

DIVERSITY, EQUITY & INCLUSION

Job Coaches Help Employers Hire, Train Employees with Disabilities

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...abilities. limitless possibilities.



Burt Brooks

Robert Butters, CEO of Green Light Development, speaks from experience when he tells other businesses that the benefits that come from hiring workers with autism or other disabilities far outweigh any challenges.

Job coaches available through government and private nonprofit agencies facilitate job placement and training to ensure new hires are seamlessly integrated into the workforce and thrive in their positions, Butters said.

"The biggest challenge is getting companies to understand that you can do this," Butters told 200 attendees at [NJBIA's webinar](#) Thursday, where business leaders, employees with disabilities, and various private nonprofit and state agencies that provide job placement and training shared their experiences creating more inclusive workplaces.

"Organizations like Spectrum Works or Easterseals NJ can absolutely provide the type of support that a corporation needs," said Butters, whose company partners with [Spectrum Works](#), a nonprofit that provides employment and job training for autistic individuals.

"We're a manufacturing company and we've had over 500 people come from Spectrum Works through our programs," said Butters, who was joined during the webinar by an autistic employee who works remotely as a data analyst, and his manager, to discuss the program's benefits.

Burt Brooks, of [Easterseals NJ](#), said business owners should not assume that hiring a disabled employee requires paying for expensive workplace accommodations. Sometimes accommodations are inexpensive, such as providing a disabled library worker with a magnifying glass to be able to read the Dewey decimal labels on book spines.

"Many employers do not have, or have only limited experience, with hiring people with disabilities, let alone training on top of that," Brooks said. "You are in luck because you live in New Jersey, which provides plenty of support that allows you to attract, hire and train employees."

Job coaches provided by Easterseals NJ and other government and private nonprofit agencies help not only the disabled employee, but the business as well to ensure successful outcomes, he said.

"They do tireless work to help the individual who is looking for a job to be hired, but also to help the business navigate the hiring process, the training process and even follow up after the employee is more comfortable in the position," Brooks said.

Making your business more inclusive is not only the right thing to do, but also good for the bottom line, he pointed out.

"We have study after study that shows people with disabilities end up being your best workers," Brooks said. "They want to go to work, they want to do a good job. It is a win-win situation for everyone."

NJBIA Chief Government Affairs Officer **Chrissy Buteas** urged webinar attendees to “lean in” on the mission to create more inclusive workplaces because there are thousands of individuals in the disabled community who are eager to find work and can be valuable assets to businesses.

“Please utilize all of us as a resource – our association partners, disability organization partners and government officials so that we can connect you,” Buteas said.

To view the entire webinar, go [here](#).

Burt Brooks, Chrissy Buteas, Disabilities, EastersealsNJ, Green Light Development, Hiring, Robert Butters, Spectrum Works Diversity, Equity & Inclusion, General Business, Human Resources, Not-for-profit