

previously spent seven years working as a Foreign Service Officer for the U.S. State Department, working overseas in China, India, and Pakistan. Prashanth graduated with a BA from New York University and an MBA from George Washington University.

Join the DC Metro BLN Gala Committee!

The DC Metro BLN's 4th Annual Gala is October 25, 2018 and planning is underway! Once again being held at EY's beautiful new space overlooking Tysons Corner, our committee has just formed and we are looking for volunteers. If you have experience in event planning or just want to contribute your ideas, please contact us. The committee meets monthly by conference call and we are seeking ideas on keynote as well as support in building our famous Live Auction items. The first meeting will be in February.

[DC Metro BLN Discussion Board](#)

It's all about the MEMBER NETWORK! All members have access to the Discussion Board where they can comment on topics including veterans, accommodations, Millennials, community partners and accessibility.

[Log on](#) to join the discussion!

In the News - Articles of Interest



Disability Supplier Diversity Corner

Disability Entrepreneurship Network

NEXGEN: Transforming Disability Inclusion for Entrepreneur Success

Powered by DC Metro BLN and Deaf Entrepreneurship Network

Gallaudet University

September 20-22, 2018

The DC Metro BLN Disability Supplier Diversity Committee in collaboration with the Deaf

Entrepreneurship Network has announced its theme for our first joint event geared to Entrepreneurs and Future Entrepreneurs with disabilities and Corporate Supplier Diversity Professionals. Look for details soon on Speakers, Sessions, Exhibit opportunities and Attendee registration.

If you work in supplier diversity or are a company owned by a person with a disability, you won't want to miss this event!

Interested in presenting? Contact us!

Committee Co-Chairs



Millennial Corner



Meet College Steps!

College Steps is a non-profit working to empower students living with learning and social challenges through structured post-secondary support. Their team works closely with high schools, colleges and families to emphasize peer-to-peer services that create successful post-secondary opportunities.

The Workforce team was developed to support students on an individual basis with internship development and employment goals. They work closely with students to create cover letters and build resumes based on their internship placements. Each student has a peer mentor from the college who joins them at their internship if needed for additional support.

College Steps works closely with community employers and have found that a peer based model best supports their students in the working world. Many of these students continue their college careers and utilize their internship skills after they graduate. College Steps is always looking for ways to connect with additional community employers to provide work placements and additional opportunities. Tori Milne is the Director of Workforce for College Steps. For more information or to contact [Tori](#) or visit www.collegesteps.org

Veterans Corner

Apply To The HIRE Vets Medallion Program Demonstration Today!

The HIRE Vets Medallion Program Demonstration is now accepting applications!

The Program Demonstration will recognize job creators for their investments in recruiting, employing, and retaining our nation's veterans.

The Program Demonstration will allow the Department of Labor's Veterans' Employment and Training Service (DOL VETS) to initially run applications, raise awareness of the HIRE Vets Medallion Program, and enable more employers to prepare to successfully garner recognition when the Program launches in 2019.

The Program Demonstration will use the same criteria the HIRE Vets Medallion Program will use in 2019. The Program Demonstration has no application fee and is limited to the first 300 applicants.

Job creators of all sizes can apply online at www.hirevets.gov.

For more information, visit www.dol.gov/vets, follow [@VETS_DOL](https://twitter.com/VETS_DOL), and join the conversation [#HIREVets](https://twitter.com/HIREVets).

DRIVE DisabilityEmployment.org Subscription



A new feature is available on the Office of Disability Employment Policy's Data and Resources to Inspire a Vision of Employment website that allows users to sign up for periodic updates on state-level policy and practice innovations, technical assistance initiatives, and outcomes that are most relevant to them. Information is vital to ensuring that systems and services put Employment First. This new feature is designed to customize the delivery of information to the users who require it. Users can go to the DRIVE website to select the states, service delivery systems, policy topics, and data sets that most interest them, and will receive notification when

information that matches these preferences is added to the site.

[Visit the DRIVE website](#)

The Workforce Recruitment Program: Where Success Comes Full Circle



The Workforce Recruitment Program is an initiative, managed by ODEP and the U.S. Department of Defense, which offers employers access to a database of pre-screened college students and recent graduates with disabilities who are interested in summer or permanent jobs. In a DOL blog, Lauren Karas, business development specialist at ODEP, discusses her journey from WRP student to her current position as manager of the program. She highlights the benefits of the WRP for both students and employers. “It’s my hope that more employers will reap its rewards, and that more students with disabilities use it as a gateway to a rewarding career,” she says.

[Read the WRP blog](#)



Registration is now open for the 2018

Disability Equality Index (DEI).

Disability Equality Index (DEI) is a free benchmarking tool for USBLN partners that provides a confidential opportunity to receive an objective score on disability inclusion policies and practices. It’s an aspirational, educational, recognition tool that helps identify opportunities for continued improvement and helps establish a reputation as an employer of choice. The DEI is a joint initiative with the American Association of People with Disabilities.

Companies can now register for the Disability Equality Index.

Visit the [DEI Website](#).
We value transparency, learn more about the [DEI survey questions](#).
[View the 2017 DEI Best Places to Work](#).
[View the 2016 DEI Best Places to Work](#).

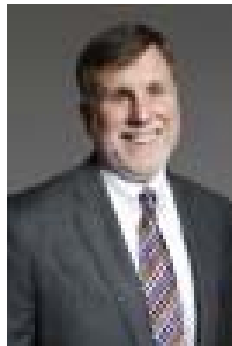
Upcoming Events in the Area and Beyond

Events



PEAT Talks: Emerging Workplace Technologies and Vision Loss

Thursday, February 15, 2pm ET



Paul Schroeder, Director of Public Policy & Strategic Alliances for [Aira \(link is external\)](#).

Paul leads Aira's public policy engagement and issue development in the public sector including state/federal programs, supports Aira's business development, and manages the relationship with key organizations representing the interests of people with disabilities. Prior to Aira, Paul spent over 20 years in various roles at the [American Foundation for the Blind \(link is external\)](#).

[Aira \(link is external\)](#) Director of Public Policy & Strategic Alliances Paul Schroeder will discuss how emerging technologies are shaping the landscape of employment for people with vision loss, and other disabilities. This session will examine the development and implications of new technologies that provide:

- access to remote, real-time, human and AI assistance in the workplace
- smartphone apps such as Seeing AI and BeMyEyes
- vision enhancement through electronic optical eyewear

- support for indoor wayfinding assistance
- acceptance and privacy

Register

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PEAT Talks is a monthly virtual speaker series to showcase organizations and individuals whose work is advancing accessible technology in the workplace. Held the third Thursday of every month at 2pm ET, these events are designed to be energetic and interactive discussions highlighting a spectrum of exciting work. To see upcoming events in this series, please visit their [calendar](#).



Webinar:

Top Things to Know About Braille Signage

February 15, 2018

12:30 - 1:00 p.m. Eastern Time

[Join us](#) for this 30-minute webinar and learn more about accessible signage.

Webinar:

Cancer as a Disability: Your Rights in the Workplace

February 20, 2018

2:00 - 3:30 p.m. Eastern Time

This 90-minute session will provide an overview of the laws that provide protection in the workplace for those who are coping with a cancer diagnosis.

For more upcoming webinars in 2018 please visit [ADA Mid-Atlantic Center's calendar](#).

CAREER FAIR



**Friday, March 2, 2018
11 AM - 3 PM
Field House Gymnasium**

The Career Center is excited to announce our Spring 2018 Internship and Job Fair! Participating in this event will provide employers with opportunities to recruit from hundreds of eager and qualified candidates, add to diversity recruitment strategies, and increase or maintain visibility at the world's only university in which all programs and services are specifically designed to accommodate deaf and hard of hearing students.

Register today to secure a spot!

We provide our guests with convenient free on-site parking and access to comfortable accommodations at the Gallaudet University Kellogg Conference Center and Hotel (for those traveling to Washington, DC). All exhibitors will be served a continental breakfast and a hot lunch. Registration also includes two representatives, booth, free Wi-Fi, and electrical hook up (if requested prior to the event).

For more information or to register, please contact Monica Garvin at monica.garvin@gallaudet.edu or [202-651-5438](tel:202-651-5438)

2018 AAPD Leadership Award Gala



March 13, 2018 | 6:30pm – 9:30pm | Washington, DC

AAPD is proud to recognize **Lydia Brown** and **Emily Ladau** as the recipients of the [2018 AAPD Paul G. Hearne Leadership Awards](#).

Through the AAPD Paul G. Hearne Leadership Awards, the American Association of People with Disabilities (AAPD) recognizes outstanding emerging leaders with disabilities who exemplify leadership, advocacy, and dedication to the broader cross-disability community. Two individuals each receive \$2,500 in recognition of their outstanding contributions and \$7,500 to further a new or existing initiative that increases the political and economic power of people with disabilities.

[Purchase Tickets!](#)



Registration Deadlines: Early Bird: February 28, 2018
Regular: June 15, 2018

The USBLN has opened registration for the USBLN Annual Conference & Expo. Last year's conference sold out and this year the event is expected to bring together more than 1,000 attendees from across the country.

Full Conference

3 – Day Package July 10-12, 2018

Includes Conference Meals, Receptions & Leadership Awards Dinner

[Register Now](#)

Registration and Hotel Space will go fast; you don't want to miss out!

About Us

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 people with disabilities in the workforce, marketplace and supplier diversity.

Andrea Hall, *Chair*

DXC Technology

Dan Ellerman, *Vice Chair*

Accenture

Brooke Thomas, *Secretary*

Lockheed Martin

Ellen de Bremond, *Treasurer*

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- Jenn Bassett, JBG SMITH
- Karen Cook, Gallaudet University
- Michelle Crabtree, Hyatt
- Sophie Howard, General Dynamics IT
- Misty Koper, EY
- Charlesiah McLean, Leidos
- Eduardo Meza-Etienne, eSSENTIAL Accessibility (Chair, Accessibility Committee)
- Bob Vetere, Northrop Grumman
- Myra Wilder, Marriott International
- Emily Yee, Deloitte

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- Ron Drach, Drach Consulting, LLC (Chair, Wounded Warrior Committee)
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- Rikki Epstein, The Arc of Northern Virginia
- Denyse Gordon, CACI
- Tisha Herne, AudioEye
- Karen Herson, Concepts, Inc.
- Bryan Moseley, TCS Associates
- Chrissone Palmer, EY
- Ann Rader, Healthcare Transformation, Strategy Execution & Management Consultant
- Prashanth Rajan, KPMG
- Rick Rogers, The Resource Network (Co-Chair DSDP Committee)
- Carrie Schroeder, PwC
- Jenn Sharp, KPMG
- Kia Silver Hodge, SME-C5 Consulting, LLC
- Sue Werber, SME -C5 Consulting, LLC (Chair, ME Committee)

CEO, Executive Director: The Honorable Katherine O. McCary, C5 Consulting, LLC

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