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Disability Matters Special Edition



Dear Friends:

Welcome to another special edition of The Wave, featuring stories and photos from Springboard’s 2017 Disability Matters Europe Conference and Awards which took place in Parma, Italy, 9-10 October. If you were lucky enough to attend, reading this issue will allow you to re-experience the education, inspiration, celebration and of course, networking that this action-packed event delivers each and every year. For those who were not able to attend, you will immediately realize that you missed a content rich event thanks in large part to our honorees sharing their disability journeys, our Keynote presenter and all of our subject matter experts. This year’s sponsors not only helped to make DMEUR a huge success, their sponsorship clearly illustrates their own corporate commitment to the mainstreaming of individuals with disabilities in the workforce, workplace, and marketplace. This is especially true of our 2017 Host, Barilla who without their support, partnership and friendship, the event would not have been possible.

We hope this special edition issue of The Wave will inspire your participation in our 2018 event being Hosted by Dow Europe and held in Horgen, Switzerland, 5-7 November. The 2018 application process will be opening very soon as will the opportunities for sponsorship. We look forward to your participation and wish you much success in the coming year.

Your friend and Springboard’s CEO,

Nadine O. Vogel

2018 Disability Matters Events

Europe
Horgen, Switzerland
5-7, November 2018

North America
Jupiter, FL
April 24—26, 2018

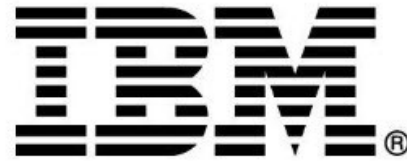
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Conference & Awards Honorees

Parma, Italy 09-10 October, 2017

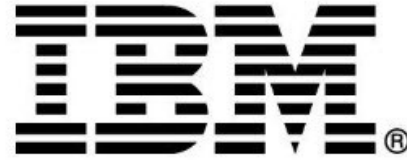
WORKFORCE



This award category represents Human Resources and related initiatives for the outreach, recruitment, career development, talent management and retention of people with disabilities. This category includes individuals who are born with or have acquired disabilities, maturing workers with

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On October 10th 2017, IBM received the Disability Matters' annual Workforce Award for its commitment to the inclusion of people with disability on their workplace.

IBM has always acknowledged people, with their own special characteristics, as the base of its success and development, and it has always considered diversity as a founding value of the company, and as a source for competitive edge, since it generates innovation and creativity. For example, the first person with disability was hired in 1914 at IBM, so IBM is a pioneer in this field.

IBM Italia focuses its commitment on the following constituencies of diversity: gender, culture, generations, disability, LGBT, work and life integration.

Regarding **disability**, best practice of IBM Italy is the **WMA Project**, which was born in 2004, sparking from a group of visually impaired colleagues. Now it includes people with other disabilities, such as motor disability and deafness.

MWA was born as a pilot project: now it is a true service used to promote inclusion for everyone. MWA is the acronym of Mobile Wireless Accessibility, a name that sums up the three core values the project represents: mobility, inclusion and innovation, specifically in the internal processes. What does the acronym mean, though? Mobile: the company is everywhere, because the companies were and are constantly changing, and mobility is the main problem for a person with disability, so this is the highest demand. Wireless refers to the technology: when the project was born, wireless was the best technology available, now it has been overcome, but we want to keep the name because nowadays it's a brand. Accessibility is the protocol to avoid digital divide.

Today many colleagues without disability take part in the team, so we can have many different skills and carry on many different projects. MWA deals with many tasks, for instance testing

colleagues on the main IBM topics, but with a specific point of view: accessibility.

In time, MWA has become a symbol, a stimulus, and an answer to the necessities of people with disability, eager to be more integrated in the world which surrounds them, both socially and employment-wise. The idea stems from the creation of a mobile solution to support the visually impaired in their daily and working life. We also work with the aim to discover new technologies that focus their services on users with disabilities. Hence, the specialization on accessibility, the availability, the use of assistive technologies, services and integration of disabled people in employment, both for internal use and for customers.

The team also collaborates in the organization of events tied to technology and disability in Italy, as, for example: Abilitando and Handimatica, where IBM technologies are bent towards the theme of disability.

One of the main topics in these events is disability management: a set of strategies which allows inclusion of people with disability. Disability management allows the dialogue between the company and its rules and complex processes, and people with disability with their specific needs.

Last year, in November 2016, IBM organized the first national conference on disability management “Disability Management: Buone pratiche e prospettive future in Italia” (“Disability Management: Best Practices and Future Perspectives in Italy”) where universities, companies and associations had the opportunity to compare the best strategies used in their respective environment, to facilitate the process of inclusion.

The common goal is to favor and to increase the productivity of people with disability, as they should be seen as resources and not as a legal obligation .





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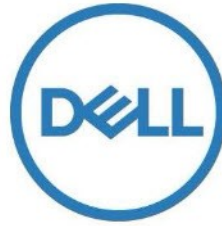
DISABILITY CHAMPION



This award category recognizes an individual whose advocacy, commitment, and action in support of mainstreaming disability in their workforce, workplace and/or marketplace has greatly contributed to their organizations success in these endeavors. The award recipient is someone whose job description does not specifically include this work, yet he/she diligently works to influence others.

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Dell believes in creating a global business that harnesses the power of the best and brightest talent. We are a global team who are united behind common values and culture and care for one another as colleagues and friends.

We fully recognize the powerful role that our diverse team members and culture play in enabling the company's global business footprint, with operations in 180 countries, manufacturing in 25 locations, more than 40 distribution and configuration centers, and more than 1,800 service centers.

Our global Employee Resource Groups (ERG) significantly contribute to our inclusive culture. These communities provide opportunities for personal and professional development by connecting team members around areas such as gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation and background.

True Ability is one such Employee Resource Group at Dell, started in 2010 with a mission to "Educate, drive awareness and serve as a resource for our team members impacted by disabilities and/or special needs". This mission statement remains today and is very much our guiding principle for all we do in the 35 True Ability chapters across 23 countries.

The first chapter began in Ireland, and we started by creating events and devising initiatives to open up the disability conversation in the workplace. Lessons in leadership, partnering with HR to connect with local hiring opportunities and making improvements to our facilities were all early achievements, that in turn attracted attention from other Dell sites in EMEA, who then themselves progressed to launching True Ability locally. The expansion success in EMEA led to my remit growing in 2013 to lead True Ability globally, overseeing the entire network of team—all of whom are volunteers.

By collaborating with the regional teams we are able to drive our strategic priorities that align to our overarching True Ability goals. Of key importance to our strategy is the ability to offer

and country specific localization, allowing chapter leads to implement initiatives that suit them on a local level.

The integration of Dell and EMC was a standout moment, as it gave True Ability the opportunity to unite likeminded leaders across the globe. To be a successful company and a great place to work, we must actively champion an inclusive culture. That means creating a welcoming workplace where people of all backgrounds come together to do their best work. Only then can Dell empower and inspire each team member's full potential to execute against the company's strategy and drive innovation for our customers. Throughout the merger, True Ability's team played an essential role in ensuring site partnership, regional sharing and global awareness of our integration progress.

Today we are one combined team across 23 countries with our network delivering around 150 True Ability events each year, onsite in Dell offices, both for and by employees.

In addition to the work we do internally, we also partner with our local communities, 3rd level institutions, government agencies and NGOs to give back and advance careers of young people. One way this is facilitated in through the mentoring of undergraduates with disabilities that are coming into the workforce, an initiative that has been a personal drive for me. Examples of how this is implemented include the creation of the "Dine in the Dark" experience, holding the first event in Ireland and encouraging its expansion across EMEA, APJ, Latin America and North America and establishing a leadership development program in 2016 for the True Ability leaders in EMEA, that was later replicated in Latin America.

A key strength of our team is our connectivity across the entire Dell organization, that allows us to raise awareness of True Ability and open minds to the potential of disability in the workplace. To achieve this, we engage with Dell employees at all levels, something that led to me being acknowledged internally as one of three winners of an Outstanding Achievement Award in 2015. However, a bigger achievement of 2015, was the successful placing of True Ability, EMEA in the Top Ten Diversity list announced by The Economist.

The Disability Champion award 2017 is a wonderful acknowledgement that I am honored to receive and it has been tremendously celebrated by all of us at Dell.

Niamh Carew, Dell EMC True Ability Employee Resource Group Global Leader.



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MENTAL HEALTH IN THE WORKPLACE -FRANCESCO BAGLIONI

Progetto Itaca and Accenture: Partners in Job Stations

Progetto Itaca is an Italian organization that has been engaged for almost 20 years in the promotion and safeguard of mental health. It is present in 11 Italian cities and endorses two important international organizations, N.A.M.I. (National Alliance on Mental Illness - the American largest mental health organization) and Clubhouse International (Worldwide Community dedicated to social inclusion of individuals with a history of mental illness).

The vision of Progetto Itaca:

We think that mental disorders are actual diseases with a biological component and that every person hit by a disease of the psyche should receive prompt help, an accurate diagnosis and effective treatment to lead a meaningful and satisfying life, free of prejudice and stigma.

The mission:

To raise interest in the community in order to overcome stigma and prejudice. To inform people in order to prevent diseases and guide towards diagnosis and treatment. To sustain patients and their families in their path to recovery and wellbeing towards a meaningful life.

Progetto Itaca is particularly engaged in the training of volunteers, care givers, relatives, users and staff. In the emotional support to people with a psychiatric disorder and their families. In the promotion of self-help groups and mutual help. In the raise of awareness about psychological disorders among high-school students. In the social, job and housing inclusion of people suffering from mental illness. In the counseling service for the assessment of needs and orientation to treatment.

In partnership with Fondazione Italiana Accenture and Accenture spa, Progetto Itaca has founded and developed Job Stations, a project of smart working for people with psychiatric disabilities; these work centers are present today in several Italian cities and act as a solid, effective and sustainable resource to increase employment among people suffering from mental illness

protagonists are people with mental disabilities. It is as important as to win the 2017 edition of Greater Than Award, global award of Accenture, as best project oriented to the communities where the company operates. “The final goal” Pozzoli explains, “is to give a role in the work world to young people, men and women, with psychiatric disabilities”. The meaning, then, is that of inclusion. Up to now over 50 people have found a position in Job Station, allocated among many firms.

How did the Job Stations adventure start? From the realization that, if supported in the right way, people with disabilities can be truly integrated in the work world, giving value to their skills. For companies, as Aldo Pozzoli says, the advantages are noticeable, from the opportunity of finding oneself to recruit young people trained to cover roles actually required from the employer, to the possibility to fulfill legal obligation to hire people with disabilities. As for the individual, to transform a history of mental disease into a resource, disability into ability, starting from the principle that everybody has a hidden potential: this is a fundamental goal. In this way you help people to regain self esteem and to defeat social exclusion.

The secret for a correct job integration is to identify the activity that is a good fit for the person. This activities are appropriate to be carried out at a distance, in a stimulating but protected environment, without the stress that you have when relating with colleagues in an atmosphere that is also competitive, not sustainable, given the psychic fragility of the worker. Noise, confusion, constant pressure are difficult obstacles to overcome.

The more suitable tasks are those that have to be carried out at a desk, face to face with a computer, from managing of archives, to the creation and updating of company databases, from editing and checking expense notes, to the basic paperwork for the settlement compensation of insurance policies, up to coding or testing to detect coding errors. But this list is virtually infinite. It is important that it is an activity that can be planned, based on clear procedures, with low discretion and with regular and recurring deadlines.

A fundamental role in Progetto Itaca and for the success of Job Stations is performed by tutors, people skilled in the field of the management of psychic disabilities and employment, who assist workers (job stationers) and help them deal with and manage everyday activities.

Once candidates have been identified, Progetto Itaca proposes these candidates and their CVs, the company then meets the Job Stationer candidate for an interview, at the presence of a tutor, and decides whether to proceed to the job proposal or to meet new candidates. Once the person has been hired, the tutor continues his vital activity of support, by assuring the execution of a quality job together with an appropriate work load.

Encouraging results have been achieved through this model of cooperation. in fact several Job

Challenge won, then? Up till now the effectiveness and the solidity of the Job Station model have been verified, but the challenge is now to involve an increasing number of companies that may include people with psychic disabilities in their staff. This is auspicious based on the Job Stations-tutor-professionalism and the many activities and tasks that has been already successfully carried out by Job Stationers.

Curators: Francesco Baglioni, Progetto Itaca and Aldo Pozzoli, Accenture Spa

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EASPD MEETS SPRINGBOARD CONSULTING IN PARMA -DR. FABRIZIO FEA

At first, on behalf of EASPD (European Association of Service Providers for Persons with Disabilities), I would like to extend my best thanks to Nadine Vogel, Founder of Springboard Consulting, for having given to EASPD the important opportunity to be invited to the Meeting in Parma, held last October 9-10, introducing my organization to the several delegates that joined us there.

EASPD is a European not-for-profit organisation based in Brussels that represents over 15.000 social service provider organisations on disabilities across Europe. The main objective of EASPD is to promote the rights of persons with disabilities by furthering the implementation of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities of December 2006 (UN CRPD) through effective and high quality service systems.

Our aims is to promote equal opportunities for persons with disabilities through effective and high-quality service systems. Social Service providers play an important role in enabling people with disabilities to gain access to their social and human rights; including access to the labour market, education, housing, care and so on.

We revolve our vision around three main pillars: Impact, Innovation and Information, by monitoring and influencing the sector of disabilities, participating in research and projects and providing news on policy developments across Europe to our members. EASPD is recognized by the European Commission and we have a seat at its Disability High Level Group.

Within EASPD, working together governance and members, there are Standing Committees on Education, on Employment and on Inclusive Living. Moreover, are established Interest Groups on Early Childhood Intervention, on Workforce Development and Human Resources, on ICT and on Art and Culture.

Each year our Association organizes two main conferences in different countries on the several topics that involves our members, local authorities and interests. Last congresses have been held in Northern Ireland and Montenegro. Particularly, last June in Belfast, together with the European Union of Supported Employment (EUSE) and the Northern Ireland Union of Supported Employment (NIUSE) we organized the First World Congress on Supported

As one of our most important interest is focused on employment of persons with disabilities, EASPD recognized the importance to be part of the Meeting in Parma and we accepted the kind invitation offered by the President of Springboard Consulting. There we had the opportunity to bring our thoughts, results and main points of the main topic of the Meeting. On the other hand, we could share the update situation on employment for persons with disabilities under several points of view: research, academic and on the ground. A real unique opportunity!

In 2013 and later EASPD worked hard on its Declaration on Employment, that aims at outlining EASPD's vision in terms of the implementation of the Right to Work and Employment, as set by Article 27 of the UN CRPD.

With great pleasure I would like to report here few basic notes of the last version of the Declaration above mentioned.

As we all know, in Europe there are around 80 million people with disabilities. It is clear that their labour force participation rate is significantly lower than when compared to the population as a whole. Persons with disabilities are not fully integrated into the labour market; almost half of the working age population are either unemployed or considered as not able to work. Among those who are working, many are underemployed, paid below the minimum wage, work below their capabilities and/or with temporary contracts only and have poor career prospective. Women and young people with disabilities, persons with mental health issues, persons with intellectual disabilities, persons with psychosocial disabilities and persons with acquired brain injuries appear to be even more discriminated.

The possibilities for work and employment for persons with disabilities, especially persons with severe disabilities, often depend on the amount of (specialised) support available to them (i.e. human support, vocational education and training and technical adaptations, such as reasonable accommodation) and on the existence of support available for employers too (i.e. compensation measures against the potential loss in productivity and/or guidance on how to deal with technical and human support issues linked to persons with disabilities). Legislation also plays an important role in work and employment possibilities, as, in some countries, it defines the possibility for persons with disabilities to be entitled to work, to access the labour market and to the type of subsidies people may receive.

EASPD focusses its conclusions on several key factors enabling work and employment for persons with disabilities. I will list some of the most relevant points, even though any proposal is really essential to the purpose:

policies, not only social ones.

- ◆ Legal frameworks should promote active inclusion of persons with disabilities in the labour market.
- ◆ Inclusion starts from the early stages of life.
- ◆ Transition from school to employment needs to be addressed by establishing a sounder cooperation between the education systems and the labour market.
- ◆ There are several methodologies and support processes which have developed the know-how as to how to best support and accompany people with disabilities in their professional life. Support must be made available in all phases of work-life (recruitment, retention and end of work).
- ◆ Reasonable accommodation is crucial in providing real access to work and employment positions.
- ◆ Cross-sectorial cooperation, including trade unions, is essential to establish sound support frameworks and to identify and tackle any issue with an adequate response.
- ◆ Accessibility and universal design should be given a broad definition to cover all types of disability. Accessibility of transport and of the work place is the first step to enable access to the labour market.
- ◆ Positive attitudes focusing on skills and competences can help overcome negative perceptions and enable labour market participation for persons with disabilities.
- ◆ Support for employers to create their own Corporate Social Responsibility plans is an essential entry point for work and employment for persons with disabilities.
- ◆ The digital divide should be reduced in order to allow persons with disabilities to access education, VET, employment and leisure activities.
- ◆ Support of social cooperatives and social economy actors which promote employment and vocational training for persons with disabilities in line with the UN CRPD.

The potential of job creation for both employers and employees with disabilities is a complex but not impossible objective. There is a need for more efficient and concrete resources to organise trainings and reduce the gap between learning paths and professional environments. Isles of excellence exist, but more resources need to be allocated to make them common practice. The ultimate goal should be the realisation of truly inclusive accessible settings, as according to the UN CRPD, where persons with disabilities can enjoy their rights as everybody else.

For more information, please keep in contacts with:

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