

A Place for All to Thrive: Booz Allen Receives Two Top Recognitions for Disability Inclusion Practices

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This month—which marks the 31st anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act—Booz Allen received two prestigious recognitions for its disability inclusion efforts: it was named CAREERS & the disABLED magazine’s 2021 **Private Sector Employer of the Year** and earned a 100% score on the **Disability Equality Index® (DEI)** for the **seventh year in a row**. These honors underline Booz Allen’s long-term status as a **leader in disability inclusion**.

For the Employer of the Year award, Careers & the disABLED magazine asked its readers to name employers they would most like to work for or that they believe would provide a progressive environment for people with disabilities. Booz Allen joins a list that includes JPMorgan Chase, Pfizer, State Farm, and Verizon.

“At Booz Allen, our purpose is to empower people to change the world, and that starts with providing an inclusive work environment for everyone,” said Eli Hinson, Booz Allen Lead Technologist and co-chair of the firm’s Global Disabilities Business Resource Group (BRG), in a speech accepting the Employer of the Year award on behalf of the firm.

Employers worldwide use the DEI, a joint initiative of Disability:IN and the American Association of People with Disabilities, to benchmark disability workplace inclusion in areas such as culture, leadership, education, and benefits. Following the COVID-19 pandemic, the 2021 DEI incorporates new questions about innovative technology to advance digital and remote accessibility; mental wellness benefits; services for deaf/hard-of-hearing employees; and flexible work options.

Inclusion that begins with recruiting

- Booz Allen’s focus on disability inclusion starts at the earliest stages of the hiring process and encompasses all stages of the talent pipeline. Activities include:
- A partnership with Danish social innovator Specialisterne to recruit, onboard, and hire neurodiverse talent
- A longtime partnership with Hiring Our Heroes to participate in approximately 25 job fairs and host around 30 veterans with service-connected disabilities for a 12-week internship program each year
- Participation in the Disability:IN Next Gen Leaders program to engage with students with disabilities
- An annual Disability Mentoring Day, where Booz Allen leaders meet with area high school students with disabilities to talk about job opportunities and the firm’s accommodations process

Making Booz Allen—and the world—a more accessible place

Booz Allen employees can receive support from the firm’s Disability Accommodation and 508 Leadership teams—both of which help employees connect with **adaptive and accessible technologies** and promote the adoption of international and industry accessibility standards inside and outside the firm. To support employees who might need accessible technologies, the team advises:

- Educate yourself on accessible technologies and resources – and publicize available programs and tools
- Keep in mind an employee might not immediately know what they need for accessible tools and technologies, and that needs can change over time
- Communicate—let employees know your door is always open
- Build trusted relationships through conversations of the right type at the right time
- Let the employee guide the conversation

- Simply asking “How can I help” is a good place to start

The firm’s Global Disabilities BRG can also provide support and connection, in addition to providing opportunities for leadership, development, and volunteerism through activities including:

- Hosting virtual events for employees to talk about accessible technologies, from the tools they use to ways to improve product design and testing
- Speaking about accessibility resources and best practices, as part of critical discussions with groups such as Easterseals
- Providing a platform for sharing stories and experiences, as two deaf/hard-of-hearing employees recently did about challenges during COVID-19
- Maintaining a decade-plus long relationship with the Special Olympics of Virginia (SOVA), serving as a key sponsor and most recently, supporter, participant and virtual coaching staff for the annual Dulles Plane Pull, held virtually last fall. The firm has also supported—with involvement from Booz Allen’s Brains and Hearts Campaign (BAHC)— the organization’s annual Polar Plunge, Virtual Dulles Day 5K/10K and more.

“One in 4 adults in the U.S. has a disability, visible or non-visible. Booz Allen is proud to be recognized as a place where employees with disabilities can bring their whole selves to work and thrive,” said **Brian MacCarthy**, Booz Allen Vice President and executive sponsor of the firm’s Global Disabilities Business Resource Group.

Learn more about Booz Allen’s **Global Disabilities BRG**, the firm’s **commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion**, and **careers at Booz Allen**.

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