



Erik Olesen – Lake County

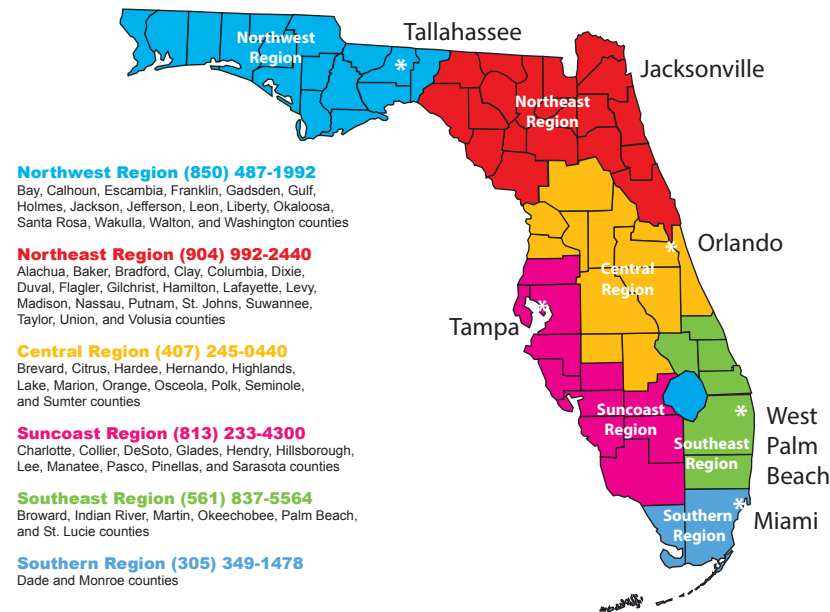
Erik Olesen, pictured with his boss David Hidalgo, made such a good impression at his internship with Green Light Fire Bag in Lake County that he has earned a permanent position. Vice President of Green Light Fire Bag David Hidalgo said, “We have long believed that a strong workforce is inclusive of the talents and skills of all individuals. We have been extremely impressed by Eric’s work ethic, performance, and aptitude in the workplace and are pleased to provide workplace accommodations to ensure his success.” APD Employment Liaison Cindy Drew said, “I used the APD internship funding to locate the internship for Erik who is on the APD waiver waiting list. His employer is exceptionally pleased with his work. It took a lot of time and effort to put this into place, and I am happy it is working out so well.”

Hiring someone with a disability can make good business sense for your company. For more information, contact these state agencies:

- APD and its nearest office (see below)
- Vocational Rehabilitation – www.rehabworks.org
- Division of Blind Services – dbs.myflorida.com

The APD office that serves your area may know of qualified people with disabilities who are looking for work.

APD Regional Offices



Agency for Persons with Disabilities
1-866-APD-CARES (1-866-273-2273)
(850) 488-4257
www.apdcare.org
APD Job Search Website:
www.apd.myflorida.jobs



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Looking for Good Employees?

People with disabilities can do the job!





Ruth Ogburn – Tallahassee

Ruth Ogburn is friendly, hardworking, and loves her job at a Tallahassee Walmart. Ogburn began working at Walmart in 1993. Her dedication has helped her to reach 20 years of employment. “It feels wonderful! I’m always ready to work,” Ogburn exclaimed, “I’m ready for another 20 years of employment.” Manager Tim Hobbs says, “Ruth does anything you ask her to do. She gets along with everyone and always has a good attitude.”



Larry Cardarelli – Lakeland

Larry Cardarelli, pictured on right with General Manager Gary Gordon, has been a driver at Fields BMW in Lakeland for nine years. Gordon interviewed Cardarelli for the driver position. Gordon says, “We were impressed by his abilities. The subject of disability wasn’t relevant to the interview. We were impressed by how Larry presented himself.” He added, “Over the years, Larry has been very reliable and dependable. BMW appreciates diversity, but emphasis isn’t placed on a disability. The focus is on a good attitude.” Cardarelli takes obvious pride in his work at the BMW dealership and Gordon appreciates having someone he can trust in this high profile position.



Kevin Johnson – St. Petersburg

Kevin Johnson IV is a valuable member of the Jim and Heather Gills YMCA staff. Johnson enjoys the independence and responsibility that employment provides him. While Johnson likes performing maintenance tasks, his passion is interacting with the club’s members. He said, “My favorite part of the job is making the members happy.” Maintenance Director Hal Murch said, “Kevin is easy to get along with and very dedicated.”

Untapped Market

Many employers overlook people with disabilities as potential job candidates. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, the unemployment rate for Floridians with disabilities ages 16 to 64 is about 63 percent—much higher than the state and national averages for the general population. The Florida Agency for Persons with Disabilities (APD) wants you to have the facts when making hiring decisions.

Dependability

Employees with disabilities are typically very reliable. Having a job is important to everyone because working in the community contributes to self-esteem. People with disabilities tend to develop greater

loyalties to their employers and remain in their positions for many years resulting in a lower turnover rate. People with disabilities are creative and innovative in order to overcome day-to-day obstacles. They make inventive and resourceful employees. The thousands of successfully employed individuals with disabilities in Florida are proof of this fact, including the workers who are featured in this brochure. According to a DuPont study, on average, people with disabilities have better attendance records than other workers, and equivalent or better productivity and job-retention rates.

Supported Employment

Supported Employment is the name of a service that helps individuals with disabilities to go to work and maintain stable employment. It typically involves an

employment specialist facilitating training, work customs, motivation, and productivity. The employer does not pay for Supported Employment.

Accommodations

A common myth is that it is expensive to hire someone with a disability because of the accommodations they might need. The facts prove otherwise. A Harris survey indicates that nearly 70 percent of adults with disabilities who work or want to work do not need special equipment or technology. For those that do, two-thirds of accommodations cost less than \$500, with nearly 25 percent costing nothing at all, according to the Job Accommodation Network.