



# nTIDE Jobs Report: Trend indicates improved job growth for Americans with disabilities in 2016

Kessler Foundation and University of New Hampshire release nTIDE Report for October - Monthly Update

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EAST HANOVER, N.J., Nov. 4, 2016 (GLOBE NEWSWIRE) -- Trend continues for Americans with disabilities as economic indicators improve for seventh consecutive month, according to today's National Trends in Disability Employment – Monthly Update (nTIDE), issued by Kessler Foundation and University of New Hampshire's Institute on Disability (UNH-IOD). During the month of November, our attention turns to efforts to return veterans to the workforce. The employment programs resulting in job gains for veterans with disabilities may serve as models for the broader population of jobseekers with disabilities.

In the Bureau of Labor Statistics Jobs Report released Friday, November 4, the employment-to-population ratio for working-age people with disabilities increased from 26.5 percent in October 2015 to 27.9 percent in October 2016 (up 5.3 percent; 1.4 percentage points). For working-age people without disabilities, the employment-to-population ratio also increased from 72.5 percent in October 2015 to 73.1 percent in October 2016 (up .8 percent; 0.6 percentage points). The employment-to-population ratio, a key indicator, reflects the percentage of people who are working relative to the total population (the number of people working divided by the number of people in the total population multiplied by 100).

"2016 is shaping up to be better employment-wise for people with disabilities, compared to 2015," noted John O'Neill, PhD, director of employment and disability research at Kessler Foundation. "It's noteworthy that the gains for people with disabilities continue to outpace those of people without disabilities."

The labor force participation rate for working-age people with disabilities increased from 30.0 percent in October 2015 to 31.3 percent in October 2016 (up 4.3 percent; 1.3 percentage points). For working-age people without disabilities, the labor force participation rate also increased from 76.0 percent in October 2015 to 76.5 percent in October 2016 (up 0.7 percent; 0.5 percentage points). The labor force participation rate is the percentage of the population that's working or actively looking for work.

With both the employment-to-population ratio and the labor force participation rate going up at the same time, it suggests that more people with disabilities have jobs and more people with disabilities are engaging in the labor market, looking for work, compared to the same time last year," said Andrew Houtenville, PhD, associate professor of economics at UNH.

Unemployment is especially high among veterans with spinal cord injury, which results in significant physical disability and long-term risk for secondary medical complications. In 2005, the Veterans Health Administration in Tampa, Florida conducted a prospective, randomized study in this population comparing the impact of traditional vocational rehabilitation with a model of evidence-based supported employment – the Spinal Cord Injury Vocational Integration Program (SCI-VIP). Veterans in the SCI-VIP received individual placement and support in an integrated program of rehabilitation and vocational services. This group achieved competitive employment rates 2.5 times higher than those receiving traditional vocational services (25.9 percent v. 10.5 percent). "That such gains were achieved in this middle-aged, medically complex population is very impressive," said Dr. O'Neill, "especially given the average duration since injury was more than ten years. Such an approach to integrated vocational services may prove beneficial in other populations with significant disabilities and low rates of returning to work."

In October 2016, among workers ages 16-64, the 4,397,000 workers with disabilities represented 3.1 percent of the total 143,289,000 workers in the U.S.

The next nTIDE will be issued on Friday, December 2, 2016.

Join our nTIDE Lunch & Learn series, starting today, November 4 at 12:00pm EST. This live broadcast, hosted via Zoom Webinar, will offer attendees Q&A on the latest nTIDE findings, provide news and updates from the field, as well as host invited panelists to discuss current disability-related findings and events. Taryn Williams, Chief of Staff at the Office of Disability Employment Policy at the U.S. Department of Labor, joins Drs. Houtenville, O'Neill, and Michael Gamel-McCormick of AUCD to discuss today's findings. You can join live, or watch the recordings at: [www.ResearchonDisability.org/nTIDE](http://www.ResearchonDisability.org/nTIDE).

NOTE: The statistics in the National Trends in Disability Employment Update are based on Bureau of Labor Statistics numbers, but are NOT identical. They've been customized by the University of New Hampshire to efficiently combine the statistics for men and women of working age (16 to 64). NTIDE is funded, in part, by grants from the National Institute on Disability, Independent Living and Rehabilitation Research (NIDILRR) (90RT5022-02-00 & 90RT5017) and Kessler Foundation.

#### About Kessler Foundation

Kessler Foundation, a major nonprofit organization in the field of disability, is a global leader in rehabilitation research that seeks to improve cognition, mobility, and long-term outcomes - including employment - for people with neurological disabilities caused by diseases and injuries of the brain and spinal cord. Kessler Foundation leads the nation in funding innovative programs that expand opportunities for employment for people with disabilities. For more information, visit [www.KesslerFoundation.org](http://www.KesslerFoundation.org).

#### About the Institute on Disability at the University of New Hampshire

The Institute on Disability (IOD) at the University of New Hampshire (UNH) was established in 1987 to provide a coherent university-based focus for the improvement of knowledge, policies, and practices related to the lives of persons with disabilities and their families. For information on the NIDILRR-funded Employment Policy and Measurement Rehabilitation Research and Training Center, visit [www.ResearchonDisability.org](http://www.ResearchonDisability.org).

For more information, or to interview an expert, contact:

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A photo accompanying this release is available at: <http://www.globenewswire.com/newsroom/prs/?pkgid=41822>

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