



# National Trends in Disability Employment Lunch & Learn Series

Season 10, Episode 9 nTIDE –

## Creating Inclusive Tech Employment Pathways

September 5, 2025 12:00 – 1:00 pm ET | Free | Online | [Register](#)

Website: [researchondisability.org/ntide](https://researchondisability.org/ntide) | Contact:  
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Welcome to the National Trends in Disability Employment (or nTIDE) Lunch & Learn series. On the first Friday of every month, corresponding with the Bureau of Labor Statistics jobs report, we will be offering a live broadcast via Zoom Webinar to share the results of the latest nTIDE findings. In addition, we will provide news and updates from the field of Disability Employment, as well as host an invited panelist who will discuss current disability-related findings and events.

### AGENDA

Time	Item
12:00 PM ET	Introduction & Welcome Andrew Houtenville, University of New Hampshire
12:10 PM	Overview of National Trends in Disability Employment (nTIDE) Jobs Report Release: Elaine Katz, Kessler Foundation The Numbers Andrew Houtenville, University of New Hampshire
12:15 PM	Announcements from the field of Disability Employment: Denise Rozell, AUCD
12:30 PM	Guest Presenter Emily Homer and Teresa Thomas, Melwood Community Services
12:45 PM	Question and Answer for Attendees

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

*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 Kessler Foundation.*



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## PRESENTERS



**Emily Homer, BS**, is the Executive Director at Melwood Community Services, part of a family of three related companies based in Maryland and the DC area. They all have a shared vision of a world where people with disabilities are fully included. Emily has over 35 years of relevant experience serving people with disabilities. Before coming to Melwood, Emily was the Senior Director of Program Services at Innovative Life Solutions, Inc. in Washington, DC. As Senior Director of Program Services she had supervisory responsibilities for over 320 employees. She was also the Executive Director at VOCA Maryland, where she led an organization of over 100 staff, focused on supporting people with disabilities. Emily has a BS in Special Education from Ball State University.



**Teresa Thomas** recently joined Melwood Community Services as Director of one of their key innovative initiatives, **abilIT**. Teresa is seasoned in both cybersecurity management and recruiting, hiring, and retaining neurodivergent and disabled talent. As Director of **abilIT**, Thomas will oversee the program and drive its national expansion, scaling it in innovative and impactful ways. The **abilIT** program addresses critical challenges: high underemployment and unemployment rates among neurodivergent and disabled adults, the growing demand for IT and tech talent, and the need for a cohesive national solution.



**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 1999 & was a National Institute on Aging Post-Doctoral Fellow at Syracuse University in 1998/1999.

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**Elaine E. Katz, MS, CCC-SLP** is Senior Vice President of Grants at Kessler Foundation. Elaine Katz oversees the Foundation's comprehensive grantmaking program. During her tenure, the Foundation has awarded more than \$50 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 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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