

### 2022 Legislative Session Reception

As legislators convene in Tallahassee for the 2022 Legislative Session, we thought this was a great opportunity to host a reception at the Florida Historic Capitol Museum with our partner Florida SBDC Network. As we continue to raise awareness about the importance of disability inclusion, it is crucial that Florida legislators are aware of this vital segment of Florida's workforce, and we appreciate the support of legislative champions like **Representative Chris Latvala**.

During the reception, we were pleased to hear guest speaker **Michelle Dennard** discuss the commitment CareerSource Florida has to disability employment. We also heard from our Board Chair **Laurie Sallarulo** and her personal story of disability inclusion.

*Florida's workforce is strong and more resilient when all of our citizens, including those with disabilities, have the opportunity to pursue rewarding careers.*

**Michelle Dennard**  
President & CEO  
CareerSource Florida



*Michelle Dennard, President & CEO of CareerSource Florida; Greg Britton, CEO of Florida SBDC Network and Allison Chase, President & CEO of The Able Trust*



**Allison Chase**

*Florida is growing and our economy is changing. To prepare for the future, it's crucial that we have a strong workforce and the best way to meet workforce demands is to make sure we're utilizing all the talent in Florida. Floridians with disabilities represent an underutilized talent pool. They bring a diverse set of skills and like the rest of us, they want meaningful and sustainable employment.*

*I am pleased to support The Able Trust in their commitment to ensuring that every person with a disability has the opportunity to live up to their full potential. For a stronger Florida, we need to make sure all Floridians who want to work can work.*

**Florida Representative**  
**Chris Latvala**

### Monthly Poll

What is the median one-time cost of accommodations for an employee with a disability?

**\$1000**



*Laurie Sallarulo, President and CEO of Junior Achievement of South Florida and Chair of The Able Trust*

### Inclusive Training Program

During the reception, we also announced a new training partnership with **Florida SBDC Network** that we will kick off this spring -- more details are below. We look forward to working with employers across Florida who are interested in becoming more inclusive and strengthening their organization by accessing this high quality talent pool.

Thank you for your positive response to the poll we included in last month's newsletter about participating in our Listening Tour. We will be sharing information on when we're in your area as the dates are finalized.

If you would like to partner with us on one of these meetings, please contact Jesse Hinojosa at [jesse@abletrust.org](mailto:jesse@abletrust.org).

I look forward to seeing you soon.

Best regards,  
**Allison Chase**

\$500

\$250

**I have no idea what the cost of the typical accommodation is.**



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JOIN US IN CELEBRATING

**CTE MONTH  
FEBRUARY 2022**



In Florida, there are currently more than 772,000 K-12 CTE students, more than 338,000 postsecondary CTE students, and 15,000 Registered Apprentices engaged in this type of meaningful education.

## LEARN HOW TO BECOME MORE INCLUSIVE



The Able Trust is developing a professional development course for the **Florida Small Business Development Network (SBDC)** to help their statewide network understand and benefit from disability workforce inclusion.

Small businesses represent 99.8% of all businesses in Florida though nationwide they employ people with disabilities at a lower rate than large businesses. Small businesses are competing for qualified talent, and persons with disabilities are an untapped pool that can help fill those gaps.

The Able Trust/Florida SBDC training will provide small businesses with the knowledge and skills needed to include people with disabilities in their organization. The training provides practical tools for recruiting, hiring, and retaining persons with disabilities and a roadmap on getting started.

Contact The Able Trust at [info@abletrust.org](mailto:info@abletrust.org) to learn more about how your business or industry can benefit from the training and support.

**INCLUSIVE BUSINESS HIGHLIGHTED IN "UNDERCOVER BOSS"**



*"We are a store that highly promotes disability inclusion and disability employment."*

Rita's Italian Ice franchise owners Chip Byers and Andrew Collins were featured in a recent episode of "Undercover Boss." Byers, who is also a board member of The Able Trust and autistic, was pleased to have the opportunity to highlight their company's values and the importance of hiring persons with disabilities.

Check out the links below for local coverage.

[Clickorlando.com](http://Clickorlando.com)

[Orlando Sentinel](#)

## WHAT WE'RE READING

### The State of Workplace Disability Inclusion & Digital Accessibility: 2020

UKG™ surveyed 1,000 managers at U.S. companies with more than 150 employees to understand whether leaders are well-equipped to effectively support direct reports with disabilities, especially as the pandemic has driven more companies to adapt to remote work. Among the findings, responses indicated that when things return to normal in the office, more than three quarters of employees think their companies' accommodation of employees with disabilities or employees requiring reasonable accommodations will be better, compared with times before COVID-19.



[Read more](#)



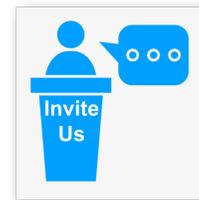
Your support ensures Floridians with disabilities have opportunities to gain meaningful employment.

To make your tax-deductible donation to The Able Trust, [click here](#).



Forward this newsletter to other colleagues, and business and community leaders who care about being more inclusive.

[Click here](#) to join our mailing list



We welcome the opportunity to share information about disability employment. Invite us to speak at your upcoming board meeting, conference or webinar.

[Click here](#) to fill out our Speaker Request form



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