabilities opportunities to be visible in front of a group,” says PwC Tax Director Rob Rusch, a disability inclusion advocate. “If we live in a world where an individual in a wheelchair is visible, then it starts to break down that perception” that someone in a wheelchair may not be capable of performing a certain job.

Read the complete article for ways managers can provide advancement opportunities for employees with disabilities.

[Read more](#)



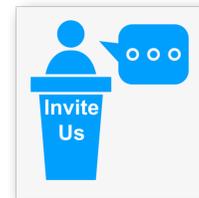
Your support ensures Floridians with disabilities have opportunities to gain meaningful employment.

To make your tax-deductible donation to The Able Trust, [click here](#).



Forward this newsletter to other colleagues, and business and community leaders who care about being more inclusive.

[Click here](#) to join our mailing list



We welcome the opportunity to share information about disability employment. Invite us to speak at your upcoming board meeting, conference or webinar.

[Click here](#) to fill out our Speaker Request form



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