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# Helping Veterans Start a New Career

Job Corps is helping our veterans transition from the military to a new career. At Job Corps, veterans can train for a new and rewarding career alongside other veterans. After training, Job Corps staff will work with veterans to find a job. Some veterans may require additional support during their stay in Job Corps. The following article highlights the successes, as well as challenges facing our veterans, and how centers can provide a positive and supportive environment.

## *Golconda Job Corps Center Reaching Out to Veterans*

According to Deena Strader-Hubbard (Disability Coordinator) and Jim Steffen (Counselor) at the Golconda Job Corps Center in Golconda, IL, “We are just trying to do our part in helping this country through these hard times.” This center has connected with the Illinois Department of Employment Services for Veterans in the hopes of recruiting more veterans to attend Job Corps. Golconda staff and Center Director, David Floyd, recently hosted an open house for veterans to learn more about the program. According to Steffen, 12 to 15 veterans attended this event. The center currently has two veterans with disabilities enrolled in the program.



David Floyd, Golconda Center Director, shakes hands with a veteran at the center-sponsored open house and luncheon.

Golconda has seized this opportunity and is already seeing positive outcomes. “Many of the veterans have skills they learned in the military but they do not have the credentials needed for the workforce, so Job Corps is a natural fit to help them receive the necessary credentials,” Steffen said. Strader-Hubbard sees many benefits to connecting to the local veteran resources in the community. She said a disabled veteran connected to the local Veterans Administration Hospital will be coming to Golconda JCC soon. This individual will continue to receive medical and counseling services through the VA hospital, in addition to wellness services offered at Golconda. The center is also seeing the natural benefit of men and women who have served the country bringing a more mature and positive culture to the center.

Joe Hawk, a veteran with a disability, is currently enrolled at Golconda. He is 50 years old and has been diagnosed with post traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and depression. He stated that he is the first veteran to use the age-waiver process at Golconda. When asked about his experience so far, he said, “At first it did take some time to adjust because of my age, but now I get along great with most of the students.” He also said that he is able to answer many questions students have about the military. Hawk is enrolled in the welding program and hopes to find a good-paying job when he leaves. He learned of Job Corps through his VA representative.

Strader-Hubbard said, “The reasonable accommodation process was done the same as it is for any other student with a disability applying to the program.” The center conducted a telephone conference with Hawk and discussed accommodations. Her advice for other centers is to establish connections with the different agencies that serve veterans, such as vocational rehabilitation, and VA hospitals to make them aware of the Job Corps program. (See page 4 for additional tips on supporting veterans with disabilities who apply to Job Corps.)

For information on accommodating veterans with PTSD, visit the following link on the Job Accommodation Network (JAN) Website: <http://askjan.org/media/ptsdvets.html>.

# Disability Technical Support NOW Available

Information Notice 10-75, issued April 8, 2011, announced technical support for accommodation services throughout Job Corps. This means help is available for Disability Coordinators (DCs), and for all center staff. As the DC, there are many expectations and responsibilities that come with running a successful program.

Below are some of the consultation and technical assistance services that center DCs can expect under this support contract:

- ♿ Guidance on policies and practices related to providing reasonable accommodation for students with disabilities;
- ♿ Assistance with the applicant-file-review process to ensure all applicants are provided with equal opportunity to participate in the Job Corps program;
- ♿ Guidance/clarification on disability-related PRH requirements
- ♿ Instruction on the proper and prompt reporting of disability and accommodation data;
- ♿ Information on disability resources in the community and local programs that can provide accommodations or services to centers or training to center staff/students;
- ♿ Web-based training opportunities;
- ♿ Information on how to prepare for a successful regional office center assessment (ROCA) of your disability program.

In addition to providing the above support, Regional Disability Coordinators (RDICs) and other accommodation support staff will also:

- ♿ Conduct monthly regional teleconference calls for center DCs to provide training, share program/policy updates, and facilitate information exchange;
- ♿ Provide on-site assessments of center accommodation services as part of the ROCA process;
- ♿ Assist Regional Offices by conducting an administrative review of applicant files recommended to the Regional Office for denial.

Each region has its own RDIC (shown above right). These coordinators are the initial contact for any disability-related needs.

## Regional Disability Coordinators

### *Boston region*

Lisa Kosh  
Regional Disability Coordinator  
301-608-3290 ext. 602  
[lisa.kosh@humanitas.com](mailto:lisa.kosh@humanitas.com)

### *Philadelphia and Atlanta regions*

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### *Chicago and San Francisco regions*

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### *Dallas region*

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Regional Disability Coordinator  
650-670-0708  
[sylvia.domagalski@humanitas.com](mailto:sylvia.domagalski@humanitas.com)



# Disability-related PRH Changes and Updates

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The information below highlights recent changes to the disability program from PRH Change Notice 10-04 released September 27, 2010, and PRH Change Notice 10-07 issued October 28, 2010. All changes and updates mentioned below can be found in PRH-6: 6.11 R7 and Appendix 605.

1. **How many DCs should there be?** A center should have two DCs: The Health and Wellness Manager (or a health-staff designee), and Academic Manager (or an academic staff designee) will function as co-DCs.
2. **What information about the disability program needs to be formalized as standard operating procedures (SOPs)?** Three SOPs related to the disability program are now required: (1) DC roles and responsibilities; (2) process for applicants/students to request and receive reasonable accommodation; and (3) process for the review of applicant files.
3. **What new forms have been added or changed?** The Job Corps Reasonable Accommodation Request Form has been changed. Make sure the new form (found in Appendix 605) is used for applicants/students to request reasonable accommodations. The Job Corps Reasonable Accommodation Funding Request Form has been updated and is now included in Appendix 605.
4. **Are there any new or updated processes related to the disability program?** The effectiveness review for accommodation plans has been updated. Before it was suggested that the review of accommodation plans occur during the student's evaluation of student progress (ESP) panel. Now, Appendix 605 requires this review as part of the ESP panel. Forms to support this process and more information can be found on the Job Corps Disability website.

Each center should implement a referral process for students suspected of having a learning or other disability. This process should be documented using a referral and feedback form. A sample form is available on the Job Corps Disability website.

## Staff Disability Training Ideas

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- ▶ Invite an outside expert to provide training or share information on a specific disability topic (e.g., a local university professor).
- ▶ Invite an agency or community organization that supports individuals with disabilities to share their resources (e.g., a staff person from your local [Center for Independent Living](#)).
- ▶ Invite a local business leader, who is a member of the [US Business Leadership Network](#) to share their experiences hiring and employing workers with disabilities.
- ▶ Develop a training using material from the Job Corps Disability website Resources section. The following subsections have training material and ideas: Trainings & Presentations, Promising Practices, and Webinars.
- ▶ Use a scavenger-hunt game to highlight areas of the Job Corps Disability and Learning Disability websites.
- ▶ Pick a specific section of the reasonable accommodation process, and provide training to center staff (e.g., the accommodation plan effectiveness review process and each staff member's and department's role in reviewing the plan for effectiveness).
- ▶ Conduct training on reasonable accommodation plans—How to consider all areas on center when developing/implementing a plan (e.g., academics, career technical, residential, cafeteria, recreation); how to access the accommodation plans in CIS; how to monitor/provide feedback on accommodations.
- ▶ Have staff attend upcoming disability webinars.



# Spotlight on Assistive Technology

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## ***What is an assistive technology device?***

An assistive technology device is defined as “any item, piece of equipment or product system, whether acquired commercially or off the shelf, modified or customized, that is used to increase, maintain, or improve functional capabilities of individuals with disabilities.” [As defined by the Assistive Technology Act of 1998, as amended (P.L. 108-364).]

## ***How Can Assistive Technology Help Students Successfully Complete a Career Technical Training (CTT) Program?***

Students with disabilities who are interested in pursuing a career through Job Corps should not feel they would be unsuccessful due to a disability. Assistive technology can be provided as a reasonable accommodation to help ensure that students are provided with the support they need to successfully complete career training.

## ***I have a blind student who is interested in pursuing the Nurse Assistant/Home Health Aide trade. What are some accommodations we can use to assist the student in being successful?***

*Possible Accommodations:* To assist the student with learning basic nursing skill, the following accommodations could be considered.



*Benefits:* All these devices provide audio output that makes it possible for the student to participate in skills training classes.

*Suggestion on Where to Purchase:* Digital thermometer, <http://www.maxiaids.com/categories/204/Talking-Thermometers.html>; talking digital scale, [http://www.largeprintreviews.com/product\\_talking\\_scales.html](http://www.largeprintreviews.com/product_talking_scales.html); talking blood pressure monitor, <http://www.quickmedical.com/talking-blood-pressure-monitors.html>.

**Check out the Job Corps Disability Website for how assistive technology devices can be used in other CTT areas.**

# Helping Veterans Start a New Career (continued)

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## ***Tips on Supporting Veterans with Disabilities Who Apply to Job Corps***

- ▶ It is important to complete the reasonable accommodation process before an individual with a disability arrives on center. Here are some things to consider for veterans with disabilities applying to Job Corps:
  - ✓ If the individual states he/she is a person with a disability, does the individual have appropriate documentation?
  - ✓ If the individual is over the age of 24, did the center complete the age-waiver process?
  - ✓ Did the Disability Coordinator contact the applicant to discuss reasonable accommodations?
  - ✓ Is the accommodation plan ready to be implemented when the student arrives on center?
  
- ▶ Centers may want to reach out to their local veteran agencies to provide information about the Job Corps program. This will help (1) agencies provide appropriate referrals to Job Corps and (2) centers establish linkages with knowledgeable veteran resources.
  
- ▶ Did the center contact community resources that may be able to provide accommodation ideas, assistive technology, or adaptive equipment?

# Disability Resources

## Training

**Free Online Training on Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI), and Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD):** Learn more about these conditions and how they will affect an individual in the workforce. Plus, learn how to better support individuals with TBI and PTSD in the work environment, and to dispel myths. Training available at: <http://www.americasheroesatwork.gov/forEmployers/presentations/TBIptsd/>

## Disability Awareness Month

**October: National Disability Employment Awareness Month.** The theme for this year's National Disability Employment Awareness Month has been announced. The theme, "**Profit by Investing in Workers with Disabilities,**" promotes the contributions of workers with disabilities and highlights to the public that these workers represent a highly skilled talent pool that can help employers compete in this global economy (taken from Office of Disability Employment Policy).



Veterans receive priority enrollment at all Job Corps centers. While they may attend any Job Corps center in the nation, there are three centers that offer dorm areas exclusively for veterans. They will be living among other veterans who are also transitioning from the military to civilian life. Those centers are:

Atterbury Job Corps Center, Edinburgh, IN  
Earle C. Clements Job Corps Center, Morganfield, KY  
Excelsior Springs Job Corps Center, Excelsior Springs, MO

E-mail your comments or suggestions to Carol Abnathy, National Health and Wellness Manager, [abnathy.carol@dol.gov](mailto:abnathy.carol@dol.gov).

## New Policy

How do centers obtain audio versions of the TABE test? The National Office has changed the policy to enable centers to order audio versions of the TABE 9/10 directly from McGraw-Hill (and keep them securely on center). Contact the McGraw-Hill Customer Service Team at 800-538-9547 to order the audio versions of the TABE test.

## Upcoming Webinars

Reasonable Accommodation 101  
IEP Basics  
Assistive Technology Basics  
Reasonable Accommodation Process  
Disability Sensitivity  
Learning Disability 101  
TABE/GED Accommodations  
JAN (Job Accommodation Network) Overview  
Disability Website – Review of Tools  
Reasonable Accommodation Team Meeting Guidance

*Center Disability Coordinators will receive email alerts of upcoming webinars.*

The screenshot shows the USBLN website header with the logo 'USBLN DISABILITY AT WORK'. Below the header is a navigation menu: 'Text Only Site | Home | About Us | Affiliates | Join Us | Members | Partners | Events | News Room | Programs'. On the left side, there are three blue boxes: 'Disability Supplier Diversity Program' (Learn more about the USBLN® Disability Supplier Diversity Program), 'TOWER Initiative' (Learn more about the USBLN® Tools on Work and Employment Readiness Program), and 'TOWER Initiative Toolkits'. On the right side, there is a large graphic for the 'Biz2Biz Report' with the text 'A Monthly Publication of the USBLN® VOLUME 4, ISSUE 4 - APRIL 30, 2011' and a button that says 'Download the April newsletter now' with links for PDF, DOC, and TEXT.

The US Business Leadership Network® (USBLN®) is the national disability organization that serves as the collective voice of over 60 Business Leadership Network affiliates across North America, representing over 5,000 employers. The USBLN® helps build workplaces, marketplaces, and supply chains where people with disabilities are respected for their talents, while supporting the development and expansion of its BLN affiliates.

Join the USBLN® to learn more on how to connect with businesses that promote and support the hiring of individuals with disabilities. Registration to receive news, events, and announcements is free. Stay connected with their content-rich monthly e-newsletter called the Biz2Biz Report. <http://www.usbln.org/index.html>.