

# Inclusion Drives Innovation

## An Employer Summit on Hiring Individuals with Disabilities in SC

**2017 Inclusion Drives Innovation Employer Summit  
Tuesday, October 10, 2017 10:30am- 3:00pm**

**10:30 – 11:00 AM: Check-In/Engage with Vendors**

**11:00 – 11:20 AM: Welcome from Shannon Garrett**, Chair of the SC Business Coalition for Employment of People with Disabilities

**Reading of the National Disability Employment Awareness Month Proclamation**

Interim Commissioner Felicia W. Johnson, South Carolina Vocational Rehabilitation Department

**11:20 AM – 12:00 PM Session One: Employer and Education Panel**

**Panel Summary:**

This panel will include experts across multiple sectors. They will discuss:

1. Techniques for how they have successfully recruited and retained talented employees with disabilities.
2. Why and how their organizations have created cultures that support diversity and inclusion.
3. The new South Carolina Employability Credential and how it supports an employer's ability to hire a more diverse workforce

**Panelists:**

- **Mark Pearce, CDM**
  - Mark Pearce is the Senior Director of Food and Nutrition for Morrison's Food Services at Spartanburg Regional Healthcare System. He has a Bachelor of Science degree in nutrition and is a Certified Dietary Manager. Mark has over 27 years of hospital food management experience in California, Texas, Alabama, and the Carolinas. Through this position, he has provided employment opportunities for workers with disabilities in faith-based, community and for-profit hospitals, demonstrating that inclusion can be successful in a variety of settings.

- **John Payne**
  - John Payne is the Director of the Office of Special Education Services (OSES) at the South Carolina Department of Education. John has an extensive experience in administering state-level special education programs; has worked in child welfare agencies including non-profit advocacy organizations; and has worked in program evaluation and educational policy. He has taught at the high school, community college, and university levels; and has published and presented nationally in the areas of social justice, educational research, and special education. He has been recognized for co-authored research by the American Council on Rural Special Education. He is a member of the National Association of State Directors of Special Education, serves a member of the South Carolina Interagency Coordinating Council, an ex officio member of the South Carolina School for the Deaf and the Blind's Board of Commissioners, the South Carolina Brain Injury Leadership Council; and on the SC School-Based Mental Health Advisory Board.
  
- **Gayel Wigfall**
  - Gayel Wigfall brings over 25 years of Human Resources experience to her current position as the University and Inclusion consultant at BlueCross BlueShield of South Carolina. In this capacity, she offers diversity and inclusion solutions to internal client groups, including diversity training design and facilitation. Prior to joining BlueCross, Gayel held various positions in the areas of recruiting, employee relations, training and program management. She holds a Bachelor of Arts degree in Psychology and certifications in Human Capital Strategies (HCS) and Global Career Development Facilitation (GCDF). She is currently pursuing certification as a Certified Diversity Professional. Gayel is a member of several organizations including: the South Carolina Diversity Council, SC Vocational Rehabilitation Business Partnership Network and Blue Diversity Alliance. In addition, Gayel was a member of the inaugural Midlands class of the Diversity Leadership Academy, and is a proud supporter of South Carolina Youth Corps. As an ambassador for diversity and inclusion practices, Mrs. Wigfall has conducted diversity and inclusion presentations for numerous organizations, area colleges, high schools and youth organizations.
  
- **Rhonda Midgette, PHR, SHRM-CP, MHR**
  - Rhonda Midgette is an HR Advice Partner for TD Bank, having joined the company in 2013. She has over 20 years of human resources experience and 10 years in the banking industry. She has a master's in human resources from Villanova University and is a graduate of the Diversity Leadership Institute. Rhonda sits on the SC Chamber Diversity Committee, is the Diversity Chair for Columbia SHRM, and is the Chair for the SCBA HR Committee.

**12:00 – 12:30 PM: Lunch**

**12:30 – 1:30 PM Session Two: Techniques to Improve Recruitment**

### **Session Summary:**

This group activity will provide an opportunity for attendees to gain hands-on experience reviewing job descriptions for possible barriers to employment. Table leaders will provide guidance and resources to support attendees' creation of a more inclusive wording for a job posting. Attendees will then collaborate, and use their shared knowledge, experience, creativity, and resources to practice using more inclusive wording in job descriptions. By the end of the activity attendees will:

1. Understand the importance of creating a job description in regards to creating an inclusive hiring practice
2. Demonstrate the ability to choose more inclusive wording to encourage more applicants with disabilities to apply
3. Be aware of multiple resources available to them to assist when evaluating their own job descriptions

### **1:30 – 2:00 PM Break/Engage with Vendors**

### **2:00 – 2:50 PM Session Three: Disability Employment – A Map for Success**

#### **Keynote Address Summary:**

Businesses know the benefits of infusing diversity and inclusion strategies throughout their corporate culture, but they aren't always aware of the competitive advantage that may be gained by employing people with disabilities. And, they can be dissuaded by the perceived risks associated with this segment of the labor pool. It's true that among people with disabilities, unemployment rates are twice as high as rates among the general population. At the same time, people with disabilities have better overall employment retention outcomes and similar productivity outcomes when compared to their non-disabled counterparts.

In an environment where businesses are desperate for dedicated workers and lower turnover, developing strategies to employ people with disabilities who can meet productivity goals is a win-win for businesses and the communities in which they operate. This presentation will:

1. Concisely map out how businesses can successfully recruit and hire individuals with disabilities.
2. Clarify the roles of HR, operations, and corporate leadership in establishing and maintaining a successful disability employment strategy.
3. Provide HR with strategies to make the business case for inclusion of people with disabilities.

Participants will leave knowing how to establish a disability employment initiative, steps to follow to make the initiative a reality, and where to get help along the way.

#### **Keynote Speaker:** Laura Bogardus, PhD., SHRM-SCP

- Dr. Bogardus has devoted much of her life to understanding and removing barriers that interfere with individuals' success in attaining, retaining, and advancing in employment. She developed her unique perspective on these issues by being heavily involved in both human resources and workforce development. Dr. Bogardus leverages her 20 years of experience to provide

specialized HR consulting among businesses that seek to augment their disability employment initiatives.

Dr. Bogardus received a doctoral degree in international family and community studies from Clemson University and a master's degree in human behavior and conflict management from Columbia College. She is a Marano Fellow of the Aspen Institute's Sector Skills Academy for innovative workforce strategies. From 2010-2012, she directed a competitive National Fund for Workforce Solutions project to develop training and employment in the advanced manufacturing industry sector in Greenville County, SC.

Dr. Bogardus is a SHRM Senior Certified Professional. She is a member of the Greenville CAN Disability Employment Committee, the Society for the Psychological Study of Social Issues (SPSSI), and both the national and local chapter of the Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM). She is an active member of the Greenville SHRM Workforce Readiness Committee. As a doctoral student, she received the Excellence in Engagement and Social Advocacy Graduate Student Award, the Kimbrough and Melton Parents Award, and the Graduate Student Award of Excellence.

**2:50 – 3:00 PM: Call to Action with Raffle**