



County of Santa Cruz

COMMISSION ON DISABILITIES

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Commission on Disabilities

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Commission on Disabilities Recognizes Disability Employment Awareness Month

The Santa Cruz County Commission on Disabilities today announced it has been participating in National Disability Employment Awareness Month, an annual awareness campaign that takes place each October. The purpose of National Disability Employment Awareness Month is to educate about disability employment issues and celebrate the many and varied contributions of America's workers with disabilities. This year's theme is "InclusionWorks."

The history of National Disability Employment Awareness Month traces back to 1945, when Congress enacted a law declaring the first week in October each year "National Employ the Physically Handicapped Week." In 1962, the word "physically" was removed to acknowledge the employment needs and contributions of individuals with all types of disabilities. In 1988, Congress expanded the week to a month and changed the name to National Disability Employment Awareness Month.

"By fostering a culture that embraces individual differences, including disabilities, businesses profit by having a wider variety of tools to confront challenges," said Jennifer Sheehy, deputy assistant secretary of labor for disability employment policy. "Our nation's most successful companies proudly make inclusion a core value. They know that inclusion works. It works for workers, it works for employers, it works for opportunity, and it works for innovation."



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Reflecting this year's theme, throughout the month, The Santa Cruz County Commission on Disabilities has been engaging in a variety of activities to educate and inform its community members and local decision makers on disability employment issues and its commitment to an inclusive work culture. These efforts include tabling at the Santa Cruz Farmers Market downtown, making presentations to local City Councils and hosting their upcoming KUDOS Awards.

The KUDOS Awards recognize local business or program that has gone the extra mile to help persons with disabilities access goods or services. This year the KUDOS Awards will be held on Saturday, October 29th at the Porter Library located in Soquel.

The Santa Cruz County Commission on Disabilities is proud to be a part of this year's National Disability Employment Awareness Month," said Commission Co Chair, Ernestina Saldana. "We want to spread the important message that we value the diverse perspectives, including those of individuals with disabilities."

Employers and employees in all industries can learn more about how to participate in National Disability Employment Awareness Month and ways they can promote its messages — during October and throughout the year — by visiting www.dol.gov/ndeam.