

SourceAmerica[®]

The Journey *of* Employment:
WorkUnified Talks





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■ Journey of Employment

SourceAmerica® and Special Olympics established a partnership in 2017 based on the shared objective of increased inclusion of people with disabilities throughout society. SourceAmerica strives to accomplish this goal by creating employment opportunities and choices through its nationwide network of nonprofit agencies. Special Olympics focuses on inclusion through sports, education, health and leadership programming implemented worldwide. This collaboration between SourceAmerica and Special Olympics highlights the complementary missions of these organizations, which touch on a continuum of life experiences and address the whole person, offering opportunities and resources to achieve individual goals.

In July 2018, the partnership between SourceAmerica and Special Olympics achieved a milestone: the first employment-based programming offered at Special Olympics events. This was achieved when SourceAmerica presented the “Journey of Employment” resource fair at the 2018 Special Olympics USA Games in Seattle, Washington, and at the Special Olympics 50th Anniversary celebration in Chicago, Illinois. In keeping with the spirit of inclusion, the Journey of Employment represented a call to action for employers and individuals to #WorkUnified.

The Journey of Employment offered a series of stations featuring career coaching, skills assessments and interview tips. Each experience was designed to prepare athletes to interact with a diverse cross-section of employers. Employers represented at the resource fairs included:

- Amazon
- Bank of America
- Boeing
- Brooks Sports, Inc.
- City of Seattle
- Compass Group
- Excela
- Kaiser Permanente
- King County, Washington
- Microsoft
- MV Transportation
- Starbucks
- University of Washington
- Walmart

Additionally, several nonprofit agencies in SourceAmerica’s network were on hand to recruit athletes for employment opportunities. These organizations included Ada S. McKinley Community Services, Inc., Anixter Center, The Chimes, Inc., Global Connections to Employment (GCE), Goodwill Great Lakes, Goodwill Industries of Metropolitan Chicago, Inc., Goodwill of the Olympics and Rainier Region, and Opportunity Secure Data Destruction (a division of Glenkirk).

The Seattle and Chicago events received coverage through local and national news outlets, and the awareness generated by the Journey of Employment was a significant accomplishment for this partnership. The highlight was an [article on ESPN](#) that showcased the importance of workplace inclusion and the efforts of both organizations. This piece also highlighted the leadership demonstrated by participating companies and featured the experiences of the most important stakeholder group: the athletes.

The Journey of Employment offered a critical new opportunity to connect a traditionally underrepresented population to meaningful employment. A 2018 report published by SourceAmerica titled [The Future of Work and the Disability Community](#) demonstrates how the employment situation for people with disabilities in the United States has declined over the last few decades. Despite representing 7.7-10.4 percent of the working-age population (ages 16-64), people with disabilities only make up 3.2-5.2 percent of the workforce. Census

data shows that people with disabilities have continued to disconnect from employment as demonstrated by a decline of over 50 percent in the labor market activity rate since 1990. Workforce representation rates are significantly lower for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities, who are often the most marginalized in society. These figures underscore the need for increased collaboration between community leaders and employers committed to greater workplace inclusion and are a driving reason behind the SourceAmerica-Special Olympics partnership.

■ WorkUnified Talks

A unique feature of the Journey of Employment program offered during the 2018 Special Olympics USA Games was a series of talks between athletes and employers. The WorkUnified (#WorkUnified) Talks were designed to raise awareness, promote shared learning and encourage action on the part of those in attendance to achieve higher levels of workplace inclusion.

Speakers who participated in the WorkUnified Talks included:

- **Kelly Campbell**, Athlete Leader and Board Member, Special Olympics Washington
- **David Egan**, Community Relations Specialist, SourceAmerica, and Special Olympics International Global Messenger
- **Mark Feinour**, Senior Vice President and Business Executive for Support Services, Bank of America
- **Therese Fimian**, Director of Competitive Integrated Employment, SourceAmerica
- **John Kelly**, Vice President of Government Affairs, SourceAmerica
- **Bill King**, Teammate, Bank of America, and Special Olympics Athlete
- **Peter "PJ" Moody**, Teammate, Bank of America, and Special Olympics Athlete
- **Jo'el Roth**, Targeted Employment Navigator, GCE
- **Mike Walker**, Para-Educator and Athlete Leader, Special Olympics Washington
- **Kellea Williams**, Manager of Worldwide Operations Internal Mobility, Amazon



Panelists addressed a variety of topics related to their personal and professional experiences, starting with the importance of workplace inclusion. Responses included reflections on personal feelings as well as corporate values and initiatives. The second area of discussion focused on successes and challenges that individuals and corporations encountered on the path to achieving inclusive employment. During this discussion, audience members heard real-life examples of approaches to overcoming common obstacles. By listening to the insights athletes provided about their own life experiences, participants also gained a deeper understanding of some of the everyday challenges people with disabilities face. The third topic of discussion offered a direct connection between Special Olympics programming and success in the workplace. For this segment, speakers were asked to discuss how participation in athletics benefits work readiness. The final discussion topic was intended to prompt those in attendance to take action. During this discussion, recommendations for how stakeholders can collectively achieve increased levels of workplace inclusion were identified. These recommendations are included, along with highlights of the talks, as part of this report.

■ The Importance of Workplace Inclusion

“I believe that those among us with a disability have a contribution to make on and off the field. We are citizens who matter and, based on my experience, I believe Playing Unified and Working Unified are valuable choices for us all.” – David Egan

An inclusive workplace provides an opportunity for all employees to feel valued as individuals and contributors. An environment where diversity and unique perspectives are not only accepted, but also promoted, influences corporate culture and performance. To truly embrace inclusion, a company must see the benefits beyond regulatory compliance. Identifying the economic and societal impact of creating opportunities for people of diverse backgrounds to reach their full potential and pursue their goals is essential to overcoming long-standing barriers. Several key themes emphasizing the importance of workplace inclusion emerged through the Journey of Employment WorkUnified Talks and were expressed through the words and actions of guest speakers. Highlights of these key themes are below.

Confronting Barriers

A repeated theme related to the importance of workplace inclusion was the opportunity to confront long-standing barriers. The chance to receive equal consideration for employment has for too long been “a dream that seems too far off for people,” noted Therese Fimian. Through her work with the SourceAmerica Pathways to Careers™ initiative, Fimian is at the forefront of dispelling this notion through evidence-based customized employment practices focused on people with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD) and autism spectrum disorder (ASD).

Kelly Campbell reflected on her experiences, as well as those of her peers, when she identified empathy as a means to overcome barriers. “Whatever you did yesterday may not necessarily be what you can do today,” Campbell said, underscoring her point that, like many others, people with disabilities experience good days and bad. In her role with Special Olympics, Campbell serves as a mentor to other athletes with disabilities.



Focusing on similarities rather than differences was an idea echoed by Mike Walker, who said that a commitment to inclusion can bring people together. Walker stated that although some individuals “might talk or look different” than others, we should always choose to include, “because they are still human, and that’s important.” Working in his local school district, Walker has been embraced by his colleagues because of his work ethic and contributions to ensuring the safety of students and faculty.

Walker and session moderator John Kelly agreed that similarities can be found through more communication. Kelly remarked, “One of the themes we have seen through the Journey of Employment and talks is the great benefit of communication and new opportunities to interact that you might not experience in your daily life.”

Opportunities for Individuals and for Businesses/Shared Value

A second theme that emerged regarding the importance of workplace inclusion was the mutual benefit for individuals and job creators. Shared value was a recurring topic in the conversation between Mark Feinour, Peter “PJ” Moody and Bill King from Bank of America. The Support Services division within the bank has operated for more than 25 years and employs upwards of 300 people with disabilities. Through its long-term commitment to workplace inclusion, the bank ensures employees with and without disabilities are given equal consideration in their interview process, in their fringe benefits and in access to career advice. Feinour, who oversees the Delaware-based Support Services operation, says the bank focuses on ability and “picks the best candidate for the job,” and once they are a member of the team, they “work with [them] to see what their goals are and what they want to do in their careers.” Feinour, Moody and King agreed that this results in positive outcomes for their customers; each commented on finding enjoyment in hard work and in providing good customer service.

On a similar note, Fimian discussed the positive benefits of connecting the skills, interests and abilities of people with disabilities to business needs. This type of customized employment is a core tenet of the Pathways to Careers initiative and helps maximize benefits for the employment seeker and the employer. A commitment to inclusion allows such benefits to occur, which can lead to positive career development opportunities. Upward mobility was a benefit identified by Jo’el Roth of GCE, a nonprofit organization that employs a diverse population of people with and without disabilities. Citing an example

of an industry that offers job opportunities for the future, Roth spoke of how they hire information technology (IT) trainees who “work their way up a career track to a business systems analyst.” Through their inclusion efforts, GCE provides a career trajectory for people with disabilities that can open the door to many opportunities.

Campbell offered a holistic perspective on the benefits of inclusive employment for people with disabilities, saying, “It’s really important for companies to employ people with disabilities because it helps them and their families feel secure when they don’t have guardianship anymore; they feel like they have somewhere they can be, and their family doesn’t have to worry about their children or adults.” This sentiment touches on an array of topics related to promoting independence and financial security and the ripple effect it can have on families and caregivers when such goals are achievable.

Corporate Culture

The final theme associated with benefits of inclusive workplaces was the positive effect on corporate culture. A word related to culture that was used by nearly every speaker was “teamwork.” When talking with his Support Services colleagues, Feinour commented on the camaraderie that is built when people “live, work and play together.” Teams are built through communication, mutual respect and shared goals. The beneficiaries of an inclusive culture are not only team members, but also customers.

The positive effect on customers was best described by Kellea Williams of Amazon. Williams described Amazon’s process of becoming more inclusive as a journey that started with looking at their customers; hearing testimonials from people engaging with devices, such as Amazon Fire and Echo, in different ways; and then realizing the enormous potential they possessed internally. Williams shared the following:

“Amazon has a motto that ‘inclusion inspires innovation’ and I think that’s what we see from a business perspective. It really takes people from all walks of life, of all backgrounds to really innovate on behalf of our customers and the services we provide. And, I think when you have all of these different voices and perspectives, it really just makes the workplace that much stronger. And for us, we are able to deliver to our customers that much better because we’re thinking about all of our customers’ needs and not just a subset.”



Achievement Through Inclusion

Without a focus on inclusion... “We wouldn’t be able to have a person who might bring a different perspective into the workplace and a new environment into the workplace...and that’s important because we all have strengths within us and we all need to find strengths within our community...even the smallest being can change the course of history – don’t underestimate people because of their outward appearance.” – Mike Walker

Throughout the course of the WorkUnified Talks, panelists were asked to share examples of the successes and challenges they have experienced. The responses included personal stories of achievement, such as recognition from peers or milestones reached, that many people may take for granted. Other panelists offered examples of business successes, building on the themes identified in the prior section. What was most telling was the positivity and the focus on successes rather than challenges.

Personal Achievement

Continuing with a focus on interpersonal relationships, Walker was proud to share that, “People have learned to communicate with me in a more successful way.” As a person who self-identifies as having high-functioning autism, he shared that his co-workers came to realize that he does not directly relate to certain forms of humor like sarcasm. Listening to Walker, one comes away with a sense that his colleagues have more genuine dialogue with him because they respect how he communicates and contributes to the team. This connection, along with Walker’s hard work and diligence, led to him receiving the “classified employee of the school district award” for two consecutive months. He is the first school district employee with autism to receive this recognition from his peers.



The talk featuring Bank of America team members Moody and King offered a perspective on how successes that many take for granted can be significant for others with a different life experience. Moody reflected on his preparation for his first interview 17 years ago as a major step toward his goals, saying, "I had to come in a suit, shave...dress for success and speak clearly." Speaking about his experience, King added that once he landed his job with the bank, he focused on "working hard, being on time and staying busy." This has led to a long tenure at Bank of America for both. They have spent nearly two decades working with multiple teams and gaining a variety of professional experiences. With his steady employment, Moody proudly said, "[I have] my own car, my own apartment – I have independence." His colleague King added, "...and community involvement."

Business Successes

Workplace inclusion is both a social and economic imperative. As more companies adopt a strategy of full inclusion, they join in the chorus of voices calling for more progress in their industries. Both Williams and Feinour are strong advocates for inclusion with Amazon and Bank of America respectively. Their professional experience fuels their genuine enthusiasm for connecting people with disabilities to opportunities within their companies.

When speaking about Amazon's culture, Williams said, "The more we have grown as a company, the more thoughtful we have become." This has fueled innovation within Amazon, particularly through the design of their Fire and Echo devices. It has also enabled Amazon to adopt a universal design process where people with disabilities are "asked for [their] opinions on the front end to test products and beta services in advance so they're inclusive from the get-go." Beyond product enhancements, Amazon has also focused on the experience of their team members. Williams went on to say, "...over the last couple of years we've started an affinity group for people with disabilities who really became a partner for real estate and facilities and for a lot of the devices that are being built and are really a part of that inclusive community."

Feinour was visibly energized when discussing his role leading Bank of America's Support Services and by the opportunity to lead a diverse team. For Feinour, the true mark of accomplishment is how his division operates seamlessly within the corporate culture. Receiving nods of agreement from his team members Moody and King, Feinour stated, "We are like any other line of business at the bank. We just happen to focus on a different talent pool...but everyone receives the same benefits, same opportunities to develop and advance as any other employee at the bank – so that's one of the things that makes us so successful."

Creating a Foundation for Success

The level of success achieved by Amazon and Bank of America did not come without a concerted effort. Both companies explicitly made a commitment to advance the goal of workplace inclusion. Organizational learning to create a culture of inclusion is an area of specialization for Fimian, director of the Pathways to Careers initiative. To facilitate sustainable and meaningful outcomes, Pathways focuses equally on the individual, their natural system of supports and potential employers. Speaking about the program's standards of service, Fimian shared:

"We find the more we're able to create the space for these things to take place and to understand an individual's skills and abilities relative to unmet business needs – that is what allows us to see this work...It creates a much greater opportunity for a successful job match and for someone to really get into a position where they can excel."

Echoing the importance of developing a network to promote success, Feinour related how his department operates. “[We work] with our local support partners and we’ll let them know what types of opportunities we have, they in turn work with their clients [and] present their clients that are a fit for our requirements.” In each of their remarks, Fimian and Feinour referred to working with provider agencies that specialize in employment of people with disabilities as a bridge to connecting individuals, services and outcomes.

GCE is an example of a nonprofit agency that focuses on promoting upward mobility and exploring sustainable jobs in emerging industries as a strategy to diversify the value proposition for the community it serves. As a mark of its success in creating a culture of inclusion internally, as well as at client sites where services are performed, GCE’s representative, Jo’el Roth, spoke about reasonable accommodations. Accommodations that aid individual success can sometimes be the key that unlocks a person’s potential. GCE ensures its staff have access to accommodations for a variety of physical as well as cognitive disabilities. This has been an element of the nonprofit’s success across various industries where it connects people with disabilities to jobs. Roth shared how tools, such as screen readers, accessible workstations and management supports, have led to success in a variety of career fields offered by GCE. With a commitment to inclusion, GCE has demonstrated success in employing people across a diverse range of disabilities and facilitating their advancement to positions of great complexity and responsibility.

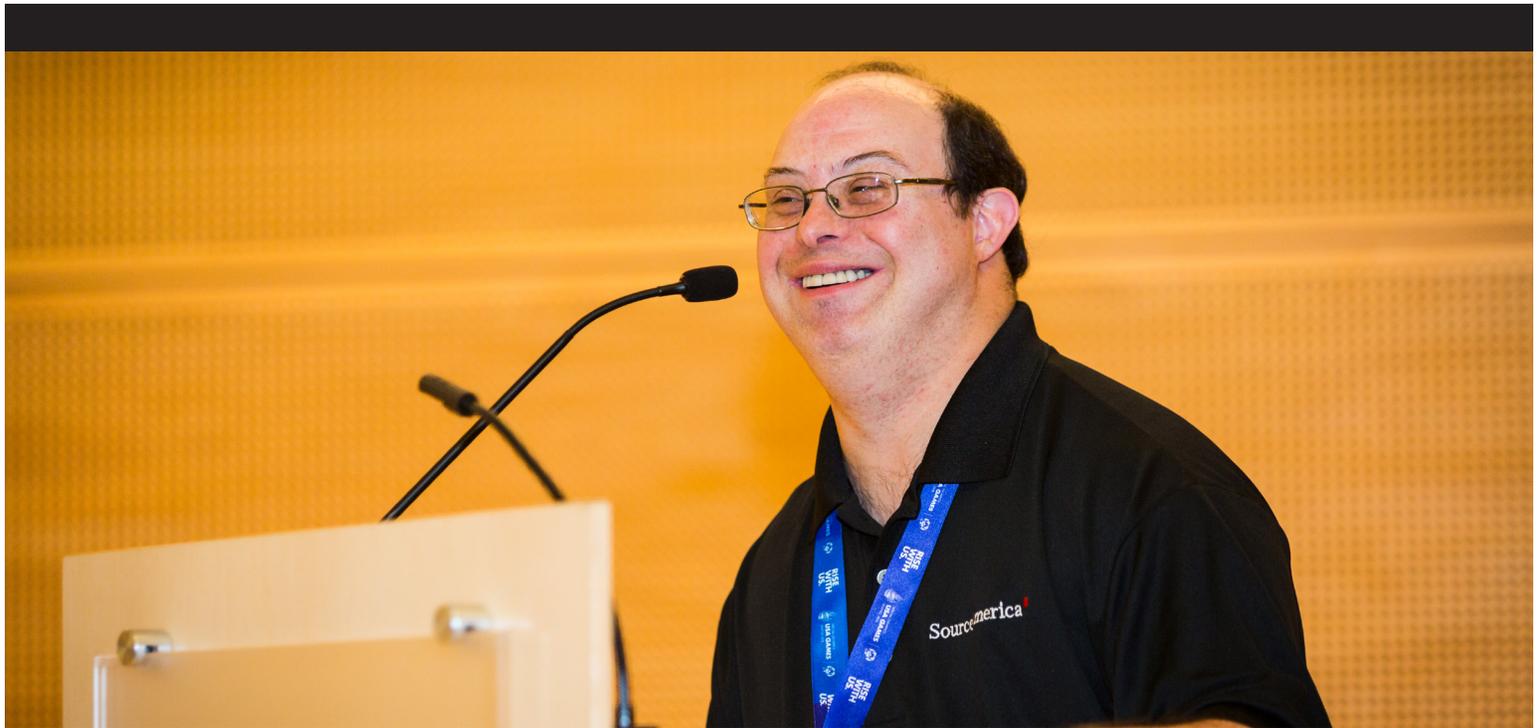
■ The Connection Between Sport and Work

“Special Olympics taught me to always do better, try harder, beat my last time. I go to every practice and look after my own health. Special Olympics has taught me that I’m in charge of my actions, and I know that it’s going to be up to me.” – Kelly Campbell

Participation in the programming offered by Special Olympics uniquely prepares individuals to be successful in the workplace, and much of the discussion during the WorkUnified Talks centered on the connection between sport and work. The panelists reinforced this connection when discussing their experiences and the unifying power of sports.

Athlete Perspective

The logical connection between sport and work is the acquisition and refinement of skills. Campbell related how participation in sports has fueled her individual drive and determination to achieve more. As a leader, she imparts this knowledge to her fellow athletes to help further their individual development. During his talk, Walker spoke about a variety of skills transferrable from the playing field to the workplace: “Some soft skills that are involved in sports can come from different virtues, whether it’s courage, leadership, wisdom, loyalty, honor – and those are all important.” Like Campbell, Walker is a leader within his community. Through his participation in sports, he has learned this: “You have to have a person who is a good leader and is able to communicate with the other teammates, otherwise the team might not work successfully with each other.” As evidenced by Walker’s employment award, his unwavering commitment to quality and his leadership skills have made him an ideal teammate and co-worker.



David Egan, host of the WorkUnified Talks, introduced each of the speakers and recognized them for their contributions. When it was his turn to share his story, Egan offered many insightful comments on the connection between sport and work. Speaking about inclusion, Egan said, “it contributes in so many ways...this ‘Unified’ thing we talk about is something that people don’t often understand. Some people think that participating is just a day off from work to play with Special Olympics athletes – but it is more than that! It can have a lasting impact on people’s lives.”

He went on to share the following: “Studies have shown that people with intellectual disabilities who are employed are disciplined, reliable, predictable and dedicated to the job.” Egan related these attributes to his personal experience in Special Olympics where he gained confidence, improved his skills and set a goal to do his best. He shared more on this, saying, “Doing one’s personal best and working well with others is what matters throughout life.”

Employer Perspective

The corporate executives who participated in the WorkUnified Talks saw a direct correlation between the skills and abilities acquired through sport and high-level performance on the job. Teamwork was identified by each company as a direct result of playing sports. Feinour’s Support Services division has a large number of Special Olympics athletes on staff. This benefits the Support Services model of specialized teams. In speaking with Support Services team members, they proudly recite the teams they’ve been a part of and how they have advanced their professional skills and personal goals. Feinour credits this to maintaining focus on a central goal of satisfying their many customers.

From a talent recruiting perspective, Williams shared that she sees “that involvement and the dedication it takes to be an athlete...it takes an inordinate amount of dedication.” When speaking with a potential candidate who is a Special Olympics athlete, she expressed seeing a consistent “commitment to excellence.” As supporters of Special Olympics, both Bank of America and Amazon recognize the potential athletes possess to impact many aspects of their organizations.

Coming from the perspective of a program that connects individuals and opportunity, Fimian was excited to talk about how participation in Special Olympics offers tremendous

insight about a person's strengths and interests. SourceAmerica's Pathways to Careers initiative has worked extensively with Special Olympics athletes in Utah, Michigan, Massachusetts and Virginia. When interacting with athletes, Fimian expressed seeing consistent themes of "self-discipline, being on time and promptness, all of the soft skills that are so important." Using a process called Discovery, Pathways professionals spend considerable time with an individual to uncover their career goals to find the best employment match. When working with athletes, Fimian finds that digging into their sports experience is "just so exciting because it gives us indicators around how to help this individual put together a fantastic career plan and then identify where that business is in the community [that] is going to really welcome and benefit from their unique skills and abilities."

■ Recommendations for Achieving Inclusion

"You are the champions that accept our differences and see what unifies us. Let us make sure that no one person with a disability is forgotten or left behind without a job of their choice." – David Egan

The final topic each panelist was asked to address was their recommendations for spreading the WorkUnified concept. They each reflected on their experiences and perspectives, suggested approaches that require framework change, and provided examples of practical methods to perpetuate success. Framework change, in this context, requires adjusting mindsets to see abilities rather than limitations. This is the societal change that both Special Olympics and SourceAmerica strive for through their programs. The words of the athletes on this topic resonated with the company representatives in the audience who were at varying stages in their workplace inclusion initiatives. The employer panelists added to this shared learning by offering a set of strategies for the audience to consider.

Changing Hearts and Minds

Speaking from his personal experience, Egan remarked, "Employment is a defining aspect of adult life...it connects us to full participation and inclusion in our communities. It fosters a sense of self-worth and opens opportunities for social growth leading to greater independence." It was this sense of a broader community that resonated with both Williams and Walker in their discussion. Speaking as a corporate executive, Williams stressed the importance of "learning to be curious about your community and getting to know others and stepping out of your comfort zone...just getting to know [people] and their perspective opens you up to have more empathy because there's so much to get involved with in your community." Walker agreed and added, "Go out in the community...even if you are a CEO...go out to the community and try to get to know people...ask people what they would like to see."

Going from a community level to a personal level, Campbell homed in on the shift that people must make when embracing diversity in the workplace. "Don't make assumptions...we can be better than non-disabled employees sometimes if given the time...we still get from A to B," she said. This was an important point that the employers who spoke in the talks embraced. By focusing on the positive attributes that people bring to the job, you maximize their contributions to the team and the goals of the organization. This, in turn, creates an atmosphere where people can grow. Feinour reinforced this sentiment with this: "At the end of the day, what is important to us is that people continue to develop and ultimately reach their goals."

Tactical/Practical Approaches

Throughout the course of the WorkUnified Talks, the employer representatives shared numerous approaches that have led to their success in fostering inclusion. Recommendations touched on various topics such as community building, addressing internal capacity and matching talent to opportunity effectively. Feedback received from the companies in attendance demonstrated the positive impact the talks had on their thought process. Moving forward, the goal is continued peer-to-peer learning resulting in increased hiring of people with disabilities within each company.

A popular approach to community building many companies explore is the sponsorship of employee resource groups (ERGs). Often originating from diversity and inclusion efforts, ERGs are most successful when there is strong executive sponsorship and the group is led by representatives of the population it intends to benefit. Speaking on this topic, Williams explained how their ERGs are called affinity groups and how they “tend to be grassroots started employee groups for people to come together.” She added, “Two years ago we saw [that] we were really missing a people with disabilities affinity group.” In addressing this gap, Williams said the affinity group quickly found an executive sponsor to offer support via advocacy throughout the company. Another takeaway from Amazon’s experience is that it’s important to look for community-related events to participate in, such as the Journey of Employment.

A second set of recommendations was provided by Bank of America’s Feinour and demonstrated their commitment to internal capacity building. Under Feinour’s leadership, Support Services stresses equity for all team members. This is reflected in their business model, which promotes task diversification and opportunities for growth commensurate with other divisions within the company. Feinour said that his staff can “work on different teams with different skills sets, but more importantly they’re doing different types of projects.” This is a component of the internal capacity building the bank has invested in to become a model employer of people with disabilities. Though they work with community partners to identify candidates, Feinour said that in their model they “are the ones who do the job coaching. Each team has a manager and an assistant manager, and they’re the ones who manage the project and everyone else on their team. And they will be the ones as somebody comes on as a new hire, to teach them a job, make sure they understand the job, and team them up with a peer to work through the process.”



Notably, Bank of America is a leader when it comes to investing in the development of people with intellectual disabilities. Through their partnership with Special Olympics, Bank of America supports the Athlete Leadership Program, which prepares athletes for roles in the workplace and the community beyond sport. David Egan and many others have directly benefited from the Athlete Leadership Program and have gone on to achieve personal and professional goals.

The final recommendations provided through the talks focused on effectively matching individuals to opportunities. Speaking as a subject matter expert on creating customized employment outcomes, Fimian provided the audience with recommendations to achieve shared success. Fimian's advice reflected how a thoughtful, structured approach to aligning individual talent and interest with business needs has proven particularly beneficial for the employment of people with I/DD and ASD. "As the director of the Pathways to Careers program, I see success in taking the time necessary to really understand – going back to the skills and abilities – and carefully identifying the business needs that match a unique contribution an individual can offer," said Fimian. In affording the time to find the right match, we allow space for "informed choices, for both the individual and the business," which offers transparency in the process and fosters a better connection and lasting results. Whether a company wants to pursue a scalable approach to inclusion or is just beginning their journey, the recommendations offered in this report can be a resource toward progress.

Conclusion

"From the perspective of job seekers, I encourage people to be creative when they look at a company – no matter what the title is of the job, I always encourage people to think about the entire company. Then when placing individuals, we have to think about the entire person. There is a person who can do every single function or job that needs to be done." – Jo'el Roth

As the first offering of its kind at a Special Olympics event, the Journey of Employment successfully brought together key stakeholders to influence positive change. Athletes, their families and coaches, and corporate employers were provided a platform to connect on multiple levels. Perhaps the most important of these connections was a shared recognition of the need for framework change to remove barriers to greater inclusion.

In summarizing the insights provided by the ten speakers, there were several key themes. Each panelist stressed the importance of feeling like they are part of something – through sport, work and community involvement. Consistently, the speakers equated inclusion to a community-building effort that centered on communication and mutual recognition of abilities. This took many forms, from individual connections between teammates or employee and supervisor, to employee resource groups, to a significant shift in corporate culture.

Another theme observed during the discussions was the connection between sports and employment. Each athlete was able to draw parallels between their experience in Special Olympics and their career paths. Attributes such as self-discipline, dedication, loyalty,

honor, leadership and teamwork were identified by the athletes and acknowledged as highly desirable by employers.

The final takeaway was the variety of approaches companies have used to pursue their inclusion goals. The recommendations offered in this report span supporting individual employee engagement to organizing the operations of an entire division. The fundamental principle is that each person offers a unique set of skills and experiences that are likely to match unmet business needs. Connecting the two offers the greatest potential for success.

The Journey of Employment and WorkUnified Talks offered an exciting platform to share the diversity of talent possessed by Special Olympics athletes and the benefit they can provide to employers. A goal for the program was to ensure that each athlete who participated felt they were viewed as strong candidates for meaningful jobs throughout the United States. Another goal was promoting shared learning between companies that are at various stages in their workplace inclusion initiatives. Both goals were achieved. These achievements, along with the positive experiences of stakeholders, which were reflected throughout this report, in various media publications, and in conversations at the events, underscore the profound impact this partnership between SourceAmerica and Special Olympics has already had and the importance of offering additional convenings in the future.

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