JUNE 2016
Hiring Team Members with Disabilities (HTMWD)

A look into how Meijer is using fresh ideas to help put the customer first and win with the team. We are putting a spotlight on the growing efforts of hiring team members with disabilities.
“People make the difference. We’re building partnerships within our communities and supporting a diverse workforce. We are committed to establishing an inclusive environment, which requires intentional leadership around safety, communication, and productivity. We play an important part in fostering an inclusive workforce where every individual is recognized for his or her abilities each and every day.”

Rick Keyes, President

Forward Momentum:
Expanding the Efforts of Hiring Team Members with Disabilities

Diversity and inclusion has always been a part of the Meijer culture and company. Throughout the years, Meijer continues to grow and expand their business, creating inclusive work environments that help us put our customers first, win with our team and have a passion to compete.

As these inclusion efforts continue, Meijer has been uniquely dedicated to hiring team members with disabilities. Research shows individuals with disabilities meet or exceed productivity, quality, and attendance standards of team members without disabilities. While Meijer has always hired individuals with disabilities, it’s the desire to continue our engagement with outside organizations and community partners that make this work so important.

As Meijer remains involved in the community with various events dedicated to individuals with disabilities, we look forward to sharing some of these highlights. Recently, Meijer sponsored and took part in Lt. Governor Calley’s MI Hidden Talent Tour which brought together companies from all over Michigan to help facilitate learning and best practices surrounding a diverse workforce. In addition, Meijer has assisted student groups from the Association for the Blind and Visually Impaired with store tours and learning opportunities about working at Meijer.

While Meijer continues to build a diverse workforce that reflects their customer base, it is by keeping the customers first and at the forefront of their mind that allows Meijer to become their store of choice and part of the Meijer family.
Just the Facts...

OVER 1 IN 5 AMERICANS, APPROXIMATELY 54 MILLION PEOPLE HAVE A DISABILITY

PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES HAVE $220 BILLION IN DISCRETIONARY SPENDING POWER

PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES ARE THE LARGEST MINORITY GROUP IN THE NATION

61% OF PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES ARE OF WORKING AGE, BETWEEN 16 AND 64 YEARS OLD

MORE THAN 7 OUT OF EVERY 10 AMERICANS WILL ACQUIRE SOME SORT OF DISABILITY BY THE TIME THEY REACH THE AGE OF 75

Students from the Association for the Blind and Visually Impaired
Spend a Day Learning at Meijer!

- Students have an opportunity to work with Bakery team members and package cookies for our customers.
- Students are given a chance to learn how to identify good produce vs. bad produce.
- Line Manager, Matthew Korff leads the students on a walking tour through the various store departments.
On June 22, 2016 a group of 10 students and 6 staff members from the Association for the Blind and Visually Impaired had the unique opportunity to tour Meijer Store #248 in Cedar Springs, Michigan and learn firsthand what it would be like to become a Meijer team member. The students began the morning learning about the history of Meijer and the different opportunities that a retail store such as Meijer provides. Line Manager, Matthew Korff served as the students tour guide for the day and had the students engaged and laughing from beginning to end with all of his stories and experiences.

After their introduction into Meijer, they were then taken on a walking tour of the entire store, learning about the different areas team members are able to work in as well as the responsibilities associated with each department. One student stated that “taking the tour” was their favorite part and it allowed the students to really get the experience of what it would be like to become a team member. As the group moved toward the produce area, Matthew had a hands-on activity waiting for everyone. He shared with the group that one of Meijer’s core values is “freshness” and how each and every type of produce must be consistently checked and rotated to ensure our customers were receiving fresh products each and every day. He then allowed each student to feel the difference between a non-ripe and ripe avocado as well as the different textures of the peppers.

The surprises didn’t end there, the finale of the morning took the students over to the bakery area where they all put on their hairnets and made sure they thoroughly washed their hands. Matthew explained to the group that safety and health was another core value and Meijer and these steps were extremely important before they could handle any of the food. Matthew and the bakery team members then led the students in the activity of packaging all of the cookies for the day so they would be ready to fill the shelves for our customers. “I loved counting the cookies” one student stated “I really wanted to find a technique to make it faster.” Watching the students work together to efficiently count and package all of the cookies was such a joy and it was wonderful for the students to learn that when you become a Meijer team member you are immediately welcomed into a family.

The student’s day concluded with a presentation from Cecil Brown, a Project Manager from the Talent Acquisition team and Dorrie Tompsett, a representative from Meijer’s Disability Management Services. Cecil and Dorrie taught the students all about how to apply to become a Meijer team member and how committed Meijer is to working with individuals with disabilities to determine accommodations that can be made in order for the team member to be successful. The students were amazed at how personalized disability accommodations at Meijer are and loved that Meijer is dedicated to always doing the right thing for their customers and team members.

Overall it was an exciting day of learning and experiencing first-hand what it would be like to become a Meijer team member and the students left excited about the possibilities of the future!
Justin Pierce is an intern at Meijer assisting the Human Resource Analytics Team. Justin holds a Bachelor of Science degree in Statistics from Grand Valley State University. For the past several months he has been essential in assisting his peers with preparing and analyzing workforce data as it relates to our current Diversity and Inclusion efforts. But Justin’s story of how he became part of the Meijer family is quite unique. “After spending two summers submitting countless applications, I sought assistance through Michigan Rehabilitation Services and Sandra Wiper, a Rehabilitation Counselor. She ultimately led me to my local community partner, Grand Traverse Industries and Suzy Puroll, a Community Employment Specialist, who worked with Meijer to assist me in getting placed into my role”. Justin’s first assistant Patrick Flandreau was a wonderful leader and mentor to him during his time at Meijer and stated “Justin was a great asset to the HR Analytics team. He learned about analytics, while Meijer benefited from having a talented resource. Justin was able to jump into an important and timely project with great zeal and passion. He demonstrated great precision in his work and a desire to demonstrate his value.”

Once Justin learned about the inclusive efforts Meijer had in place to recruit team members with disabilities, he felt comfortable enough to offer his personal experience. “What I noticed was the family oriented work environment and over the past 15 weeks I have been treated with dignity and respect by everyone, as if we were all part of one big extended family.”

During his time with Meijer, Justin has also been instrumental in assisting the efforts for hiring team members with disabilities and even had an opportunity to attend the Lt. Governor’s MI Hidden Talent Tour, a workshop for businesses intending to hire individuals with disabilities. Justin later joined other Meijer team members in a leadership forum, listening to Randy Lewis, former Walgreens Sr. Vice President and champion for hiring individuals with disabilities. After realizing the impact of his contribution, Justin shares, “My efforts may provide opportunities for others with special needs in finding a home here at Meijer.”

Although Justin’s internship is quickly coming to an end, Justin reflects back on the amazing opportunity he has been given and cannot wait to see what the future holds. “I have truly enjoyed the chance to chase a dream of mine for the past 15 weeks. There would have never been another opportunity to witness such a caring and family-friendly work environment by remaining a kitchen-aide back in Traverse City.” Ultimately Justin feels, “You should always show kindness to all of your co-workers because you do not know who has a disability or challenges and how a smile to all will make their day!”
On June 21, 2016 Meijer sponsored and took part in the 2016 MI Hidden Talent Tour. This workshop was created by Michigan Lt. Governor Brian Calley and MI Supreme Court Justice Richard Bernstein and helps bring together companies from around Michigan to facilitate discussions on hiring individuals with disabilities. Marcelo Olivarez, an Operations Manager at Meijer’s Lansing Distribution Center gave a presentation on Meijer’s success with hiring team members with disabilities. Dave Mulder, Lansing Complex Director also represented Meijer and took place in a panel discussion to discuss best practices and community involvement. It was an extremely well received event that gave Meijer a chance to spotlight some of their successes and partner with other companies in the community to help further the efforts of hiring team member with disabilities.
On May 4, 2016 Meijer team members had an opportunity to hear and speak with Randy Lewis, author of *No Goodness Without Greatness* at the Holland Area Chamber of Commerce, Lessons in Leadership series. Randy, a former Sr. Vice President of Walgreens spoke about his experience with developing initiatives in the workplace that focus on hiring individuals with disabilities. He also personally spoke to the Meijer team members after the presentation, encouraging them along their journey and to remain committed and accountable to the efforts.
On June 9, 2016 Meijer Supply Chain Interns had an opportunity to tour Peckham, Inc. Peckham is a nonprofit vocational rehabilitation organization that provides jobs and training opportunities for persons with significant disabilities and other barriers for employment.Named #11 on Fortune Magazine’s Great Place to Work List, Peckham is nationally recognized for its achievement in providing exceptional vocational rehabilitation.

Meijer interns had the unique opportunity to learn about Peckham’s processes, their partnership with Meijer, and see firsthand what a big impact the small accommodations their company has made to be inclusive. Kaylee Zajac, Supply Chain Planning Intern stated that “It was great being able to see how Meijer can partner up with Peckham. I learned a great deal about commitment, growth, and respect for the workplace and as an employer, Meijer, is speaking volumes by creating these kinds of experiences and opportunities for team members.”
On May 10, 2016 Meijer had an opportunity to participate and present at the Ottawa Area Intermediate School District Career Fair. Meijer team members spoke with the students about current job opportunities at Meijer and Disability Management Services team member Dorrie Tompsett gave a presentation teaching students the steps to applying and becoming part of the Meijer family.
On June 21, 2016, Gina Goldberg, Human Resources Manager for Pleasant Prairie Distribution Center in Wisconsin, represented Meijer as a participant and a keynote speaker for the Lakeside Curative Services Business Symposium Event. Lakeside Curative Services is one of the providers of vocational rehabilitation services and opportunities for Racine area citizens with disabilities. Over 100 different businesses were invited to the event which would allow them to share and learn about best practices and successes surrounding hiring individuals with disabilities as well as create an open dialogue about how businesses can overcome assumptions and open doors for persons with disabilities. Gina opened the event as the keynote speaker and spoke about the overwhelming success Meijer has had hiring team members with disabilities in her location, she then led the roundtable discussion as the event’s business ambassador. Gina stated “I felt this was an excellent event for Meijer to participate in and attend, it really helped to foster business to business communication and was an opportunity to break down some of those walls and barriers.”