



# Challenge Unlimited Celebrates National Disability Employment Awareness Month

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Challenge Unlimited, Inc. is 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.

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.

"When I was growing up, many people doubted what I could do just because I was blind. But because I had people in my life who instilled in me an expectation of work and showed me opportunities to be successful, I completed college and became known for what I *can* do," said Kathy Martinez, assistant secretary of labor for disability employment policy.

"Challenge Unlimited is proud to be a part of this year's National Disability Employment Awareness Month," said President and CEO Tom Moehn. "We want to spread the important message that a strong workforce is one inclusive of the skills and talents of all individuals, including individuals with disabilities."

This year's theme "Because We Are EQUAL to the Task," will be reflected throughout the month. Challenge Unlimited and its affiliated organizations will engage in a variety of activities to educate its clients and staff on disability employment issues and the role they play in fostering a disability-friendly work culture.

These efforts include attending several community outreach events in the St. Louis and metro-area. The organization will also host a “Walk a Day in my Shoes” event, where members of upper management will spend a day working alongside front-line employees in various areas of the organization.

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 the ODEP website at [www.dol.gov/odep/](http://www.dol.gov/odep/).

Challenge Unlimited, Inc. provides opportunities for individuals with disabilities which assist them to live, work, and participate in the community. Challenge Unlimited, Inc. and its affiliated companies, Alpha Industries and Residential Options, are known throughout the country as leaders in offering community rehabilitation services, vocational training, developmental training, educational opportunities, community-integrated housing, and employment to individuals with disabilities. To learn more about Challenge Unlimited, Inc., visit [www.cuinc.org](http://www.cuinc.org).