EARN Small Business Webinar Series:

Local and State Disability Inclusion Incentives and Resources for Small Businesses

May 1, 2024

Featured Panelists

Ray McCoy
Program Coordinator
Employer Reasonable Accommodation Fund
Department of Employment and Economic Development
State of Minnesota

Ray McCoy is a program coordinator for the State of Minnesota’s Department of Employment and Economic Development, for a new program called the Employer Reasonable Accommodation Fund (ERAF). He has an active role promoting this program statewide and building relationships with partners throughout the state of Minnesota. Ray has over ten years of experience in workforce development, program management, and outreach. He has a passion for creative engagement and education for inclusion and accessibility initiatives.
Kris Oldenburg is the audit and compliance manager for Tax & License with the City of Tacoma, Washington. As part of this role, he supports the Business and Occupation Tax Program for Tacoma. This program includes a variety of deductions and incentives to support community goals. Prior to his time in Tacoma, he was the deputy director of property appraisal at the Municipality of Anchorage in Alaska. As part of that role, he managed the exemption program which included a variety of exemptions to encourage community growth. His background in supports for the community does not end there. At the largest provider of disability service in Alaska, Kris supported people with disabilities in a variety of administrative roles, including defending Medicaid audits and compliance with national accreditation requirements.
Nikki Powis
Director of Small Business Programs
National Disability Institute (NDI)

Nikki Powis is the director of Small Business Programs for the National Disability Institute (NDI). Nikki is responsible for the strategic direction and implementation of NDI’s multiple small business initiatives serving entrepreneurs and small business owners with disabilities. Her role includes championing NDI’s efforts to expand diversity, equity, and inclusion within the entrepreneurial eco-system and supporting entrepreneurs with disabilities to start, build and grow their businesses.

Nikki Powis brings over 30 years of experience managing programs to advance economic opportunities for underserved communities at the local, regional, statewide, and national level. Nikki has worked as an educator and director of workforce programs to include education and expansion of small business ownership and has experience developing curriculum for workforce development, entrepreneurship, and small business development.

Nikki has served on multiple advisory boards focused on workforce development and increasing employment opportunities for people with disabilities and multiple barriers to employment.

Nikki brings both extensive professional experience, and as a parent of a child with a disability, personal knowledge and passion into her work toward supporting positive change efforts.

For more information, visit AskEARN.org.