

A hand is visible on the left side of the image, holding a small, rectangular piece of light-colored wood. The background is a dark, textured surface, resembling a chalkboard. The word "disability" is written in large, colorful letters across the middle of the image. In the bottom right corner, there are two pieces of chalk, one white and one yellow.

# 2021 ANNUAL REPORT TO THE GOVERNOR

disability

COMMISSION FOR STATEWIDE CONTRACTS TO SUPPORT  
EMPLOYMENT FOR INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES



*State of Delaware  
Commission for Statewide  
Contracts to Support  
Employment for Individuals  
with Disabilities*

September 30, 2021

The Honorable John Carney  
Governor State of Delaware  
Tatnall Building  
William Penn Street, 2nd Floor  
Dover, DE 19901

Dear Governor Carney,

On behalf of the Commission for Statewide Contracts to Support Employment for Individuals with Disabilities (Commission), I am pleased to submit our annual report, as required by Title 16, Chapter 96 of the Delaware Code.

State Fiscal Year (SFY) 2021 continued to be an extremely challenging time for the employment program overseen by the Commission, especially given the global pandemic's effect on the operations of state government. I am pleased to report that the Ability Network of Delaware (A.N.D.) and its eight subcontractors were able to meet this challenge by performing janitorial services and providing temporary staffing as part of the state's essential workforce.

The janitorial services that were provided under the auspices of the Commission assisted the Division of Public Health in meeting its cleaning needs at testing sites, and the temporary employment services that were provided helped the Department of Labor meet the demand caused by record numbers of unemployment claims.

We ask that you review the Executive Summary on page 2 of the report for the key indicators of the continued success of this important disability employment program:

- The number of people with disabilities who were employed in the State Use program over the course of the fiscal year;
- The number of hours worked; and
- The cumulative and average wages earned.

In addition to the routine business of the Commission that was conducted during SFY 2021, which involved setting aside state buildings in or removing them from the Janitorial Services Contract and adjusting prices for these services when needed, the Commission also certified A.N.D. as the state's Central Nonprofit Agency for another three years.

I want to thank you for your ongoing support of the Commission's work and its efforts to provide opportunities under state contracts for people with disabilities to gain work experience and move towards greater independence. The three success stories spotlighted in the last few pages of this report say it all – these are meaningful jobs, which can provide a good start towards a career for people who may have formerly thought they'd never have a shot at the American dream.



Respectfully yours,

**Clint Walker**, Chair  
Commission for Statewide Contracts to Support Employment  
for Individuals with Disabilities

Cc: The Honorable David Sokola, Senate President Pro Tempore  
The Honorable Peter Schwartzkopf, Speaker, House of Representatives  
The Honorable Molly Magarik, Secretary, Delaware Health & Social Services  
The Honorable Sarah McBride, Chair, Senate Health, Children, & Social Services Committee  
The Honorable David Bentz, Chair, House Health & Human Development Committee



# WHO WE ARE



The Commission for Statewide Contracts to Support Employment for Individuals with Disabilities (Commission) serves to further the policy of the state concerning employment for individuals with visual impairments and other disabilities. The intent of the Commission is to provide opportunities for Delawareans with disabilities to achieve maximum personal independence through useful and productive employment in an expanded and constant market for their products and services.

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This annual report highlights the impact on the employment of people with disabilities of set-aside contracts overseen by the Commission for Statewide Contracts to Support Employment for Individuals with Disabilities. There was year-over-year decrease from SFY 2020 to SFY 2021 in the number of employees participating in the State Use Program (from **376** to **339**). However, the wages earned by these employees increased (from **\$3,826,668** to **\$4,199,920**). The pandemic likely decreased the hiring of employees working under both the janitorial and temporary services contracts. This was due to some concerns about the health and safety of people with disabilities working in close proximity with other individuals, as well as the shift away from work being done in state buildings. The average wage per hour remained relatively stable from SFY 2020 to SFY 2021 due to the increase in hours worked (from **319,400** to **348,839**). In addition to the wages listed in this report, health insurance and other benefits were provided to the employees.



**\$4,199,920**

total wages earned



**348,839**

total hours worked



**\$12.04**

average wage per hour

# CONTRACTED SERVICES



Ability Network of Delaware (A.N.D.) is the Central Nonprofit Agency that was selected by the Commission to manage two set-aside contracts: **Temporary Employment Services** and **Janitorial Services**. Under Title 16, Chapter 96 of the Delaware Code, A.N.D. manages the contracts established with the Commission and Government Support Services. A.N.D. subsequently subcontracts these services to community rehabilitation programs (CRPs).

Chimes, Conexio Care, DPI Staffing, Easterseals of Delaware and Maryland's Eastern Shore, Elwyn, Fedcap, Goodwill of Delaware and Delaware County, and ServiceSource are the CRPs who employed people with disabilities and others to perform the work that was done under the set-aside contracts in SFY 2021.

In cooperation with state agencies that refer people with disabilities for employment exploration and job placement, this program helps CRPs find work that matches the skill levels of people they support, with any training and job coaching that may be needed.



The Commission thanks these dedicated employees of Ability Network of Delaware for coordinating the work of the participating Community Rehabilitation Programs. LEFT: Natalia Magruder is A.N.D.'s Customer Service Manager. RIGHT: Matt Curcio is A.N.D.'s Contract Manager.

## TEMPORARY EMPLOYMENT SERVICES

This contract affords A.N.D. the opportunity to facilitate the placement of well-qualified candidates into temporary employment roles in **12 set-aside positions**. This offers people with disabilities a variety of work experiences in service sectors that have been identified as growth industries in the state and in the commercial labor market. The **173** individuals with disabilities who worked under this contract gained valuable work experience while performing a critical service in the clerical, food service, case management, and other jobs that are important to the state of Delaware.



**\$2,207,655**

total wages earned



**162,536**

total hours worked



**\$13.58** \*

average hourly rate

\* Wages worked due to state agency requests for extra hours during the pandemic are not included.



DPI Staffing began providing temporary employment services as an A.N.D. partner in November 2015.



Goodwill of Delaware & Delaware County has a long history of participation in A.N.D.'s contracts. As one of the first subcontractors of A.N.D., Goodwill has been a tremendous supporter of the State Use program and contributed greatly to the program's growth over the years.

# JANITORIAL SERVICES

A.N.D.'s community rehabilitation program partners provide essential cleaning services in **80** buildings located throughout the state with a total cleanable space of **2,457,147** square feet. There were **166** employees with disabilities who were employed as janitors during SFY 2021.



**\$1,992,265**

wages earned  
by people with  
disabilities



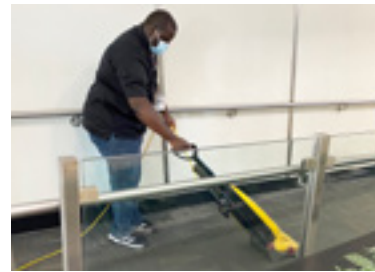
**186,303**

total labor hours  
of persons with  
disabilities



**\$10.69**

average hourly rate



LEFT TO RIGHT: Jessie Mills,  
Camille Pottinger, Jeffrey  
O'Connell, and Alex Brickle.



**Goodwill of Delaware and Delaware County** provides job training programs and employment placement services to people with disabilities, as well as those who lack education, job experience, or other challenges to finding employment. Goodwill cleans **24** buildings with a total of **1,262,135** square feet.



**Fedcap** is a large multi-state rehabilitation service provider that offers vocational training and employment supports in Delaware and other states to people who have barriers to employment. Fedcap cleans **25** buildings with a total of **554,895** square feet.



**ServiceSource** is another large, multi-state rehabilitation services provider. They clean the Carvel State Office Building in the heart of downtown Wilmington, one of the largest multi-tenant buildings in Delaware, with a total of **302,250** square feet.



**Easterseals of Delaware and Maryland's Eastern Shore** is a multi-service provider that assists individuals with significant disabilities who want to secure and/or maintain employment by providing services through individual or group supported employment. Easterseals cleans **14** buildings with **165,963** square feet.



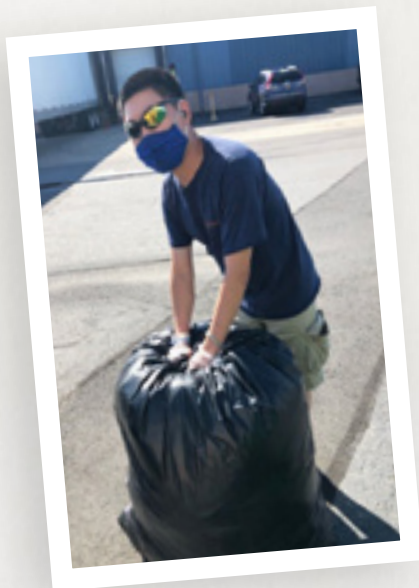
**Chimes** is a large provider of residential and vocational services for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities in Delaware and other states. Their programs provide employment and educational experiences that help people access the greater community. Chimes cleans **8** buildings with a total of **108,893** square feet.



**Conexio Care** provides a comprehensive array of health care, housing, and employment services to help individuals and families to achieve their goals and enhance Delaware communities. Conexio Care cleans **7** buildings with **59,459** square feet.



**Elwyn** is human services organization with operations in Delaware and other states serving individuals with a wide range of intellectual, physical, behavioral and developmental disabilities. The newest provider in the A.N.D. State Use program, Elwyn cleans **1** building with **3,552** square feet.



Asa Mebane is a determined and hard worker. He has been a part of the Easterseals' Group Supported Employment since the program was launched in Kent County in 2013. Asa begins his Monday through Friday shift with an infectious smile on his face before the sun comes up at 6:30 a.m. He goes on to complete his job with high integrity every single day.

When circumstances demanded an increase in cleaning and disinfecting efforts due to the pandemic, Asa was eager to help fulfill the need for keeping his community safe and healthy. Not only did he continue working on the A.N.D. janitorial services contracts, helping to ensure a safe and clean environment for state employees, he also continued to work at his second job at Royal Farms where he has been employed for the past four years.

Asa is admired by many for his upbeat personality, positivity, humility, and truthfulness.

After putting in approximately 25 hours a week between both jobs, Asa still finds time to be an active member of his community, participating in Special Olympics and Arc events when circumstances allow. His dedication, as a member of Delaware's essential workforce, helps keep our community safe and healthy. He is also friendly to everyone he meets. All in all, Asa is a remarkable person!







Paula Barnes began her journey with Goodwill Staffing Services in March 2021 when she submitted an application for an Administrative Specialist position. Her solid skills obtained in previous positions made her a perfect candidate for an open administrative position within the state of Delaware.

Although Paula was disheartened when her first interview didn't work out, she maintained a positive and determined attitude. Her second interview was with the Division of Public Health. Within an hour of the interview, the Goodwill recruiter received an email saying they wanted her to start the following week. Both Paula and the individual who hired her felt she was a great match for the job.

Paula started working at the Division of Public Health on June 1, 2021. She used Goodwill's Get a Job/Get a Ride program, which offers free public transportation for her first 30 days of work.

Paula did an exceptional job with the Division of Public Health, receiving positive reviews on her work ethic and performance.

On July 28, 2021, Goodwill received a request to increase her responsibilities with a promotion to Trainer/Educator position under Goodwill's other contract with the state. This extended her placement beyond the scheduled end date for the Administrative Specialist set-aside position, and it came with a substantial pay increase. Paula will also be considered for a merit position in the future, which would provide her with full-time employment with the Division of Public Health.





Greg Henry

During the past year I was fortunate enough to be able to work during the COVID-19 pandemic. I provided essential cleaning services to the Delaware Veteran Memorial Cemetery during this time. Through conversation with the Elwyn staff, I understand that COVID-19 has become an issue for everyone around the world.

My job is very important, because my work helps stop the spread of the infection and because by keeping the cemetery clean, families can bury their loved ones in a safe environment.

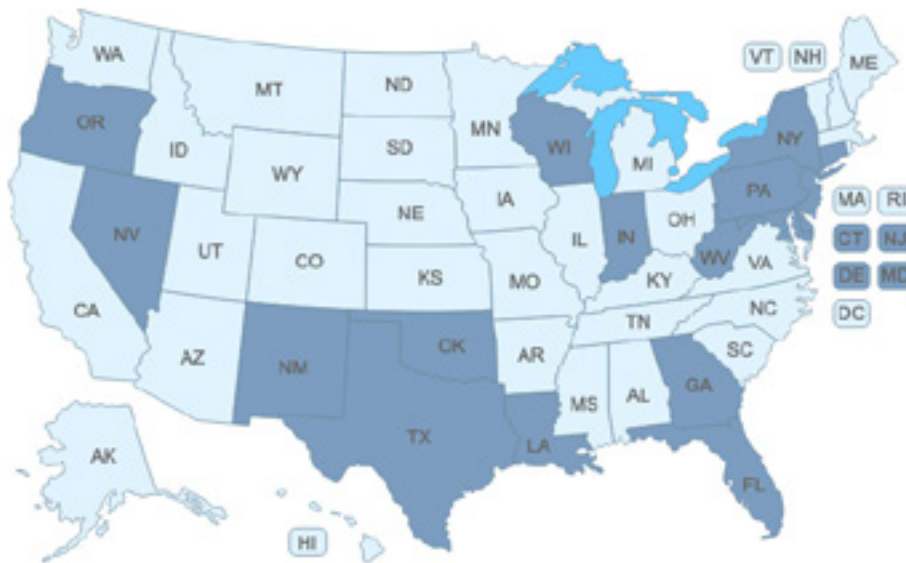
I have made great strides in my employment skills. For example, if the DART Transportation bus is running late or if the bus is stuck in a traffic jam, I have learned that I should communicate with my job coaching staff and that I should call the job site to let someone there know I will be late.

The Elwyn staff treat me with respect and I really like my job.

I also have learned to perform special tasks to make sure the site is clean while practicing safe social distancing and wearing personal protective equipment each time I work. When I am not working, I enjoy trips to the mall, watching football, and visiting my father.







# THE IMPORTANCE OF SET-ASIDE CONTRACTS IN THE EMPLOYMENT OF PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES



In 1971, Congress passed the Javits–Wagner–O'Day (JWOD) Act, which expanded the scope of the federal set-aside program, requiring certain supplies and services be purchased from nonprofit agencies employing persons who are blind or have other severe disabilities. The federal set-aside program is now called AbilityOne and is responsible for employing more than 40,000 people with disabilities nationwide. About half of the states in the country, including Delaware, passed laws like the JWOD Act, requiring that products and services be purchased from non-profit agencies employing people with disabilities.

In a report published by the [State Use Program Association](#) in January 2021, which included data from Delaware and 14

other states, 23,514 people with disabilities were employed in “State Use” programs, with total wages exceeding \$189,200,000. Seventy-nine percent of this work was performed by people with disabilities in good-paying service jobs such as assisting customers at DMVs, doing document imaging, providing janitorial services, and working in a variety of positions in temporary employment.

Despite multiple government efforts and compelling reasons for hiring people with disabilities, their rates of employment remain unacceptably low. The employment statistics issued by the U.S. Department of Labor Office of Disability Employment Policy in August 2021 showed that for people ages 16 years and over, the Labor Force Participation Rate for people with disabilities was 21.6% vs. the rate for people without disabilities, which was 67.3%. The Unemployment Rate for people with disabilities (10.9%) in August 2021 was more than twice that of people without disabilities (5.0%). These statistics demonstrate a continuing need for set-aside programs to help assure job opportunities exist for people with disabilities, along with all other programs that support their employment.

# BENEFITS OF THE SET-ASIDE CONTRACTS TO DELAWARE

In 2019, A.N.D. commissioned [an independent economic study](#) of the impact on the state economy of spending on social services and of employment under the set-aside contracts. It found that during State Fiscal Year 2019, wages earned by participants employed under the set-aside contracts, which were spent in their local communities, generated an additional \$5.1 million of economic activity in the state economy. This spending supported 35 additional jobs in local communities and generated an additional \$240,000 tax revenues to the state government (see the table below). Furthermore, the earnings of these individuals replaced some of the federal and state benefits which the participants would have otherwise received.

ECONOMIC AND FISCAL IMPACTS OF EMPLOYMENT IN A.N.D.'S SET-ASIDE CONTRACTS	
# Participants Employed in SFY 2019	689
Aggregate Wages Earned by Participants	\$4.5 million
Economic Impact from Wages Spent in Local Communities <sup>1</sup>	\$5.1 million
Additional Employment Supported	35
Additional Labor Income Earned	\$1.5 million
Additional State Tax Revenues Generated	\$240,000

SOURCE: A.N.D. (2018), IMPLAN (2019)



## TEMPORARY DAY PORTER (TDP) SERVICES

In March 2020, A.N.D. was asked to begin providing additional cleaning services in state buildings that remained open after Governor Carney declared a state of emergency due to the COVID-19 outbreak, to assure the state employees working there and visitors to the buildings that frequently touched surfaces like elevator buttons and other surfaces would be clean. Four CRPs<sup>2</sup> hired additional employees to meet this need. Since March, over 47,000 hours of TDP services have been provided. People with disabilities were responsible for providing over 36,000 hours of these TDP services.



## UNEMPLOYMENT CLAIMS PROCESSING

When it became clear that additional assistance was needed due to the record number of unemployment claims received during the first months of the pandemic, former Department of Labor Secretary Cerron Cade reached out to Goodwill to request assistance with processing them. By June of 2020, Goodwill assisted the Department by placing more than 50 individuals into these critical positions, 29 of whom were Operation Support Specialists under A.N.D.'s set-aside contract. Goodwill also assisted DOL by learning how to do the claims processing so that they would be able to train the temporary employees on their job responsibilities before they were placed.

<sup>1</sup> The four rows in this section of the table refer to the economic multiplier effect in the State's Economy (i.e., the effect of participant wages spent in local communities, which benefits Delaware citizens who are not employed under the set-aside contracts).

<sup>2</sup> The four Community Rehabilitation Programs were Easterseals, Fedcap, Goodwill, and ServiceSource.



## FUTURE DIRECTIONS FOR DELAWARE'S "STATE USE" PROGRAM

The AbilityOne Commission, which oversees the federal set-aside contracts, has a pilot project underway to explore the impact of a reduction in the direct labor hour ratios – specifically, by reducing the ratio from 75% to lower ratios at selected test sites. The Commission for Statewide Contracts to Support Employment for Individuals with Disabilities will review the evaluation of this project, and other demonstration projects conducted by AbilityOne and [SUPRA members](#), when considering recommendations for future updates to Title 16, Chapter 96 of the Delaware State Code (“Statewide Contracts to Support Employment for Individuals With Disabilities”) and its enabling regulations.

The AbilityOne pilot project was developed after the implementation of the [Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act](#) (WIOA) was signed into law by President Obama on July 22, 2014 to help job seekers — including people with disabilities — access the services they need to succeed in employment and to match employers with skilled workers. The WIOA created a committee to make recommendations on how to increase competitive integrated employment (CIE) for individuals with disabilities.

Among the recommendations of this committee were for the [AbilityOne Commission](#) to create three pilot projects to evaluate their impact on CIE: 1) to reduce the disability ratios in federal set-aside contracts, 2) “to increase the percentage of work that may be subcontracted to for-profit companies where there is an obligation for subcontractors to hire AbilityOne participants,” and 3) to award “AbilityOne contracts from federal customers to private industries who would be allowed to meet the minimum work hour requirements with CIE opportunities elsewhere in their business outside the contract.”

The Commission would also like to explore solutions to the transportation issues faced by people with disabilities who work under the two state set-aside contracts. Currently, public transportation options include regular bus service and paratransit service operated by [DART First State and the Delaware Transit Corporation](#). In some cases, the fixed route bus service does not provide employees working under the set-aside contracts with a schedule that gets them to their workplace in a reasonable amount of time or at a reasonable hour. Any delays in the service can also result in a late arrival to work. The Commission would like to understand whether other transportation options may currently exist or may be developed to better meet the needs of these employees.





July 21, 2020 (Canceled) | August 18, 2020 | September 15, 2020 | September 24, 2020  
 October 20, 2020 (Canceled) | November 17, 2020 (Canceled) | December 15, 2020  
 January 19, 2021 (Canceled) | February 16, 2021 | March 16, 2021 (Canceled)  
 April 20, 2021 (Canceled) | May 18, 2021 | June 15, 2021

## VOTING MEMBERS

<b>Mr. Clint Walker</b>	Chair, Member of the public
<b>Mr. Doyle Dobbins</b>	Vice-Chair, Member of the public
<b>Mr. Dean Stotler</b>	Director, Government Support Services
<b>Ms. Cynthia Fairwell</b>	Deputy Director, DVR representative
<b>Mr. Jamie Johnstone</b>	Deputy Principal Assistant (Revenue), Secretary of Finance representative
<b>Ms. Carvella Jackson</b>	Member of the public
<b>Ms. Cindy Farmer</b>	Member of the public

## NON-VOTING MEMBERS

<b>Ms. Deborah Talley</b>	Acting Deputy Director (DVI)
<b>Mr. Thomas Cook</b>	Executive Director of Ability Network of Delaware (A.N.D.)
	VACANCY: One representative of a CRP that employs individuals with disabilities

### SUPPORT STAFF

<b>Ms. Michele Hamilton</b>	Administrative Specialist III, Office of the DVI Director
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## COMMISSION FOR STATEWIDE CONTRACTS TO SUPPORT EMPLOYMENT FOR INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES

Biggs Building, 1901 N. Dupont Highway, New Castle, DE 19720, 302.255.9810

[Click here to see previous years of the Commission's Annual Report to the Governor.](#)