

Working Without Limits: An Employer Summit

Promising Practice: Walgreens

About Walgreens

Walgreens is a corporation built on the century-old traditions of fairness, trust and honesty. Since its creation in 1901, Walgreens has been dedicated to caring for the health needs of the community by offering comprehensive and specialty pharmacy services. Social responsibility is a top priority at Walgreens which has a long history of sharing its people and resources to support the communities it serves.

Walgreen's currently employs 230,000 people. As of March 31, 2009 Walgreens operated 7,233 locations in 49 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico and Guam. Of the 7,233 locations 6,736 are drugstores, 573 more than a year ago. The company also operates worksite health centers, home care facilities and specialty, institutional and mail service pharmacies. Its Take Care Health Systems subsidiary manages 713 in-store convenient care clinics and worksite health and wellness centers. Walgreens plans to open 7,000 stores by 2010.

What are Walgreens efforts to employ people with disabilities in its Distribution Centers?

In 2007, Walgreens embarked on a mission to comprise a minimum of one-third of its workforce at all new distribution centers of people with disabilities. Motivated by the desire to help the disabled population in the United States, Sr. Vice President, Randy Lewis adapted a planned capital investment to level the professional playing field for people with disabilities and increase the efficiency of the Walgreens distribution system. The plan aims to increase the number of people with disabilities within the Walgreens workforce and take the steps necessary to help those employees continue to be successful by incorporating a more universal, user-friendly design into the engineering of processes, software design, user interface and other systems.

Impact and Response

Employees throughout the Walgreens enterprise have responded to the new employment strategy with great enthusiasm. At sites where implementation has taken place there has been a significant rise in morale among the workforce as well as an increased level of loyalty among customers and shareholders. After NBC aired a segment about the program, the Walgreens customer relations department reported the largest public response in Walgreens history.

Recommendations

Walgreens offers a variety of policy, program and implementation recommendations to inquiring businesses. Whether in the spirit of their own efforts or the use of Walgreens' specific strategies and policies, the promising practices of Walgreens will guide and encourage employment of people with disabilities in communities across the country.

For more information on this promising practice, contact Deb Russell, Manager, Outreach and Employee Services at Walgreen Co. at Deb.Russell@walgreens.com or (847) 527-5385.

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