

“Celebrating Value and Talent.”

National Disability Employment Awareness Month (NDEAM)



In October 2025, we celebrate the 80th anniversary of National Disability Employment Awareness Month (NDEAM), an annual recognition of the positive impact of people with disabilities in the American workforce. This yearly event began in 1945 as a weeklong national observance of the contributions of people with physical disabilities. In 1988, Congress designated the commemoration as NDEAM, which then evolved to acknowledge the importance of increasing opportunities for people with disabilities, including those with mental health conditions and other nonobvious disabilities, in the workforce. In 2001, ODEP was created and entrusted to administer NDEAM, including the selection and promotion of its annual theme.

Leading up to the celebration of America's 250th anniversary in 2026, this year's NDEAM theme and graphics will also honor the national milestone. NDEAM 2025 will recognize the value and talent American workers with disabilities add to our workplaces and economy and highlight their achievements both past and present. That's the spirit behind this year's official theme: “Celebrating Value and Talent.”

Bureau of Labor and Statistics

2024 Annual Labor Force Statistics by Disability Status and Race/Ethnicity

Persons with a Disability, Aged 16-64, 2024

Labor Force Statistic	Hispanic	White	Black	Asian	Other	Total
Labor Force Participation Rate	40.8%	43.0%	32.0%	42.3%	38.4%	40.7%
Employment-Population Ratio	36.9%	39.9%	28.5%	39.0%	34.2%	37.4%
Unemployment Rate	9.5%	7.1%	10.8%	8.0%	10.8%	8.1%

Persons without a Disability, Aged 16-64, 2024

Labor Force Statistic	Hispanic	White	Black	Asian	Other	Total
Labor Force Participation Rate	75.6%	79.7%	76.1%	75.5%	74.5%	77.9%
Employment-Population Ratio	71.9%	77.3%	71.6%	72.9%	70.1%	74.9%
Unemployment Rate	4.9%	3.0%	5.9%	3.5%	6.0%	3.9%

Source: Current Population Survey, Bureau of Labor Statistics

Notes: The category labelled "Other" combines the three categories of American Indian and Alaska Native, Hawaiian and Pacific Islander, and multiple races; all categories after Hispanic are limited to non-Hispanics.

SPOTLIGHTS: SPORTS AND CULTURE

Stevie Wonder

Stevie Wonder, a musical prodigy, lost his sight shortly after birth due to complications with preterm birth.



Signed by Motown by the age of 11, he would later be crowned as the youngest ever artist to have a number 1 single on the Billboard Hot 100. Wonder went on to become one of the most influential and successful musicians in history, winning 25 Grammy Awards and producing an extensive catalog of timeless hits. His achievements serve as a testament to the idea that disability is not a limitation but an opportunity for unique perspectives and talents to flourish.

SPOTLIGHTS: SPORTS AND CULTURE

Frida Kahlo

Frida Kahlo was a Mexican artist with a unique touch that has inspired millions of artists around the world.



Kahlo was **born with spina bifida**, a condition that affected her spine and leg growth. Her condition was aggravated when she contracted polio as a child and a bus accident that left her bedridden for months at 18. All this left her struggling with debilitating and chronic pain.

Despite her struggles, Kahlo channeled her pain into her art, creating powerful and emotive paintings that continue to resonate with audiences worldwide. Her work not only captured the essence of her own experiences but also addressed broader social and political issues, which would cement her legendary status in art history

SPOTLIGHTS: SPORTS AND CULTURE

Aaron Fotheringham

Aaron Fotheringham, also known as “Wheelz,” was born with spina bifida, which left him paralyzed in his legs. Never one to give up, Fotheringham adopted an extremely positive mindset about his wheelchair. To him, his wheelchair was a tool for achieving his dreams, not a hindrance.



With unmatched determination and skill, he performs jaw-dropping tricks and stunts, proving that one's potential is not defined by physical constraints. He has won four Wheelchair Motocross (WCMX) Championships and pioneered the wheelchair backflip.

Beyond his athletic achievements, he advocates for inclusivity and the belief that everyone, regardless of ability, deserves the chance to pursue their dreams.

SPOTLIGHTS: SPORTS AND CULTURE

Sudha Chandran

A talented Indian classical dancer, Sudha faced a life-altering setback at the age of 16 when a bus accident led to the amputation of one of her legs.



Despite this profound challenge, she did not let it define her or limit her dreams. Sudha returned to the world of dance with a prosthetic limb, displaying unmatched determination and dedication to her craft. Her comeback was marked by a remarkable performance in the dance drama “Mayuri,” a biographical film based on her own life.

Resources

Disability Supports Services in College:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AyDS730UW8E&list=PLIMuNSK9aJurbvcWDq3E0nokZXoD8S4-r&index=17>

CCBC Disability Support Services

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ni-IE07lyXc&list=PLIMuNSK9aJurbvcWDq3E0nokZXoD8S4-r&index=32>

DDA Process and Choosing a Coordinator of Community Services

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qixVcQbxo38&list=PLIMuNSK9aJurbvcWDq3E0nokZXoD8S4-r&index=28>

DDA Housing Supports

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LSBkW08BxhA&list=PLIMuNSK9aJurbvcWDq3E0nokZXoD8S4-r&index=24>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=liERrGsUmnQ>

Workforce Recruitment Program

<https://www.wrp.gov/wrp>

mydisabilityjobs.com

BCPS Family Support Services (staff)

Keenya Golden

kgolden@bcps.org

Birth to 21

Supervisor of Family Support Services

443.809.3660 or 443.809.5443

Ramsey Mihavetz

emihavetz@bcps.org

Kindergarten to 21-years-old

Resource Teacher of Family Support Services

443.809.5443

Sherrelle Pinkett

spinkett@bcps.org

Kindergarten to 21-years-old

Family Support Liaison

443.809.5443

EVENTS

8th annual Black Men in Education

The Center for Black Educator Development (CBED) was founded in 2019 to address and accelerate change in the educational ecosystem. Its mission to rebuild the national Black Teacher Pipeline to achieve educational equity and racial justice is achieved through the alignment of pathways into the profession, professional learning and public policies to ensure greater educator diversity, cultural responsiveness, and improved student outcomes for Black children.

CBED is thrilled to be hosting the 8th annual Black Men in Education Convening (#BMEC2025) on November 20-22, in Philadelphia, PA at the Loews Philadelphia Hotel! Participants will be welcomed in a communal, empathetic space to discuss the deeply emotional, intellectual, and trajectory-altering work revolutionary Black men in education do on a daily basis.

This year's convening theme is: Power to the Pupil: History, Hip Hop, & the Future of Teaching & Learning

<https://thecenterblacked.org/about/>

https://cbed.regfox.com/2025-black-men-in-education-convening?utm_source=meta&source=socialad&fbclid=IwB21leAM_9PhleHRuA2FlbQEwAGFkaWQBqykX310kcQEeqwt5U4dVSWMQ44v4-FgQfdK_VliHW5ctrewqnKiZNgrZrVs4XJ6hTRU4qVM_aem_5bEn8li2CR012Uo9r3rjUQ&utm_medium=paid&utm_id=120234559403140081&utm_content=120234990712980081&utm_term=120234990712990081&utm_campaign=120234559403140081

National Leadership Summit

NEA's annual National Leadership Summit helps to develop activist leaders and prepare them with the knowledge, skills, and abilities necessary to lead relevant, thriving associations and to lead in their professions. Our unified, strategic, and interdisciplinary approach to leadership development reinforces and supports key leadership competencies in seven strategic areas.

If you would like to attend an upcoming conference/training related to minority affairs and/or leadership OR would like to nominate someone to attend, click the link to apply for financial support: NEA CONFERENCE NOMINATIONS I

<https://marylandeducators.org/2026-nea-conference-nominations/>

Volunteers Needed

Would you like to join the newsletter team?

We would LOVE TO HAVE YOU!!!!!!

September Spotlight!!

Laura Norman, Johnnycake Elementary highlighting Hispanic/Latino Heritage Month

