

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
June 14, 2016

Beth Gianforcaro  
(614) 438-1467  
[beth.gianforcaro@ood.ohio.gov](mailto:beth.gianforcaro@ood.ohio.gov)

## **100 Ohio Businesses Join Network Focusing on Value of Hiring People with Disabilities** *A Record Number of Ohio Businesses Commit to Strengthen Employment Opportunities*

(COLUMBUS, OH) – One hundred businesses are now members of the Ohio Business Leadership Network a peer-to-peer business organization that provides employers with information and resources about how best to recruit, select, train and retain a workforce that includes individuals with disabilities. (See attachment 1.)

“Hiring individuals who have disabilities brings a wealth of benefits to a company,” said Kevin Miller, director for Opportunities for Ohioans with Disabilities, the state agency responsible for providing services to Ohioans with disabilities to achieve quality employment and independence. “Myths, fears and misunderstanding too often are the barriers to hiring people with disabilities. The Ohio Business Leadership Network and its members take down these barriers by being progressive in their approaches to looking at the abilities of people and to this relatively untapped workforce resource/labor market.”

There are more than 1.5 million individuals with a disability in Ohio. More than 800,000 of these Ohioans are of working-age (between 16 and 64). The most recently published Vocational Rehabilitation Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment estimated that more than 100,000 of working age Ohioans with disabilities are seeking employment.

“We are proud to achieve this milestone that makes Ohio one of the largest and most active affiliates of the Business Leadership Network in the country because it means more Ohio businesses have access to resources to help enhance hiring and retaining a workforce that includes people with disabilities,” said Mitch Morgan, president of the Ohio Business Leadership Network and assistant vice president, diversity and inclusion strategy manager for Fifth Third Bank.

Through the Ohio Business Leadership Network, members have access to the following:

- Learning best business practices from Ohio companies that have successfully employed people with disabilities and benefited from a diverse workforce representative of Ohio’s largest minority group;
- Employer-focused training provided at no charge at employer worksites through webinars;
- Federal contractors can receive assistance with meeting section 503 requirements and connections to qualified candidates with disabilities;
- Connections to the U.S. Business Leadership Network, a national association of experienced employers;
- Quarterly meetings for business contacts;
- Networking opportunities;
- Consultation opportunities with peers;
- Hiring resources such as the newly released Employer Toolkit for Hiring People with Disabilities: <http://www.odjfs.state.oh.us/forms/file.asp?id=1690&type=application/pdf>

Ohio businesses recognize that building a workforce that includes more individuals with disabilities is good for business. Nationally, it is estimated that 52 percent of the 77 million baby boomers will become disabled. By employing people with disabilities, employers can effectively position themselves to develop products and services that are more likely to appeal to a diverse customer base, resulting in a significant increase in profits, Morgan added.

According to a DePaul University study of 314 workplaces, employees with disabilities have the same job performance ratings, do not require more supervisory time, are no more likely to be absent, late or have time off work, do not have more work place accidents and are less likely to quit the job.

Further studies from the Jobs Accessibility Network show that when hiring workers with a disability, 58 percent of employers provided no-cost accommodations and often, one-time accommodations cost no more than \$500.

In addition, according to the U.S. Department of Labor, the large and growing market of people with disabilities has \$175 billion in discretionary spending -- more than four times the spending power of tweens (8-14 year-olds), a demographic sought after by businesses.

Membership in the Ohio Business Leadership Network is free. Businesses interested in becoming members can find information at: [www.ohiobl.org](http://www.ohiobl.org). Ohio is an affiliate of the U.S. Business Leadership Network which represents 51 chapters and more than 5,000 employers across the United States. In 2014, Ohio was awarded Outstanding Affiliate of the Year for its work to help businesses hire more workers with disabilities.

- 30 -

*Editor's Notes:*

- Attachment 1: List of the 100 Ohio Business Leadership Network Members, to date;
- Attachment 2: Quotations from some Ohio Business Leadership Network members about being a member of the network and hiring people with disabilities.



Opportunities for Ohioans  
with Disabilities

John R. Kasich, Governor  
Kevin L. Miller, Executive Director



### Attachment 1:

### Members of the Ohio Business Leadership Network

1. Ability Center @ Home
2. Adecco
3. AMC Theatres
4. American Electric Power
5. Aramark
6. AultCare
7. Battelle
8. Booz Allen Hamilton
9. Bob Evans Farms
10. Cardinal Health
11. Cardinal Health at Home
12. Central Ohio Diversity Council
13. Cintas
14. Cincinnati Children's Hospital
15. Cleveland Clinic
16. Columbus State Community College
17. Columbus Zoo and Aquarium
18. Corporate One Federal Credit Union
19. COSI
20. Crown Equipment Corporation
21. CSX Transportation
22. CVS Caremark
23. Dave and Buster's
24. Dawson & Dawson Healthcare
25. Dollar General Distribution Center
26. Ernst & Young
27. FedEx Ground
28. Fifth Third Bank
29. Franklin University
30. GE Aviation
31. General Electric Lighting
32. Giant Eagle
33. HCR ManorCare
34. Hilton Columbus Downtown
35. Home Depot Distribution Center
36. Huntington Bank
37. InfoCision Management Corp.
38. iQor
39. J.B. Hunt Transport Inc.
40. JPMorgan Chase & Co.
41. Kern, Inc.
42. Key Bank
43. Kroger
44. LabCorp
45. Land O' Lakes
46. Legal Shield
47. Lowe's
48. Lowe's Distribution Center
49. Luvata Ohio
50. Manpower
51. MaritzCX
52. Marriott Cleveland Downtown Key Center
53. Marriott Cleveland Airport
54. McMaster – Carr
55. Miami University
56. Molina Healthcare Inc.
57. National Church Residences
58. Nationwide Children's Hospital
59. Nationwide Insurance
60. NiSource Inc.
61. Nielsen
62. Ohio Association of Community Colleges
63. OhioHealth
64. Ohio School Board Association
65. Ohio University
66. Parker Hannifin Corporation
67. Pitney Bowes Inc.
68. Principle Business Enterprises, Inc.
69. Procter & Gamble
70. ProMedica
71. Raising Cane's
72. Red Roof Inn, Inc.
73. Renaissance Columbus Downtown
74. Renhill HR On Demand
75. Ritz – Carlton Cleveland
76. Safelite Group
77. Sauder Woodworking Co.
78. Sears Holdings Company
79. Sherwin-Williams Co.
80. Target Distribution Center
81. Teledyne Turbine Engines
82. The Ohio State University
83. Thermo Fisher Scientific Inc.
84. Time Warner Cable
85. TimkenSteel
86. Timken Company
87. TJX Companies
88. Trinity Health
89. Turner Construction Co.
90. United Collection Bureau
91. University Hospital
92. University of Toledo
93. UPS
94. U.S. Veterans Administration
95. Verizon Wireless
96. Wagstaff, Inc.
97. Walgreens Distribution Center
98. Walmart Distribution
99. Walmart Transportation Office
100. Wright-Patterson Air Force Base



Opportunities for Ohioans  
with Disabilities

John R. Kasich, Governor  
Kevin L. Miller, Executive Director



**Attachment 2:  
Quotations about Hiring People with Disabilities  
Ohio Business Leadership Network Members**

**OhioHealth:**

“OhioHealth has been on a journey to support individuals with disabilities since 2007, and the Opportunities for Ohioans with Disabilities Agency (OOD) has been an integral part of the process. We initially partnered with OOD by having a vocational rehabilitation counselor as the single point of contact for our program by assisting with job placement and accommodations.

Through continued collaboration, it has led to a partnership with OOD counselors through two Project SEARCH internship programs which are business led and prepare students for competitive, integrated employment. OhioHealth is committed to promoting diversity and inclusion throughout our organization and this connection support our cardinal value to honor the dignity and worth of each person.”

Chris Moranda

*Systems Manager of Disability Services – Associate Health*

**Fifth Third Bank:**

“When businesses identify the strengths of employees with disabilities, then put them in jobs that match their skills, those employees turn out to be faithful, low turnover, hard-working employees.”

Teresa Tanner

*Executive Vice President – Chief Human Resource Officer*

**Marriott Cleveland Downtown Key Center:**

“Congratulations to the Marriot Cleveland Downtown Key Center for being the OHBLN’s 100<sup>th</sup> member, recruited by the Ritz Carlton Cleveland. Putting people first has always been part of Marriott’s DNA. We believe our core strength lies in our ability to embrace difference and create opportunities.”

Apoorva Gandhi

*Vice President, Multicultural Affairs, Marriott International, Inc.  
and a USBLN Board Member*

**GE Aviation:**

“GE Aviation is proud to be part of the first 100 businesses to join the Ohio Business Leadership Network.” GE Aviation is committed to hiring the best talent for our company, and these candidates include individuals with disabilities. The OHBLN is a strong resource to help companies strengthen their workforce diversity.”

Ernest Marshall,

*Vice President of Human Resources  
GE Aviation*

**Crown Equipment:**

At Crown Equipment Corporation, our employees' diverse capabilities are the force behind our success in the material handling industry. We cultivate a culture of passionate people and inspired innovation, and we are committed to promoting diversity and inclusion throughout our organization. Crown is pleased to be among the first 100 businesses to join the Ohio Business Leadership Network (OHBLN). Our partnerships with the OHBLN and the Opportunities for Ohioans with Disabilities (OOD) are invaluable resources for successful recruitment, selection, training and retention of a diverse workforce that includes individuals with disabilities.

Samantha Boutaam  
EEO / Immigration Specialist  
Crown Equipment Corporation