

Helping disabled join labor pool, tax rolls

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By Jim Cassetta and James P. Cawley Jr.

To the Editor:

October is National Disability Employment Awareness Month and the perfect time to celebrate the AbilityOne Program, the largest single source of employment for people who are blind or have other significant disabilities in the United States. It is also a cost-effective way to empower many of them to achieve greater independence by reducing dependence on government support and providing the pathway joining the ranks of taxpayers.

However, people with significant disabilities remain one of America's greatest untapped labor resources, with nearly 70 percent of this population currently without jobs. The AbilityOne Program develops and delivers employment opportunities that provide individual choice, equitable wages and benefits, upward mobility and personal satisfaction for more than 47,000 people who are blind or have other significant disabilities. These individuals are employed by a network of more than 600 nonprofit agencies that provide a wide array of quality products and services at a fair market price to federal customers. People with disabilities at these agencies are working on projects in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico and Guam.

Since 1967, WORK Inc. has been providing vocational training and employment for people who have significant disabilities through AbilityOne. Currently, over 100 individuals are working on AbilityOne projects in the Dorchester/Boston area.

WORK Inc. is proud to provide the avenue through which the people we serve can strive towards greater independence, and both personal and job satisfaction, and we salute them during National Disability Awareness Month.

Jim Cassetta CEO WORK Inc.
James P. Cawley Jr.
Development Officer. WORK Inc.

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