



Monthly Newsletter

NEWS YOU CAN COUNT ON

Ability Counts, Inc. advocates and promotes a partnership with individuals with intellectual disabilities for the purpose of assisting them to gain access to quality vocational skills, training, employment opportunities and community integration.

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Upcoming Events

- April 19th Wear Animal Print
- April 20th Spring Fling Dance
- April 26th Crazy Hair Day
- May 3rd Tacos Wars
- May 17rd PJ Day

Years of Recognition



Congratulations to Rose Luquin on her 15 year anniversary with Ability Counts

Thank you for all your hard work!

We appreciate you!



Congratulations to Andrew Kohatsu on his 5 year anniversary with Ability Counts

Thank you for all your hard work!

We appreciate you!



Congratulations to Maria Sanchez on her 5 year anniversary with Ability Counts

Thank you for all your hard work!

We appreciate you!

Thank you: Jasmin Navarrete and Karla Meneces



On behalf of our Consumers and Ability Counts, we would like to extend our sincere appreciation to Jasmin Navarrete and Karla Meneces for their prompt response during a couple of choking incidents that occurred this quarter. Their quick thinking and prompt action helped prevent the situation from escalating further and likely saved the person's life. We need more staff like them who are knowledgeable and trained in handling choking incidents, which can occur frequently in our workplace. Therefore, First Aid, CPR, and Heimlich maneuver training will be provided to all CIT/AC Instructors in the upcoming months as part of our commitment to ensuring they all have the necessary skills to respond effectively during emergency situations.

Changes around ACI



Please welcome our new Health and Safety Specialist, Mark Case, to the Ability Counts team. With 20 years of experience in healthcare and 2 years as an EMT, along with 7 years as a Direct Service Professional overseeing adults with intellectual disabilities.

Mark brings a wealth of knowledge and skills to our team. His problem-solving abilities, adaptability to new challenges, and excellent reputation make him a valuable addition.

Mark's educational background in math and science will undoubtedly bring an added benefit to the position.

We are thrilled to have Mark on board and excited to collaborate with him to ensure the well-being of our Consumers and staff.

Welcome to the team! I look forward to working with you and improving our health and safety program.

Spotlight on: Amerisource



During a visit to Amerisource, the Case Manager and the Executive Director of Ability Counts had the opportunity to get to know Angela Venaas along with her three workers Hali, Jesus, Matthew.

Angela became part of the ACI family about ten years ago. She says, “I really enjoy working with my Consumers. They make me smile all day. I especially love watching them grow, learn, and do new tasks. Most of the time they need physical assistance, time management and a little creativity to show them ways to work smarter, not harder.”

Angela and her team find immense value in their work at Amerisource. Feeling deeply fulfilled by the impact they have on the company. Because of Angela, as well as the Managers at Amerisource, our Consumers have an understanding of the steps to complete their assigned tasks with little supervision.

“My group does a lot and are great at what they do. Together we accomplish everything, from our regular tasks to extra assignments.” The Consumers showed how they perform their daily 'housekeeping' in the warehouse, emptying bins, picking up out of place items, loading totes, discarding trash, recycling and sweeping the aisles.

They are also aware of the importance of safety and diligently practice established protocols. Consumers participate in the monthly meetings and drills conducted by Angela, as well as the annual safety meeting organized by Amerisource.

The depth of Angela's dedication is praiseworthy. Ability Counts would like to express a sincere thank you for your contribution. Additionally, the Amerisource staff have demonstrated exceptional commitment to inclusivity by interacting with our consumers. Engaging with them by extending invitations to company lunches and events that gives our consumers a platform for socialization and integration. Ability Counts, Inc. wants to extend their gratitude to Amerisource for their support over the years.

Spotlight on: K&N



K&N recently did an article featuring Ability Counts and our consumers who work with them.

“Every day at our Contract Logistics site in Ontario, California, a group of special needs individuals arrive onsite, at the ready to jump in and help as a key part of Kuehne+Nagel’s workforce. In honor of International Day of Persons with Disabilities, we celebrate their contributions.

Looking back to 2019, the team had a simple but powerful idea -- invite those with special needs to join the team. To do so, the site began a partnership with a local non-profit called Ability Counts Inc that provides vocational training and employment opportunities for adults with developmental disabilities.

The special needs team started off at first with tasks like cleaning, then expanded the activities such as sorting hangers. Now, five years later, the special needs team from Ability Counts disassembles decommissioned purses and bags, removing metal items from leather bags and purses, and recycling, on behalf of Kuehne+Nagel’s high-end, luxury brand customer.

With this partnership, the team focuses on the abilities of the 12-15 special needs individuals that come to the site daily with support from an Ability Counts coach.

The site has seamlessly integrated them into the site’s workforce, breaking down barriers and fostering diversity.

“The team from Ability Counts has become an integral part of our workforce and they are included in every aspect of the facility’s activities,” said Robert Cesario, Kuehne+Nagel’s Area Contract Logistics Manager. It doesn’t matter how tough a day is; with the team from Ability Counts around, everyone feels like everything is going to be fine.”

The Contract Logistics team leadership has been so inspired, they have begun an effort to expand the program by looking across its sites in North America to find more local non-profits to partner with.

In a world where these concepts can be mere buzzwords, Kuehne+Nagel’s Ontario site serves as a model, demonstrating a genuine commitment to embracing diversity and making it an integral part of their culture.

The team realizes that the real value of the partnership with Ability Counts lies not just in the taking over of certain tasks, but in embracing the abilities of all -- making these special needs individuals from the local agency not just a workforce partner; they have become part of the Kuehne+Nagel family.”

Women's History Month



March marks Women's History Month, a celebration of women's invaluable contributions to society and culture.

Today we acknowledge the challenges that women continue to face, but also to honor their strength and determination in overcoming them.

Let's applaud the remarkable devotion and commitment of ACI women, who form the majority of our workforce and strive to make every day count for our Consumers and Ability Counts family!



Consumers of the Month



Rene Roque



Jose Espinosa



- Prentice Brown has come to work with a positive attitude is continuously improving his goals
- Joshua is very respectful and helpful. He always keeps himself busy and is a great team player.
- Michael MacCratic Always follows directions He' always ready to participate and Focuses on his training goals.
- Alejandro Espinoza: Works hard, follows instructions.
- John Chrisp is always willing to participate, is friendly towards others, and is always eager to learn new things.
- Rene Roque is always willing to participate in any vocational training, is a team player and is respectful to peers and Job Coaches.
- Gilbert Ortiz has adapted quickly to his new assignment. He has a great attitude and work quality. He's one of my top producers.
- Jose Espinoza works hard and always helps his co-workers with their assigned tasks without being told to do so.

On the field: Landscaping Crew



John Reisenauer



Gregory Pulos

While on the field this month, we had the privilege of interviewing one of our landscaping crews. It was inspiring to hear about how the program started with just two groups in 1980.

The program has now expanded to 17 groups working across various campuses including Green Acres and La Sierra University.

Our hardworking Consumers and Job Coaches drive out to these locations everyday to ensure the campuses stay clean and beautiful.

The Job Coaches play a critical role in teaching our consumers how to properly use the tools, ensuring they work safely and efficiently.

The collaboration between job coaches and consumers is truly remarkable, as they support and encourage each other to strive for excellence.

St. Patrick's Day



The Executive Director visited the CIT and AC programs on Friday, March 15th, joining in the festive atmosphere of St. Patrick's Day by wearing green and seamlessly integrating with the Consumers and Staff who were similarly dressed in green.

The Leprechaun artwork was created by our very own talented Instructor, Isaac Taylor.





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