

National Disability Employment Awareness Month 2024

Access to Good Jobs for All



AbilityOne and NDEAM

America celebrates National Disability Employment Awareness Month (NDEAM) every October. For 2024, the NDEAM theme is “[Access to Good Jobs for All](#).” The theme aligns with the vision of the AbilityOne® Program: Remain a trusted source of supply and services for Federal agencies while creating quality employment opportunities across all economic sectors for people who are blind or have significant disabilities.

What Is the AbilityOne Program?

The AbilityOne Program taps America’s underutilized workforce of individuals who are blind or have significant disabilities to deliver high quality, mission-essential products and services to Federal agencies in quality employment opportunities.

Established in 1938, the Program is administered by the U.S. AbilityOne Commission®, an independent Federal agency whose statutory name is the Committee for Purchase From People Who Are Blind or Severely Disabled. The Commission has designated National Industries for the Blind and SourceAmerica® as central nonprofit agencies that assist in administering the Program.

AbilityOne at a Glance

- Employs approximately 37,000 people who are blind or have significant disabilities, including approximately 2,500 veterans. More than 18,000 AbilityOne employees work on Department of Defense (DoD) contracts.
- More than 420 nonprofit agencies operate nationwide at more than 1,000 locations representing 40 government agencies.
- Supplied more than \$4 billion in products and services to the Federal Government in FY 2023.
- Supplies approximately \$2.5 billion in products and services annually to DoD, the largest customer of the AbilityOne Program.
- AbilityOne is a key part of the U.S. defense industrial base and provides essential and uninterrupted services to ensure continuity of government operations.

Did You Know?

- AbilityOne employees manufacture vital personal protective equipment (PPE) and clean and sanitize Federal buildings including the Pentagon, military hospitals, and Veterans Affairs medical facilities.
- AbilityOne provides services to the Library of Congress, NASA headquarters, and the National Park Service including memorials and the National Mall.
- Calls to the U.S. Passport Call Center toll-free number are handled by AbilityOne.
- AbilityOne is the secure mailroom “Vendor of Choice” for the Department of Homeland Security and the Internal Revenue Service.
- AbilityOne supplies gloves used by Transportation Security Administration (TSA) agents in airport security.
- Since its inception in 2010, AbilityOne’s Contract Management Support Services Program has returned more than \$24 billion to the Federal Government while achieving an accuracy rating of over 99%.



Kenneth Mullins is Director of Merchandising at IFB Solutions in Winston-Salem, N.C.

A graduate of North Carolina A&T State University with a degree in industrial and systems engineering, he worked for a decade for GE Aviation. After experiencing vision changes due to macular degeneration and glaucoma, he joined IFB Solutions and advanced rapidly through positions including optical inventory specialist, optical lab supervisor, and production manager for optical operations.

Outside of work, he enjoys puzzles, home improvement projects, and volunteering.

More Information
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Key Websites
U.S. AbilityOne Commission
www.AbilityOne.gov

National Industries for the Blind
www.NIB.org

SourceAmerica
www.SourceAmerica.org



AbilityOne People and Numbers – FY 2023

AbilityOne employees who are blind or have significant disabilities	36,600
AbilityOne wages paid	\$731.9 million
Estimated Health and Welfare Fringe Benefits (in addition to wages)	\$172.9 million
Average hourly wage	\$17.58
Cost per job (Commission FY 2023 \$13.124 million budget ÷ 36,600 jobs)	\$359
Sales of products and services to Federal customers	\$4.15 billion
Wounded, ill, or injured veterans working in AbilityOne direct labor jobs	2,500
Outward placements from AbilityOne contracts	1,610
Upward promotions within AbilityOne contracts	2,476

AbilityOne Representatives

- AbilityOne Representatives (ABORs) are designated individuals within Federal agencies who:
 - Advocate Federal buying in accordance with mandatory source contracting procedures.
 - Engage with the workforce to build use of the AbilityOne Program.
 - Offer feedback to the U.S. AbilityOne Commission to improve the value of the AbilityOne Program.
- ABORs create opportunity in the Federal marketplace for people who are blind or have significant disabilities, beginning with increased management focus and greater workforce attention on the AbilityOne Program.
- More than 120 ABORs have been appointed in more than 20 Federal agencies, including nearly all the CFO Act agencies. Additionally, ABORs represent 10 DoD components, including the military services.
- ABORs host educational sessions about AbilityOne capabilities and utilization for Federal agencies. DoD, the General Services Administration, NASA, and the Departments of Commerce, Education, Interior, Treasury, and Veterans Affairs have all participated in training conducted by the Commission and central nonprofit agencies.

Mission Moment

Micaela Johnston

Goodwill Industries of San Antonio Contract Services
San Antonio, Texas

Micaela Johnston works at Joint Base San Antonio–Randolph as an Automated Records Management System research database management associate. She is responsible for scanning and indexing Air and Space Force personnel records for electronic access.

The data-management expert graduated from the University of Texas at San Antonio with a degree in psychology. After experiencing difficulties finding employment due to a disability, she was hired by Goodwill Industries of San Antonio Contract Services.

In her spare time, she enjoys exploring new destinations and discovering unique coffee shops, blending her love for travel with her appreciation for a great cup of coffee.

