

PRESS RELEASE

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For Immediate Release

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**St. John's Community Services Recognizes  
October as National Disability Employment Awareness Month**  
*Talent Has No Boundaries: Workforce Diversity Includes Workers with Disabilities*

Washington, D.C. – In supporting October as National Disability Employment Awareness Month, St. John's Community Services (SJCS) continues its commitment to establish competitive employment opportunities for individuals with intellectual, developmental and other disabilities. For over 30 years, SJCS has been driven by the belief that gainful employment is the essential activity by which individuals with disabilities can develop new skills, gain greater economic empowerment, build relationships, and participate in communities of their choice.

In 2009, the proportion of the population employed was 19.2 percent for people with a disability and 64.5 percent among those with no disability. Nearly one-third of workers with a disability were employed part-time, compared with about one-fifth of those with no disability. Persons with a disability were over three times as likely as those with no disability to be age 65 or over. Across all age groups, persons with a disability were much less likely to be employed than those with no disability. (*Bureau of Labor Statistics, U.S. Department of Labor, News Release, August 25, 2010*)

While this data provides a context, it is the individual stories that reinforce the importance of work for all of us and support this year's theme—"Talent Has No Boundaries: Workforce Diversity Includes Workers with Disabilities." Eighteen years ago, Ellen graduated from a vocational center in Northern Virginia and sought the support of SJCS to transition from school to the workforce. With the help of SJCS-Virginia staff, Ellen was able to capitalize on her interests and newly developed skills to attain employment at Fort Belvoir. Within a year, she was promoted from Clerk to Administrative Assistant in the Protocol and Operations Office. Today, Ellen remains proud of her job while gaining respect and friendships from her professional colleagues. Her story underscores SJCS's commitment to expanding job opportunities in the community for highly motivated and competent people, who happen to live with a disability.

St. John's Community Services, founded in 1868, is a non-profit, non-denominational agency that is dedicated to *advancing community support and opportunities for people living with disabilities*. SJCS provides residential, employment, community participation and education services to over 450 children and adults with disabilities in Washington, DC, Virginia, Tennessee and Pennsylvania.

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