

“Coffee Talks”: A replicable model of employer engagement promoting Disability Inclusion in the Workplace



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Work Together NC

Possibility to Opportunity

What's Work Together NC?

Work Together NC is a statewide initiative funded by the U.S. Administration for Community Living (90DNCE0006). We help employers, service providers, and self advocates, *work together* to increase employment opportunities for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

Work Together NC has developed an **IDD Inclusive Employment Alliance** – or a network of employers across North Carolina who demonstrate a commitment to employing people with IDD.

Any NC based employer who completes Work Together NC's ~2 hr self paced training is eligible to apply for recognition as an IDD Inclusive Employer. Employers may qualify as either a bronze, silver, or gold level employer based on the number of workplace accessibility features they self-endorse. Employers must pay at least minimum wage to receive recognition.

A newly recognized "IDD Inclusive Employer" is provided with a contact list of regional or statewide agencies that provide Supported Employment Services to people with IDD. The employer will select a preferred agency and contact that agency for job candidates as job openings become available. Moving forward, the employer and agency collaborate to ensure the candidate receives the support needed to apply, interview, and maintain success at the job.



Work Together NC

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IDD INCLUSIVE EMPLOYMENT ALLIANCE

A network of NC based employers committed to hiring people with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD).

IDD INCLUSIVE EMPLOYER



Work Together NC

“The Enthusiasm [of my employees with IDD] around work tasks is valuable for the **WHOLE** team.”



Businesses who hire people with intellectual and developmental disabilities see increases in...

Employee retention
Workplace morale
Innovation
Productivity
Customer loyalty



Pictured: The owner of Purple Bowl, an acai bowl shop in Chapel Hill, with one of her valued employees!

Take the ~2 hour self paced training & then receive:

- An “IDD Inclusive Employer” sticker for your storefront
- Job candidate referrals
- Contacts for local agencies that provide state funded job coaching and training support



Work Together NC

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What's a Coffee Talk?



Work Together NC began hosting IDD Inclusive Employer “Coffee Talks” in September 2023 as a pilot employer engagement model, in partnership with the Chapel Hill-Carrboro Chamber Commerce. Talks are used as an initial point of contact with employers, with the aim of generating interest and excitement around disability-inclusive hiring. Talks are hosted quarterly and consistently attended by ~20-40 attendees. Some talks have been tailored to a specific industry, whereas others have been open to a general employer audience. The typical agenda includes the following:

- Welcome & Coffee ~5 min
- A panel of successful IDD Inclusive Employers [or a single guest speaker] ~20 min
- A panel of self advocates who are successfully employed ~20 min
- A brief summary of the benefits of IDD Inclusive hiring ~10 min
- Introduction to the IDD Inclusive Employment Alliance + next steps~5min

Given the success of the Coffee Talk model, we are excited to replicate it within other areas of North Carolina and expand the IDD Inclusive Employment Alliance. We are looking for adult IDD service providers and nonprofit organizations who would be interested in hosting a Coffee Talk in collaboration with their local chamber, which would hopefully lead to more job sites for your clients!



Work Together NC

Possibility to Opportunity

Attention senior living/senior service employers and hiring managers!

YOU'RE INVITED...



To a Coffee Talk to learn how to recruit an underutilized talent pool you may not have yet considered: people with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

WHEN

February 20th,
9-10am

REGISTER



WHERE

Chapel Hill Carrboro
Chamber of
Commerce

Presented by...



Work Together NC
Possibility to Opportunity



The Chamber
For a Greater Chapel Hill-Carrboro

*Virtual attendance
option available

Employers who hire people with IDD report lower turnover, increased productivity, and improved workplace culture.

DID YOU KNOW?

Individuals with IDD are eager to work and thrive in many senior living jobs- including housekeeping, food service, social/recreational activity assistance, and more...



Steps to Hosting a Coffee Talk



1. Contact worktogethernc@med.unc.edu to indicate interest in hosting a Coffee Talk. Work Together NC will be able to answer questions and offer guidance as you coordinate your Coffee Talk.
2. Contact your local chamber to set up a meeting and gauge interest the Coffee Talk model. Sharing this guide with them may be helpful.
3. If there is a cost associated with partnering with the chamber, ask for the chamber's assistance in finding a sponsor [see email template on the next page]
4. Set a date/time and reserve a room at the chamber
5. Determine whether you want your Coffee Talk to be industry-specific or a general employer audience
6. Ask the chamber to create the registration page. [see example on next page]
7. Ask the chamber to advertise event to their membership
8. Recruit either a panel of employers that have successfully hired people with IDD or a guest speaker employer
9. Recruit a panel of self-advocates with IDD who are successfully employed
10. Identify someone from your organization to moderate the panels & slides
11. Purchase giftcards for the self-advocate panelist speakers (we recommend a \$25 minimum)
12. Email the questions in advance to all panelists [see Qs on the next page]
13. Coordinate for coffee to be served at the event (most chambers have a brewer)
14. Cross-advertise the event
15. Chamber sends a follow up email to registrants [see template on next page]
16. Email worktogethernc@med.unc.edu to let us know how it went!



Work Together NC

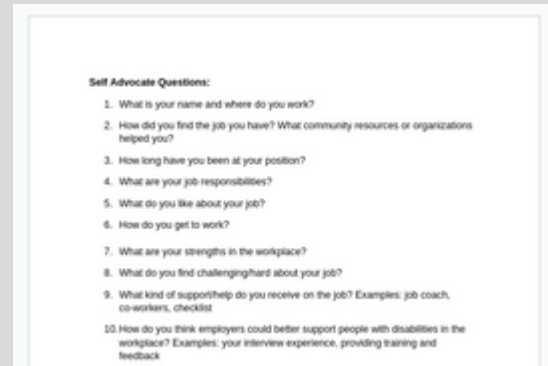
Possibility to Opportunity

Additional Resources

Slide Deck:



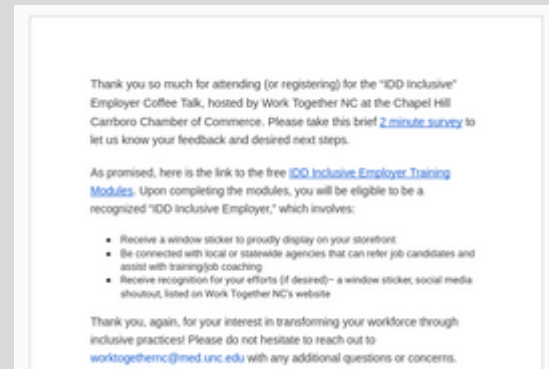
Panelist Questions:



Example Registration Page:



Follow Up Email



Request for a Sponsor Email

