

THE CASE FOR INCLUSION



Many companies in the Dallas Region have made big strides over the past few years in building a more diverse and inclusive workforce, allowing for new ways of thinking and productivity.

Diversity and inclusion are major focus areas at the Dallas Regional Chamber (DRC), where we strive every day to build the strongest possible talent pipeline to continue the unprecedented economic growth and prosperity we've been experiencing since 2010.

This year, we are adding a new area of inclusion to our focus: people living and working with disabilities.

When President George H.W. Bush signed the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) in 1990, he had this message for the business community: "You have in your hands the key to the success of this act, for you can unlock a splendid resource of untapped human potential that, when freed, will enrich us all."

The ADA awakened the nation to the importance of tapping into the talents of people with disabilities and benefiting from them being in our workforce. Still, people with disabilities today are unemployed at higher rates, earn lower wages, and often experience workplaces that fail to provide the support they need to reach their full potential.

Some of these disabilities are visible, while some cannot be seen. We all interact with members of the disability community every day, whether we realize it or not.

Each one of us has an obligation to improve in this area—to give more opportunities to those with disabilities so they can reach their full potential, which has a big added benefit for every employer: unlocking access to the best talent available.

To unlock the "splendid resource of untapped human potential" President Bush talked about, the DRC has crafted the Disability Inclusion Toolkit to help you assess and maximize your company's inclusion policies and efforts. This toolkit includes data, resources, and best practices, along with compelling stories from experts and people living and working with disabilities.

I am very proud of the work we are doing in this area and hope you will use this toolkit to make your workplace more diverse, productive, and inclusive, including for those living and working with disabilities.

Dale Petroskey

President & CEO
Dallas Regional Chamber