Federal Exchange on Employment and Disability (FEED) Meeting

The Federal Government and Neurodiversity
February 14, 2024
Today’s Agenda

Introduction and Welcoming Remarks (1:00-1:10 p.m.)
• Akinyemi Banjo, Senior Policy Advisor, Office of Disability Employment Policy (ODEP), U.S. Department of Labor (DOL)

Presentation: Model Neurodiversity-Inclusive Programs (1:10-1:55 p.m.)
• Dr. Scott Robertson, Senior Policy Advisor, ODEP, DOL
• Teresa Thomas, Program Lead, Neurodiverse Talent Enablement (Neurodiversity@Work), MITRE
• Dr. Lynn R. Cominsky, Professor of Physics & Astronomy and Director, EdEon STEM Learning, Sonoma State University, NASA’s Neurodiversity Network (N3)

Update: Workforce Recruitment Program (WRP) (1:55-2:15)
• Frances Vhay, Workforce Recruitment Program Manager, ODEP, DOL

National Disability Employment Awareness Month (NDEAM) Discussion (2:15-2:25)
• Renee Tajudeen, Director, Policy Communication and Outreach, ODEP, DOL

Report Out: Summary of FEED Member Responses to DEIA Polling Questions (2:25-2:40)
• Jennifer Croft, Diversity Program Manager, Office of Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility (ODEIA), U.S. Office of Personnel Management (OPM)

Interactive Session: Bolstering FEED Community Engagement and Connection (2:40-2:55 p.m.)

Closing Remarks (2:55-3:00)
• Taryn Mackenzie Williams, Assistant Secretary, ODEP, DOL
Introduction and Welcome

Akinyemi Banjo, Senior Policy Advisor
Office of Disability Employment Policy (ODEP), U.S. Department of Labor (DOL)
Presentation:
Model Neurodiversity-Inclusive Programs

Dr. Scott Robertson, Senior Policy Advisor, Employment-Related Support Policy Team
Office of Disability Employment Policy (ODEP), U.S. Department of Labor (DOL)

Teresa Thomas, Program Lead, Neurodiverse Talent Enablement (Neurodiversity@Work),
MITRE

Dr. Lynn Cominsky, Professor, Physics and Astronomy and Director, EdEon STEM Learning,
Sonoma State University
Our Panelists

Dr. Scott Robertson
Senior Policy Advisor, ODEP, DOL

Teresa Thomas
Program Lead, Neurodiverse Talent Enablement MITRE

Dr. Lynn Cominsky
Professor, Physics & Astronomy Director, EdEon STEM Learning Sonoma State University
Poll questions: Neurodiversity

Poll questions!
Update:
Workforce Recruitment Program (WRP)

Frances Vhay, Workforce Recruitment Program Manager, ODEP, DOL
Workforce Recruitment Program

• Recruitment program.

• Connects federal employers with college students, graduate students, and recent graduates with disabilities interested in federal service.

• Managed jointly by the U.S. Departments of Labor and Defense.
How the Program Works

• **Spring:** School Coordinators register their colleges.

• **Fall:** Students and recent graduates apply.

• **Late Fall:** Elective informational interviews with federal employees.

• **December:** Talent database is published for employers.

• **Following Year:** Employers search candidates in talent database to hire for internship and job opportunities.
Who the WRP Candidates Are

• 3,300 undergraduate, graduate students, and recent graduates with disabilities from 500+ colleges.

• Candidates are:
  ▪ Available for internships and part-time or full-time employment;
  ▪ From many academic and professional backgrounds; and
  ▪ Eligible for the Schedule A hiring authority.
Action Item

Is WRP listed as a recruitment step on your agency’s hiring checklist?
Beginning the WRP Search

• Research with HR the minimum qualifications for the job series and grade you are looking to hire.

• Define the essential functions and related skills for the position.

• Candidate searches on WRP.gov can be done by:
  • Hiring managers;
  • Other staff/federal employees; and/or
  • Human Resources staff or Disability Program Managers.
How Employers Access WRP.gov

• Anyone with a federal email address can register at [WRP.gov](https://WRP.gov) and search the database.

• Search by degree, major, job focus, location preference, keywords, and technical skills.

• Save candidate resumes for later viewing and report hires.
New 2024 Search Fields!

- Employment Type
  - Spring Internship, Summer Internship, Fall Internship, Permanent Employment
- Career Interest Statement
- Years of Volunteer/Work Experience
- Interest in Work Abroad
- Work Environment (remote, hybrid, in person)
- American Indian/Alaskan Native Preference (applicable to Bureau of Indian Affairs and Indian Health Service)
WRP Database Search Page

Please fill out one or more fields below to filter the search results for the WRP college student, graduate student, and recent graduate applications. To learn more about conducting WRP candidate searches, please go to the Application Fields and Search Tips.
Student Hiring Management

• Open an application and click “select student” to save the candidate’s information.

• Candidate will be added to your **Student Hiring Management** page.

• Selecting the candidate does not inform anyone; it just saves the application for you to view later.
Next Steps to Hire a WRP Candidate

- Reach out to WRP candidates by email or phone to schedule an interview.
- Follow your agency’s hiring procedures and coordinate with your WRP Coordinator or HR contact.
- HR will obtain a Schedule A letter from the candidate.
- You may use other hiring authorities to hire WRP candidates.
- Please report any WRP candidates who have been hired using the WRP website or email WRP@dol.gov.
“My goal is to learn more about HR management, manage a team, and support several commands in the Defense Department.”

— Esther Cing, Management Analyst, U.S. Navy

Check out more WRP success stories!
Questions & Contact Information

Website: www.WRP.gov
Email for WRP staff: WRP@dol.gov
National Disability Employment Awareness Month (NDEAM) Discussion

Renee Tajudeen, Director, Policy Communication and Outreach Office of Disability Employment Policy (ODEP), U.S. Department of Labor (DOL)
Report Out:
Summary of FEED Member Responses to Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility Polling Questions

Jennifer Croft, Diversity Program Manager
Office of Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility (ODEIA), U.S. Office of Personnel Management (OPM)
Interactive Session:
Bolstering FEED Community Engagement and Connection

Wendy Doernberg, Attorney-Advisor, Federal Sector Programs
Poll questions: FEED Engagement

Poll questions!
Closing Remarks

**Taryn Mackenzie Williams**, Assistant Secretary
Office of Disability Employment Policy (ODEP), U.S. Department of Labor (DOL)
Mark Your Calendars

EARN Webinar
“Building Local Partnerships: One Strategy for Hiring and Keeping Workers”
  o March 20, 2024, 2:00-3:30 p.m. ET

April FEED Meeting
  o April 17, 2024, 1:00-3:00 p.m. ET

June FEED Meeting
  o June 12, 2024, 1:00-3:00 p.m. ET

September FEED Meeting
  o September 11, 2024, 1:00-3:00 p.m. ET
New EARN Resources

**Toolkit:**  Small Business Toolkit
AskEARN.org/page/small-business-toolkit

**Resource Guide:**  Schedule A Excepted Service Hiring Authority for People with Disabilities
AskEARN.org/publication/schedule-a-resource-guide

**Frequently Asked Questions:**  FAQs About the Schedule A Excepted Service Hiring Authority for People with Disabilities
AskEARN.org/publication/schedule-a-faqs

**Webinar Recordings:**

- **Neurodiversity: Dispelling of Myths, General Awareness, and How to Build a more Inclusive Work Environment**
  AskEARN.org/event/neurodiversity-dispelling-of-myths-general-awareness

- **Strategies to Promote Culturally Competent Mental Health Awareness in Workplaces: A Partnership between the Steve Fund and the National Association of Colleges and Employers**
  AskEARN.org/event/culturally-competent-mental-health-awareness

- **State of Digital Accessibility**
  AskEARN.org/event/state-of-digital-accessibility
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