

CEOs, Major Companies and Government Officials Launch Public-Private Initiative to Remove Obstacles to Employing People with Disabilities

Initiative Follows First-Ever CEO Summit on Benefits of Disability Employment

WINDSOR, Conn., Jun 18, 2012 – Top-level executives from more than a dozen major U.S. companies joined with government officials to launch a nationwide public-private sector initiative to advance employment of people with disabilities. The companies and officials plan to work together to achieve common goals, including to identify and resolve employment barriers facing people with disabilities, share experience and best practices, raise visibility around the effort and awareness of the significant benefits, and expand participation.

The initiative arose from the first-ever CEO Summit focused on employment of people with disabilities on June 4, 2012, hosted by Walgreens at the company's Windsor, Conn., distribution center. The summit was held at the Walgreens facility to provide participants a first-hand look at the company's robust effort to employ people with disabilities. About 50 percent of the workforce at the distribution center has a disability but all employees work as equals with the same responsibilities and performance standards.

Summit participants included government officials led by U.S. Senator Tom Harkin of Iowa, U.S. Congressman Pete Sessions of Texas, U.S. Senator Richard Blumenthal of Connecticut, and

Delaware Governor Jack Markell, vice chairman of the National Governors Association. Participating companies included Amerigroup, Ascend Performance Materials, Best Buy, Clarks Companies, Ernst & Young LLP, GE Lighting, IBM, Lowe's Home Improvement, Lundbeck, McLane Company, Merck, OfficeMax, SAP AG, Procter & Gamble, UPS, Walgreens, and Walmart.

Following the summit, the officials and companies made a commitment to schedule additional activities with expanded participation, starting with meetings at the U.S. Business Leadership Network conference in Orlando, Fla., in October of this year; summits in Dallas and Washington, D.C.; a website to share information and best practices; and, future activities to expand and promote the employment of people with disabilities and address barriers.

"One thing we've learned from the Walgreens experience is that if companies set big goals and put themselves out there, and work with the right partners to help them build a talent pipeline of eager, productive, and loyal workers with disabilities, the results of such efforts are stronger and more productive companies and a loyal productive workforce," said Senator Harkin, the Chairman of the U.S. Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor and Pensions and a lead Senate sponsor of the Americans with Disabilities Act.

"The Walgreens facility is powerful proof that people with disabilities are valuable assets to our workforce," Senator Blumenthal said. "I appreciate the leadership of these companies on this important issue and I'm very eager to work with them to employ more people with disabilities in Connecticut and across the nation. All people with disabilities deserve the dignity of work and we should continue to find ways to help make this possible."

"As the father of a young man with Down syndrome, I understand firsthand the importance of providing individuals with disabilities opportunities in the workplace," Congressman

Sessions said. "I am encouraged by all of the companies reaffirming their commitment to employing individuals with disabilities, as well as expanding their efforts. I look forward to a continued partnership with Senator Harkin, Senator Blumenthal, Governor Markell and participating companies to provide even more opportunities for these eager and talented workers."

"The bottom line is that there are so many people with disabilities who have the time, talent and desire to make meaningful contributions to interested employers. More companies are recognizing that creating greater economic opportunity for these workers improves their own bottom line as well," Governor Markell said. "It's inspiring to see so many leaders from the public and private sectors committing themselves to this cause and pledging to work together on something that builds both economic and social capital."

"Hiring workers who happen to have some type of disability but can still do a good job and want to work is a win for business, for employees and for our communities," said Mike Mikan, CEO (interim) of Best Buy. "Our distribution facility in Shepherdsville, Ky., is proof positive that highly motivated, productive employees with disabilities deliver strong performance on every metric from productivity to safety to quality. We plan to extend this employment model to other facilities, and we encourage other companies to consider this untapped talent pool."

"Walgreens has been a leader in providing people with disabilities access to all the joys of employment that fully abled people experience," said James Salzano, CEO of Clark's North America. "The summit demonstrates perfectly that access to employment is a universal issue – one that cuts across party lines, geographic boundaries, public and private sectors. I commend Greg Wasson and Randy Lewis for convening this group, and Clarks will continue to work with Walgreens in helping other leaders across all industries join us in

transforming their organizations and ultimately improving the lives of individuals.”

“We applaud Walgreens for its leadership in promoting the advancement of people with disabilities and for creating awareness that building an environment of inclusiveness is good for employees and also can deliver significant business productivity,” said Maryrose Sylvester, President and CEO of GE Lighting. “While we have always been a supporter of inclusiveness – and in fact, it is one of GE’s key growth values – as a result of participating in Walgreens CEO summit, we are evaluating how we could apply some of the best practices we saw.”

“As a company committed to people with psychiatric and neurological disorders, we interact with people on a daily basis who have disabilities due to disorders such as epilepsy and depression,” Staffan Schuberg, president Lundbeck U.S., said. “We’ve seen these individuals overcome tremendous adversity to thrive in the workplace and make significant contributions to society. Excluding these talented, resilient people from the workforce would be a detriment, and we applaud Walgreens for their leadership on this important initiative.”

“Walgreens commitment to advancing workplace employment for people with disabilities is inspiring,” Ravi Saligram, President and CEO of OfficeMax, said. “At OfficeMax, we are committed to hiring and training people with disabilities and enabling them to reach their full potential. Once they join our team, our MaxAbilities Associate Resource group provides support to ensure that working at OfficeMax is a fulfilling, successful experience.”

“UPS long ago committed itself to the employment of individuals with disabilities, but we also know that people with disabilities as a group still struggle to find employment,” UPS Chairman and CEO Scott Davis said. “We’ve been very impressed with Walgreens disability initiative and

look to add to the approaches we use at UPS. So I view this public/private initiative as another step forward.”

“Walgreens was pleased to host this summit at our Connecticut facility to show everyone what we’ve learned – that employing people with disabilities is good for all employees, good for morale, retention and company spirit, good for productivity and ultimately, good for business,” Walgreens President and CEO Greg Wasson said. “We’re proud of our employees, and while each company needs to arrive at what works best for their business, we appreciate the chance to share our experience, the enthusiasm for what we’re doing, and the opportunity to learn and do even more.”

Since 2007, Walgreens has been actively recruiting people with disabilities to work in its 21 distribution centers and since then has developed the largest private sector disability inclusion effort in the country. The results are a company division with 10 percent of its workforce consisting of people with disclosed disabilities in the same jobs, with the same pay being held to the same standards working side by side with the rest of the workforce, and holding every type and level of position at the centers. The company’s initiative is led by Randy Lewis, senior vice president of supply chain management.

Walgreens new goal is to fill 20 percent of its distribution center jobs with people with disabilities and is now applying lessons learned at the distribution centers across the company with the recent launch of companywide solution to better enable its retail stores to employ people with disabilities. More than 100 U.S. and global companies have visited Walgreens to learn how to initiate and sustain similar efforts of inclusion.

“Like our distribution center in Anderson, S.C., our facility in Connecticut has been 20 percent more productive than our others, with lower absenteeism, lower turnover and an excellent safety record,” Wasson said. “And importantly, we’re

seeing a highly engaged workforce. Our guests from other companies that had set up similar programs at their facilities with a similar approach shared that they had the same experience.”

About Walgreens

As the nation’s largest drugstore chain with fiscal 2011 sales of \$72 billion, Walgreens (www.walgreens.com) vision is to become America’s first choice for health and daily living. Each day, Walgreens provides nearly 6 million customers the most convenient, multichannel access to consumer goods and services and trusted, cost-effective pharmacy, health and wellness services and advice in communities across America. Walgreens scope of pharmacy services includes retail, specialty, infusion, medical facility and mail service, along with respiratory services. These services improve health outcomes and lower costs for payers including employers, managed care organizations, health systems, pharmacy benefit managers and the public sector. The company operates 7,889 drugstores in all 50 states, the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico. Take Care Health Systems is a Walgreens subsidiary that is the largest and most comprehensive manager of worksite health and wellness centers and in-store convenient care clinics, with more than 700 locations throughout the country.