



**UNM Staff Council Resolution #3**

**Name:** Employment of People with Disabilities

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**Adopted by Staff Council on:** May 21, 2019

1. WHEREAS approximately one hundred fifty students with disclosed disabilities graduate from UNM annually; and
2. WHEREAS many students with disabilities cannot juggle employment and school at the same time and therefore graduate with little work experience; and
3. WHEREAS Career Services staff have observed many recent graduates with disabilities failing to thrive due to poor development of skills related to interviewing, professionalism, communication, and life transitions, as well as a lack of work experience; and
4. WHEREAS there are approximately 169,000 New Mexicans of working age with disabilities, comprising about 14% of the working-age population (U.S. Census, 2017 American Community Survey) and of these over 45,000 (28%) have incomes below the poverty line; and
5. WHEREAS employment rates for non-institutionalized people with disabilities in New Mexico was most recently estimated to be 33% compared to 74% of people without disabilities (U.S. Census, 2017 American Community Survey); and
6. WHEREAS less than 2% of main campus and HSC UNM employees have disclosed having a current or past disability; and
7. WHEREAS the University lacks specific, public goals and activities regarding the hiring of people with disabilities; and
8. WHEREAS the University management training includes little specific content around supporting employees with disabilities; and
9. WHEREAS the University should embrace the hiring of its own qualified recent graduates; and
10. WHEREAS the University of New Mexico has in place benefits and policies that provide advantages to staff with disabilities, including Policy #2720 regarding equal opportunity that expressly prohibits differential treatment based on disability and includes reasonable accommodations as one of its protections; Policy #3110 regarding reasonable accommodation for employees with disabilities and a dedicated ADA Coordinator; Policy #3300 regarding the allowance of flexible schedules; free unlimited-use ABQRide Bus Passes available for staff; and Policy #3300 regarding the allowance of adjustments to work schedules facilitating the use of public transportation; and
11. WHEREAS the University of New Mexico already has the temporary Grade 9 'Professional Intern' position; and
12. WHEREAS the American Disability Act (ADA) of 1990 protects the rights of people with disabilities, including the right to equal access to employment; and

13. WHEREAS Section 503 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 requires employers such as UNM with federal contracts above \$10,000 to take affirmative steps to hire, retain, and promote qualified individuals with disabilities above those required by ADA; and
14. WHEREAS the federal Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act of 2014 seeks to increase the accessibility of people with disabilities to increase opportunities for competitive integrated employment; and sets a benchmark of 7%; and
15. WHEREAS research informs us that employers benefit from hiring people with disabilities: 1) co-workers react positively when employers provide accommodations; 2) fears about high costs are generally not founded (Schur *et al*, 2014); 3) employers benefit from motivated employees and a culture of inclusion that attracts customers; and 4) employers report experiencing fewer challenges and more support than expected when hiring people with disabilities (Institute of Corporate Productivity, 2014); and
16. WHEREAS research indicates that co-workers have a significant influence on the work success of employees with disabilities' work life (Dunstan & Maceachen, 2014); and similarly the workplace climate plays an important role in the choice of employees to disclose disabilities (Scharder, Malzer, & Bruyere, 2014); and
17. WHEREAS research indicates that organizations with internship programs, strong senior management commitment, and active recruitment practices are more likely to successfully hire people with disabilities (Work Wellness and Disability Prevention Institute); and
18. WHEREAS the 2013 UNM Diversity Council Framework for Strategic Action Plan and Recommendations includes staff in its strategies to establish UNM as a model campus for diversity, equity, and inclusion; and the Plan includes disability diversity as one measure of success;
19. THEREFORE, be it resolved that the UNM leadership:
  - a. form a task force to initiate a program creating specific temporary Grade 9 professional intern positions for qualified recent graduates with disabilities. Some components of such a program could include employment training for the graduates and/or supervisor training in Departments hosting such positions; and
  - b. initiate a hiring preference for people with disabilities such that they are guaranteed an interview, much like the UNM Veteran's hiring preference already in place; and
  - c. create a more welcoming culture for people with disabilities, in part to meet the diversity-related institutional culture, Lobo experience, and health science objectives incorporated in the 2020 UNM Vision and Strategic Plan; and
  - d. publically share disability and accommodation information regarding faculty, staff, and students similar to other aspects of diversity.

Copies of this resolution will be sent to the UNM Board of Regents; Garnett Stokes, PhD, President of the University; Paul Roth, MD, MS, Chancellor for Health Sciences and Dean of the School of Medicine; Richard Wood, PhD, Provost; Lawrence Roybal, PhD, VP Division for Equity and Inclusion; and Dorothy T. Anderson, Vice President for Human Resources.

## Citations

- Bruyère, Susanne M. (2019). Disability-Inclusive Employer Practices and Hiring of Individuals with Disabilities. *Work Wellness and Disability Prevention Institute*. Accessed 15 April, 2019. <https://www.wwdpi.org/Webinars/Pages/Webinar.aspx?wbID=230>
- Dunstand, Debra A. and Macheahen, Ellen. (2014). A Theoretical Model of Co-worker Responses to Work Reintegration Processes. *Journal of Occupational Rehabilitation* 24(2): 189-198.
- Lykins, Lorrie, ed. (2014). Employing People with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities. *Institute of Corporate Productivity (i4cp)*. Accessed 15 April, 2019. <https://www.i4cp.com/company/downloads>
- Schur, Lisa et al. (2014). Accommodating Employees With and Without Disabilities. *Human Resource Management* 53(4): 593-621.
- Von Scharder, Sara, Malzer, Valerie, and Bruyère, Susanne M. (2014). Perspectives on Disability Disclosure: The Importance of Employer Practices and Workplace Climate. *Employee Responsibilities and Rights Journal* 26(4): 237-255.