



National Trends in Disability Employment Lunch & Learn Series

May 19, 2023

12 PM to 1 PM EST

nTIDE Deeper Dive

Employment among People with Vision Difficulties

Live webinar hosted via Zoom Webinar

[Register](#)

- 12:00 PM:** Welcome and Purpose of this Deeper Dive
- 12:05 PM:** Updated numbers pertaining to today's area of focus
- 12:20 PM:** Guest Speaker: Eric Bridges, American Foundation for the Blind
- 12:35 PM:** Open discussion and questions for all

Presenters:

Andrew Houtenville, Institute on Disability/UNH
John O'Neill Kessler Foundation
Elaine Katz, Kessler Foundation
Eric Bridges, American Foundation for the Blind
Denise Rozell, Association of University Centers on Disabilities

All webinars will be recorded and closed captioned and will be added to our website archives along with full transcripts following the live broadcast.

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Brought to you by the University of New Hampshire Institute on Disability and the Employment Policy and Measurement Rehabilitation and Research Training Center, funded by the National Institute on Disability, Independent Living, and Rehabilitation Research (NIDILRR), grant no. 90RT537.

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Presenter Bios:



Eric Bridges recently became the President and CEO of the American Foundation for the Blind (AFB). He brings over two decades of experience leading causes on the national stage that impact people experiencing vision loss. Bridges' professional career grew out of a deep passion for advocating on blindness issues. After serving as a Legis Fellow through the Brookings Institute in the U.S. House of Representatives, Bridges took the lead of advocacy and governmental affairs for the American Council of the Blind. It was then that he played an instrumental role in the passage of several landmark legislations like the 21st Century Communications & Video Accessibility Act (CVAA), which has reshaped accessibility in the digital age. He then was elevated to the Director of External Relations & Policy, where he cultivated key relationships across a diverse range of industries. During his tenure as executive director at ACB, Bridges rolled out a new strategic management operating system, allowing for significant expansion of programs and advocacy. In addition, he was able to grow the organization's revenue and pull them out of a long-standing deficit that existed prior to him taking on the role as executive director. "When it comes to significantly improving the lives of people who are blind or have low vision, each one of us has a responsibility to make sure every ounce of our energy yields the greatest momentum for full and equal inclusion in society," said Bridges. "I'm humbled to spend the next chapter in my life harnessing that energy created each day by AFB's outstanding professionals and using it to power AFB into the future."



Andrew Houtenville, PhD, is a Professor of Economics and Research Director of the Institute on Disability at the University of New Hampshire. Dr. Houtenville is extensively involved in disability statistics and employment policy research. He has published widely in the areas of disability statistics and the economic status of people with disabilities. He is the Principal Investigator on the NIDILRR-funded Employment Policy and Measurement Rehabilitation and Research Training Center. Dr. Houtenville received his Ph.D. in Economics from the University of New Hampshire in 1997 and was a National Institute on Aging Post-Doctoral Fellow at Syracuse University in 1998/1999.



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John O'Neill, PhD is the director of employment and disability research at Kessler Foundation and has over 28 years of experience in vocational rehabilitation as a rehabilitation counselor educator, disability employment researcher, and advisor to state vocational rehabilitation agencies. Dr. O'Neill has been a PI or co-PI on six NIDILRR funded, five-year research and training centers focusing on TBI and community integration, disability statistics, disability employment service system, and how individual and contextual factors relate to employment outcomes among people with disabilities.



Elaine E. Katz, MS, CCC-SLP is Senior Vice President of Grants and Communications at Kessler Foundation. Elaine Katz oversees the Foundation's comprehensive grantmaking program and its communications department. During her tenure, the Foundation has awarded more than \$49 million in grant support for national and community-based employment programs. For more than 25 years, Elaine has worked with non-profit organizations in the areas of board development, fundraising, marketing, and business development. Elaine often speaks about innovative practices for employing people with disabilities, authors/co-authors articles and papers on related topics, and is a member of several aligned organizations.



Denise M. Rozell, JD is the Director of Policy Innovation at the AUCD. Prior to joining AUCD, she spent fifteen years as Assistant Vice President for State Government Relations with Easter Seals. Denise was the primary resource to Easter Seals 75 affiliates in building capacity to increase awareness of and support for Easter Seals in state government. Prior to that, Denise was the Executive Director of the Association for Education and Rehabilitation of the Blind and Visually Impaired, an international membership organization for the professionals serving individuals who are blind or visually impaired. Denise holds a bachelor's degree in political science from Occidental College in Los Angeles and a juris doctorate from Boalt Hall School of Law at the University of California in Berkeley.

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