



## **The DC Metro Business Leadership Network**

### **2015 Annual Report**

**Letter from the  
Chairman of the Board  
Myra Wilder, Marriott International**

January 2016

*Dear DC Metro BLN Members and Friends,*

*I have had the distinct honor and pleasure to serve as your Board Chair overseeing another great year of growth and success. I am pleased to submit the following 2015 Annual Report.*

*Myra Wilder, Marriott International  
Chairperson*

### **OVERVIEW**

The DC Metro Business Leadership Network is an employer led non-profit that uses a business-to business model offering education, training programs and resources to change attitudes and address concerns of businesses so that they learn how to proactively include and utilize people with disabilities in the workforce, marketplace and supplier diversity.

The DC Metro BLN is a 501(c) 3 established in 2006 and a member in good standing as an affiliate of the US Business Leadership Network ([www.usbln.org](http://www.usbln.org)) and serves as one of its pilot affiliates for

incorporating innovative ideas and programs for replication on a national level.

### Organization and Administration

The DC Metro BLN staff consists of an Executive Director/CEO, which is funded in part by grants, membership dues and program fees. The current Executive Director brings extensive experience from both a BLN and USBLN® perspective as well as a business perspective and has been engaged with building BLNs across the US. Her vast business network and tireless efforts to create a strong sustainable BLN have resulted in many accomplishments in 2015, including our first annual fundraiser. C5 Consulting, LLC, a woman owned and disability owned and operated firm, serves the role of staff. C5's President, The Hon. Katherine McCary serves as its Executive Director/CEO.

### First Annual Fundraiser a Success September 17, 2015

The DC Metro BLN Board held its first annual fundraiser at SunTrust Bank for youth transition initiatives and activities.

The featured keynote was Curtis Pride, former major league baseball player with the Expos, Tigers, Red Sox, Braves, Yankees, and Angels, who was diagnosed at 9 months as being profoundly deaf. A DC native and graduate of the College of William & Mary, Curtis became the first full-season deaf player in the modern history of major league baseball. In addition to his inspirational speaking role to many organizations and companies across the US, Curtis coaches at Gallaudet University

*Curtis was featured in an ODEP PSA with the PBATS/ODEP relationship.*

Additional speakers included:

Juliette Rizzo, Emcee

Dan O'Neill, President, SunTrust Bank Greater Washington/Maryland

The Hon Neil Romano, former Assistant Secretary, ODEP

Jennifer Sheehy, Deputy Assistant Secretary, acting Assistant Secretary ODEP

Keri Gray, 2015-2016 Youth Transitions Fellow, HSC Foundation

Mayowa Omokanwaye, BroadFutures Intern

In addition to over 100 attendees and enjoying a fabulous evening of music, food and networking, the Gala was a financial success:

- Ticket sales exceeded \$6,500
- Sponsorships totaled \$20,000
- Silent Auction Sales exceeded \$9,000

## Partnerships

While Business drives the DC Metro BLN, its Partnerships are critical to success and sustainability. These partnerships help promote programming, grow membership, and provide member resources and community outreach. Key partners include the National Youth Transitions Collaborative/National Veterans Center Collaborative (NYTC), Greater Washington Internship Coalition, the Arc of Northern VA, Mid-Atlantic ADA Center, National Organization on Disability (NOD), Career Opportunities for Students with Disabilities (COSD), Bridges from School to Work, AAPD Emerging Leaders Program, AAAS, EARN, WRP, Student Veterans of America, and Corporate Immersion. Located in Washington, DC, the BLN has strong relationships with ODEP, VETS, OFCCP, JAN and EEOC- key resources for members. Partnering with Northrop Grumman's Operation: IMPACT, SHRM chapters and local Industry Liaison Group (ILG) Chapters has strengthened member growth.

## Programming | Our Year in Review

Looking back on 2015, we focused much of our efforts on delivering content rich programming. We also launched our National Disability@Work Webinar series that engaged employers from BLN affiliates from across the US. These webinars were designed to educate employers on the diversity of disabilities and included subject matter experts as presenters, including leaders from Columbia Lighthouse for the Blind, the MS Society, the National Working Positive Coalition on HIV/AIDS in the Workplace and the National Technical Institute of the Deaf, in addition to robust webinar conversations on self ID and self-disclosure.

Our monthly programs also included what have become several annual **Signature** events:

- 4<sup>th</sup> Annual Wounded Warrior Symposium at CACI in 2015
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Disability Supplier Program at Northrop Grumman in 2015 in collaboration with the USBLN® DOBE leadership
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Community Partner event in 2015 with the Arc of Northern VA
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Federal Updates Panel with ODEP, EEOC and OFCCP in 2015 at General Dynamics
- 2nd Annual Assistive Technology and Accommodations Symposium and Expo in 2015 at Booz Allen Hamilton

#### Youth Activities:

We held two National Virtual Career Fairs for college students in collaboration with COSD, the Workforce Recruitment Program and the DC Metro College Career Services Collaborative, along with The Greater Washington Internship Coalition. As in 2014, our employers again participated in three youth career exploration fairs for high school youth in DC, VA and MD.

We thank our membership, leadership, and especially our program hosts- all of whom helped to ensure sustainability for 2015. As with all non-profits, we are constantly looking for additional funding sources and welcome potential funders for 2016. In addition to sponsoring such as exciting events as those listed above, we will discuss the following in our 2015 Annual Report: our various committees, youth outreach, annual meetings, our advisory board, and office space, and our 2015 Finance Report.

#### Committees

We have robust committees that focus on three specific areas of transition: Youth, College, and Wounded Warriors. In 2015 we expanded our College Committee to include college and university career and disability services offices, and young Millennials and professionals. We are excited to see the committee grow and are focused on 2016 development of a partner creation on line seminar series addressing self-id, self disclosure, accommodations and

internships to be shared nationally. The Youth Committee continued its partnership with School Talk for three Career Exploration events and has been meeting with potential members who have employment opportunities that do not require a college education. Our Wounded Warrior Committee delivers an annual program that each year outshines the prior year. In 2015, CACI took the event to new level with a *TedTalks* format. As a follow up, the committee for the first time delivered a webinar on “Business Strategies for Retention”.

### Annual Meeting: 2015

In our Annual May meeting, we elected the following new officers:

- Myra Wilder, Marriott International, Chair
- Andrea Hall, CSC (now CSRA), Vice Chair
- Mirelle King, Lockheed Martin, Secretary
- Ellen de Bremond, The Choice, Treasurer

At the meeting, we elected these Board members:

### Our 2015-2016 board:

Michelle Crabtree, Hyatt  
Denyse Gordon, CACI  
Michele Magana\*, Booz Allen Hamilton  
Eduardo Meza-Etienne, eSSENTIAL Accessibility  
Evelyn Miller\*, Raytheon  
Brandon Lyons\*, EY  
Donnielle DeMesme, Golden Key Group  
Will White\*, Deloitte

### \*Board Changes at fiscal year-end:

- Resignation: Michele Magana, *Booz Allen Hamilton*, replaced by Patricia Jackson
- Resignation: Brandon Lyons\*, *EY* replaced by Anna Irani
- Resignation: Will White\*, *Deloitte* replaced by Jacqueline Winters
- Resignation: Evelyn Miller\*, *Raytheon* replacement pending

A positive development that we have observed over the past several years is that of a Corporate Membership connected to the business itself and not the individual, resulting in consistency of employers who take responsibility for submitting new board members for consideration as individuals/roles change in that organization. This enhances new thought and engagement while retaining valued companies.

### Advisory Board:

At the Annual May meeting the Board reassigned individuals that no longer represent a business (due to retirement, career changes, etc.) to serve on the Advisory Board. Additionally, Diamond Executive Membership level entitles corporations to name a person to the Advisory Board. The Board voted to increase the number of members on the Advisory Board to 19.

#### The 2015-2016 Advisory Board:

- Kia Silver Hodge, representing Diamond Member Lockheed Martin
- Sherif Ettefa and Mark Fitzgerald, representing Diamond Member KPMG
- Sue Werber, C5 and chair of Youth Committee
- Ron Drach, Drach Consulting, LLC (Chair, Wounded Warrior Committee)
- Vinece Pastor, Blue Sky Consulting, LLC (former Board Chair)
- Dinah Cohen, Dinah Cohen Consulting, LLC (CAP Director, retired)
- Anne Rader
- Rich Luecking, TransCen (retired)
- Tara Dunlap, representing Diamond Member General Dynamics

*There are additional Diamond Member Advisory Board vacancies that will be filled in 2016 for LEIDOS, PwC and Northrop Grumman*

### A note about Membership types

2015 Executive two-year Members include: Marriott International, PwC, KPMG, Lockheed Martin, Northrop Grumman, Leidos and General Dynamics. This is a growth from four to seven employers at the highest level!

Non-profit Members now include Ivymount Schools, a partner in our Youth outreach activities!

Government Members include: DC Disability Services (RSA) and DC Public Schools. Doubled in growth!

## Office Space

The DC Metro BLN offices are at the National Youth Transition Center, at 2013 H ST. NW, Washington, DC. The space was donated by TransCen, and shared with TransCen and Bridges from School to Work, a Marriott Foundation Program- both DC Metro BLN members.

## 2015 Finance Report

Funding streams include grant partners, membership, fundraiser, donations and programming income.

2015 Ending Balance - \$39,165

## In Summary

The DC Metro BLN is strong and vibrant as a direct result of well-developed and mutually beneficial community partnerships, business leaders and subject matter experts. As it matures, the DC Metro BLN is constantly seeking new partners with which to build relationships that serve the Business Community. The BLN continues to see the impact Section 503 necessitating providing business members with linkage partners and resources to assist with compliance requirements. The success of our first annual gala enables us to focus on expanding our youth outreach and our efforts to attract new employer members who represent mid-sized businesses with varied employment opportunities for youth.

## Contact Information

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