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Winter 2020

## National Disability Employment Awareness Month

October was National Disability Employment Awareness Month (NDEAM). Some of the NDEAM 2020 activities held by Job Corps centers in remote settings are summarized below.

- ▶ **Bamberg:** The center featured a remote “Take the Challenge” activity. Students were encouraged to imagine themselves having a disability (e.g., hearing/visually impaired, wearing a brace, using a wheelchair, having a learning disability, etc.), and take a picture of themselves functioning with the disability and include a brief note about how it felt.
- ▶ **Earle C. Clements:** Health and Wellness staff created a NDEAM virtual classroom with five links to informational websites, a video from their contractor, and provided the national 2020 NDEAM poster for posting to individual Google classrooms, offices, and bulletin boards.
- ▶ **Hawaii:** The Disability Coordinator/TABE Administrator posted a NDEAM 2020 “remote events” flyer to the center’s Disability Google Classroom. Some daily events included: 1) an invitation to attend a 75<sup>th</sup> annual NDEAM celebration; 2) a live virtual Facebook event featuring a musician (Mandy Harvey) who is hearing impaired along with performances from other artists with disabilities; and 3) a virtual “view party” of the public service announcement “I Can” followed by a group discussion led by guest speaker, retired Lieutenant Colonel Eric Lindsay.
- ▶ **Long Beach:** The Center Diversity Committee shared (via email and Google Classroom) a NDEAM-themed PowerPoint that featured an embedded YouTube video, “How You See Me,” slides on famous people with disabilities and how they overcame the obstacles, and a “Face Mask Challenge” where participants took a photo of themselves with the 2020 NDEAM theme, “Increase Access and Opportunity,” on their masks.
- ▶ **Ottumwa:** The Disability Coordinator hosted a Google Meet in the Disability Services Google Classroom on NDEAM. The “Building a Future that Works” video was offered and “distance learning engagement hours” were offered for students who watched the video and wrote a paper about what they learned about NDEAM.



Earle C. Clements JCC NDEAM Virtual Classroom



Long Beach JCC Face Mask Challenge

# Bookshare Partnership: Supporting Students with Print Disabilities

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## What is Bookshare?

Bookshare is an ebook (electronic book) library that makes reading easier. Individuals with dyslexia, blindness, physical disabilities, and other reading barriers can customize their reading experience in ways that work for them. Members can listen to books read aloud, follow along with highlighted text, read in braille or large font, and more.

The Bookshare library has over 930,000 titles, giving members access to virtually any book they need for school, career, or leisure reading. Students can easily access textbooks, educational materials, award-winning novels, New York Times best sellers, newspapers and periodicals, and more on virtually any device and platform. Bookshare is FREE for all qualified U.S. students of any age!



## How Can Bookshare Help Job Corps Students with Disabilities?

To meet the growing need to provide flexible “real time” accommodations and support for students with print disabilities in all settings (e.g., academic, career technical, employment, independent living, etc.), Bookshare provides free technology-based tools and resources so qualified students can access printed materials anytime and anywhere.

### Students with Visual Impairments:

- Books using a text-to-speech synthesized voice
- Books in Braille
- Materials in large print

### Students with Physical Disabilities:

- Books on a computer or a variety of portable devices
- Visual and text-to-speech features as desired
- Easy or easier to access than books on tape
- May be controlled with an individual's "single-switch" or other adaptive technology

### Students with Learning Disabilities:

- Full text of books in digital format
- Multi-modal reading with both visual and audio (through synthetic text to speech)
- Software programs are free to download that provide a large range of reading support
- Tools designed specifically for learning disabilities
- Highlighting of text as it is read aloud, changing margin, word, paragraph and line spacing
- Custom background and print colors

Bookshare’s vast collection includes a dedicated Job Corps’ library with many commonly used textbooks, study guides and career resources such as Test of Adult Basic Education Fundamentals for Reading and Math, GED Prep, Test Assessing Secondary Completion Prep, career technical books for Job Corps Health Occupations, Homeland Security, Welding, Retail, Career Transition, and many others.

More information about Bookshare is available on the Job Corps Disability website [here](#).

# Spotlight on Assistive Technology

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To promote access to instructional materials/resources and to remove barriers that often come with remote/distance learning settings, assistive technology (tools or any type of equipment or software that helps students to work around the challenges they have, whether that be with learning, communication, or mobility) can give students of all abilities more individualized and accessible learning experiences.

Here are a few ways we can use digital tools to meet the individual needs of our students and help them through learning challenges:



- **For students who are blind or visually impaired:** Today, many devices such as [Google Chromebooks](#) come with audiovisual assistance. For example, Chromebooks have a built-in screen reader called [ChromeVox](#), which reads content out loud for users on the Chrome browser. Chromebooks also have features that make on-screen content easier to read, such as screen magnifiers, high-contrast mode, and select-to-speak. Teachers can also plug in or pair a Braille keyboard with Bluetooth if students need Braille support. Popular cloud-based applications such as G Suite for Education and Microsoft Office 365 also have dictation capabilities, allowing students to type by using their voice.
- **For students who are deaf or hard of hearing:** For teachers using video technology, there are educational apps such as [Flipgrid](#) with closed-caption features, as well as videoconferencing tools such as Microsoft Teams, which comes with live captioning and subtitles. Teachers can also use FM systems — wireless devices that directly transmit sounds to a hearing aid — to communicate clearly with students who have hearing loss, even in a noisy classroom.
- **For students with speech disabilities:** Speech-to-text software and word prediction tools can assist students with speech disabilities in communicating with their teachers and peers. For example, Office 365 applications have Dictate, an Artificial Intelligence-enabled add-in that allows students to speak into a microphone and have their speech converted into text on the computer.
- **For students with learning, cognitive, and developmental disabilities:** Besides creating virtual reality experiences for students with autism, tools such as memory aids, audio books, and text-to-speech systems are especially helpful for students who need assistance with learning, attention, and organization. One particular tool is Microsoft's Immersive Reader, which was specifically designed to support students with dyslexia and dysgraphia. With the Immersive Reader, students can have text read out loud and broken into syllables — even in other languages. Microsoft's Tell Me feature allows students to access commands on Office 365 applications without having to remember them. There are also downloadable fonts such as OpenDyslexic, which can enhance readability and reading speed for students with dyslexia.
- **For students who need mobility assistance:** One way teachers can optimize their classrooms for all students is by adopting flexible furniture, a key component of a modern learning environment. Standing desks, wobble stools and even exercise balls give students more freedom and comfort to move around in the classroom. Another example is having students use interactive displays or touch-screen monitors if they aren't physically able to use a keyboard or computer mouse.

# Spotlight on Assistive Technology (Cont'd)

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## Disability Accessibility Apps

### Habit Bull

The [HabitBull](#) is a mobile app designed specifically to help the user break unwanted habits or establish new healthy habits. The app offers inspiring quotes, progress charts, reminder notifications, and easy-to-see streaks. You can set reminders for each habit and it will display them on days when you need them the most. This is especially useful if you have a to do list with repeating tasks or if you want to be reminded to do the same thing every day. The app is available on iOS and Android.



### Mango Health

The [Mango Health](#) app is designed to remind users when it's time to take their medications and records each dose. It also automatically alerts users to potentially dangerous interactions between medications and supplements or with food and drink. It also features healthy habit reminders, refill alerts, a daily health diary, and a build-in game component to increase engagement, motivation, and commitment. The app is available on iOS and Android.



### Spread the Sign

The [Spread the Sign](#) app is an international online sign language dictionary with over 300,000 signs. Users of the app can learn sign language for over twenty different languages, including American Sign Language. The app is available on iOS and Android, as well as a website tool. It is free to download.



### TapTapSee

[TapTapSee](#) is a mobile camera app designed specifically for blind and visually impaired users. It utilizes the student's device camera and voice-over functions to take a picture or video of anything and identify it out loud for them. The app can analyze and identify any two or three-dimensional objects at any angle within seconds and then speaks the identification aloud. The app is available on iOS and Android.



## Regional Disability Coordinators

- Boston: Kristen Philbrook ([philbrook.kristen@jobcorps.org](mailto:philbrook.kristen@jobcorps.org))
- Philadelphia: Angela Jenkins ([jenkins.angelak@jobcorps.org](mailto:jenkins.angelak@jobcorps.org))
- Atlanta and San Francisco: Stephanie Karras ([karras.stephanie@jobcorps.org](mailto:karras.stephanie@jobcorps.org))
- Dallas: Alyssa Purificacion Olivas ([purificacion.alyssa@jobcorps.org](mailto:purificacion.alyssa@jobcorps.org))
- Chicago: Sharon Hong ([hong.sharon@jobcorps.org](mailto:hong.sharon@jobcorps.org))

# Disability Resources

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## Job Corps Disability Website: Distance Learning Resources to Support Students with Disabilities

The [Job Corps Disability Website](#) now has a section for [Distance Learning Resources](#) designed to support Disability Coordinators and instructional staff (both academic and career technical) in guiding and implementing accommodations for students with disabilities in distance learning settings. The webpage includes guides on creating accessibility (e.g., [Windows and Office Accessibility](#), [Immersive Reader](#), [Office Lens](#), [Adobe Read Out Loud](#)), as well as suggestions for supporting students with emotional/behavioral disabilities.



## National Center on Accessible Educational Materials (AEM)

[AEM](#) is a resource website designed to support educators in creating/enhancing print, digital, graphic, audio, or video instructional materials to make them usable across the widest range of learner variability regardless of format or features. [The AEM Center Resources for Remote Learning](#) and [Resources for Access and Distance Learning](#) webpages provide resources to support students who need accessible materials and technologies while learning remotely.

## Understood.org and Distance Learning

[Understood.org](#) has dedicated webpages to support staff, students, families, and communities with [distance learning resources](#) and [online tips](#) to help provide access for students with disabilities in a variety of learning settings. Several “[universally designed](#)” best practices for online learning are also provided.

## United Spinal Association and Disability Etiquette

The [United Spinal Association](#) provides a free publication on [Disability Etiquette: Tips on Interacting with People with Disabilities](#). The publication/handbook is an excellent source for sensitivity training and support for instructional/training staff, employers/employees (anyone) working with people with disabilities, and also for improving overall inclusion practices.

### Upcoming Webinars

- Reasonable Accommodation 101
- Autism: Awareness, Advocacy and Support
- Disability Coordinator Orientation Part 3

#### To register:

- Go to [WebEx](#)