



# The Benefits of Inclusion in National Service

Many individuals with disabilities have had the opportunity to actively participate in national service. This participation has had a positive impact, not only on the communities where they were serving, but also on themselves and national service as a whole.

*“What I gave came back tenfold...I was finally able to give back some of the love and nurturing that I got as a child.”* – National service member with a disability

*“Because of her disability, I adjusted the format of our team meetings to fit her learning style. This not only helped her follow along, but it significantly increased the functionality and efficiency of our meetings. Everyone benefited from what started as an accommodation.”* – AmeriCorps\*NCCC team leader

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## Michigan Disability Resources

<http://michigan.gov/disabilityresources>

Michigan’s first website devoted specially to the interests, concerns, and needs of Michiganians with disabilities. Of Michigan’s nearly 10 million residents, about 1.9 million have a disability. On these pages you will find the services and programs for people with disabilities offered by the State of Michigan as well as other sites of interest.

## The Michigan Commission on Disability Concerns

[www.michigan.gov/dleg](http://www.michigan.gov/dleg)

The Michigan Commission on Disability Concerns which includes the Division on Deaf and Hard of Hearing responds to and advocates on behalf of Michigan’s 1.9 million people with disabilities. This is done through information and technical assistance, disability rights training, working with Michigan Business Leaders Network on employment for people with disabilities, coordinating the Michigan Youth Leadership Forum and conducting disability awareness and sensitivity training.

## Wayne State University Developmental Disabilities Institute

<http://ddi.wayne.edu>

The Developmental Disabilities Institute (DDI) is located on the campus of Wayne State University in the heart of Detroit’s cultural center. DDI is the state of Michigan’s University Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities (UCEDD) and is part of a nationwide network dedicated to the development of inclusive communities, the enhancement of the quality of life of people with disabilities, and the enrichment of the field of disability research and service. Find other beneficial information on this website by clicking on the “Links” button on the left side of the webpage.

## Disability Network/Michigan

[www.dnmichigan.org](http://www.dnmichigan.org)

Disability Network/Michigan is a collaborative organization representing 15 Centers for Independent Living (CILs) throughout the state. The Disability Network/Michigan facilitates collective work among their members; resulting in a strong essential statewide voice striving to meet the needs of the 1.9 million people in Michigan who have a disability. Find contact information along with a website for the CIL in your area by clicking on the “Member Locator” button on the left side of the webpage.

## DiverseAbility LLC

[www.DiverseAbility.com](http://www.DiverseAbility.com)

DiverseAbility LLC focuses on career development of college students and graduates with disabilities and supports organizations to include people with disabilities in their diversity and leadership development efforts. They work with Michigan’s AmeriCorps to develop service opportunities for people with disabilities. Contact them for assistance and find other valuable resource links on their website.

# BUILDING INCLUSIVE NATIONAL SERVICE ORGANIZATIONS

Reference: CNCS Disability Handbook  
<http://www.serviceandinclusion.org/handbook/index.php>

*“Disability . . . is not simply located in the bodies of individuals. It is a socially and culturally constructed identity. Public policy, professional practices, societal arrangements, and cultural values all shape its meaning.” Longmore and Umansky, The New Disability History, New York University Press, 2001, p. 19*

**LANGUAGE MATTERS:** “people first” (“person with a disability”, “person with a visual impairment”) helps remind us and others that people with disabilities are people first, and are more than their disability.

**INCLUSIVE SERVICE ENVIRONMENT:** people with disabilities are welcomed and valued for their contributions as individuals. The presence of a disability is not seen as a detriment, but valued as part of the range of human diversity.

**LEGAL BASE:** Section 504, Vocational Rehabilitation Act; the Americans with Disability Act.

**DEFINITION:** a person who has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities, a person who has a history or record of such an impairment, or a person who is perceived by others as having such an impairment.

**MAJOR LIFE ACTIVITIES:** Functions such as caring for oneself, performing manual tasks, walking, seeing, hearing, speaking, breathing, learning, and working.

## **MAKING RECRUITMENT ACTIVITIES INCLUSIVE:**

- Include images of people with disabilities as service providers in your brochures, videos, and other materials.
- Make a clear statement of your willingness to provide accommodations.
- Insert a nondiscrimination clause in all of your written materials.
- Let the public know that you will provide materials in alternate formats.
- Double check that your application forms have no questions regarding disabilities, history of disabilities (the applicant or their family), or other medical information

**INCLUSIVE SERVICE DESCRIPTIONS:** a critical first step to creating an inclusive service environment. The key objective of a service description is to identify the essential functions of the position.

**ESSENTIAL FUNCTION:** An essential function is a task or service duty that is critical to the position. If it is not performed, the nature of the position is fundamentally changed.

**QUALIFIED INDIVIDUAL WITH A DISABILITY:** A qualified individual with a disability is able to perform the essential functions of the position with or without accommodations.