

Iowa Summit

on Disability Employment

August 19, 2021



H A R K I N
S U M M I T

Schedule

8:00-8:30 am

Vendor Networking

8:30-9:00 am

Welcome & Opening Remarks

Joseph Jones, The Harkin Institute
Alex Watters, Morningside College
Rob Denson, DMACC
Senator Tom Harkin, The Harkin Institute
Virtual Emcee: *Maryfrances Evans, Iowa Radio Reading Information Service*

9:00-9:30 am

Opening Keynote

Claudia Gordon, T-Mobile

9:35-10:25 am

Panel One: State of the State

Hear from experts in the field that work to employ people with disabilities from different angles.

Moderator: *Mike O'Donnell CIRAS – ISU*
Julie Christensen, APSE
Josh Cobbs, Autism Speaks
Michelle Krefft, Iowa Vocational Rehabilitation
Michelle McNertney, Iowa Workforce Development
Sean Maiwald, Everyone At Work

10:30-11:20 am

Panel Two: Putting Vision Into Action

Iowa business leaders share their experiences of diversifying hiring practices.

Moderator: *Joseph Jones, The Harkin Institute*
Lainie Cooney, Hy-Vee
Wendy Coduti, Penn State
Jackie Rolow, SHAZAM
Lester Brown, Templeton Rye

11:30 am-12:00 pm

Serving of Lunch

12:00-12:45 pm

Luncheon Fire Side Chat

Senator Harkin, The Harkin Institute
Chuck Nalon, Miniut Meats

12:45-1:00 pm

Break

1:00- 2:00 pm

Breakout Sessions One

2:00-2:15 pm

Break

2:15-3:15 pm

Breakout Sessions Two

Identical to first Breakout Sessions

3:15-3:30 pm

Break

3:30-4:15 pm

Panel Three: Building Inclusion Into a Corporate Culture

Experts will share their tactics for building inclusivity in a corporate culture.

Moderator: *Ashlea Lantz, Griffin-Hammis Associates*
Brian Collins, Microsoft
Musi Lee, JPMorgan Chase &Co.

4:15- 4:30 pm

Closing Remarks

Steve Sukup, Sukup Manufacturing
Senator Harkin, The Harkin Institute

4:30- 5:00 pm

Reception

Breakout Sessions

Language

Mathew McCoullough, Washington, D.C.
Office of Disability Rights
Brian Dennis, Iowa Workforce Development

This session will help business leaders be at ease with what they know or do not know about working with people with disabilities, how to communicate with the Disability community, and appropriate language to use. It is also a goal to provide a safe space for asking questions.

Law

Cyndy Miller, Disability Rights Iowa
Emmanuel Smith, Disability Rights Iowa

This session will focus on good hiring practices, including applications and interviews. The breakout will also include HR recommendations, applicable laws, and disability policy history.

Leadership

Martha Jackson, NYC Mayor's Office for People with Disabilities (Virtual only)
Daniel Tallon, Mercy Medical Center
Kyle Roed, CPM
Jordenne Butler, Kwik Trip

It is imperative for an organization to have leadership to model the behavior and values essential to implement practices more inclusive of people with disabilities in the workplace. This session will offer the opportunity to hear from organizations that have implemented, or are enacting, inclusive change in their workforce.

Longevity

Tracy Keninger, Easter Seals of IA
Kim Karwal, Easter Seals of IA
Kevin Nordmeyer, BNIM
Brian Collins, Microsoft

The focus of this session will be to share the accommodation, technology, and design elements that employers might employ to make their work environments and jobs more inclusive.

Summit Speakers



Alex Watters



Ashlea Lantz



Brian Collins



Brian S. Dennis



Charles Nalon



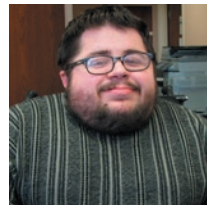
Claudia L. Gordon



Cynthia A. Miller



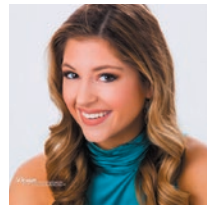
Daniel Tallon



Emmanuel Smith



Jackie Rolow



Jordanne Butler



Joseph Jones



Josh Cobbs



Julie J. Christensen



Kevin Nordmeyer



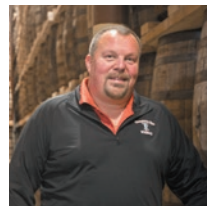
Kim Chance



Kyle Roed



Lainie Cooney



Lester Brown



Martha K. Jackson



Mathew McCollough



Mike O'Donnell



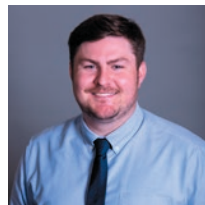
Michelle Krefft



Michelle McNertney



Musi Lee



Sean A. Maiwaldis



Steve Sukup



Senator Tom Harkin



Tracy Keninger



Wendy A. Coduti

Alex Watters

After graduating from Okoboji High School in 2004, Alex Watters was excited to begin the next stage of his life by attending Morningside University. However, in September 2004 Watters had an accident that fractured his C5 vertebrae leaving him paralyzed from the chest down.

In the fall of 2005 Alex Watters returned to Morningside University and studied Political Science before pursuing his Masters in Negotiation and Dispute Resolution from Creighton University. Following that he interned in Washington DC at the US Department of Education in conjunction with the American Association of People with Disabilities as a part of the communication and outreach team. Once returning to Iowa, he worked for Organizing for America, the reelection organization for President Barack Obama. In 2014 he ran for Woodbury County Board of Supervisors but lost. Undeterred, in 2016 there became a vacancy on the City Council and through an appointment and interview process, Alex was appointed in February 2016. Alex would then go on to win an election out right in November 2016 and has held that office since. In addition to his public service, Alex has worked at Morningside University since 2013. Throughout his tenure at Morningside he has taught an introductory course on negotiation and dispute resolution, coached a mediation team, worked as a First Year Advisor, and currently serves as the Director of Talent and Community Engagement.

Ashlea Lantz

Ashlea Lantz is the Senior Associate with Griffin-Hammis Associates. She provides training and technical assistance around Customized Employment, Self-Employment, Benefits Planning and agency capacity building. Ashlea has worked closely with state Vocational Rehabilitation systems and Community Rehabilitation Providers to create opportunities for employment through the use of Customized Employment techniques. Ashlea has supported employment professionals (who represent job candidates with disabilities) across the country, to connect with business and industry in innovative ways that meet the needs both the business and the job candidate. Ashlea is a certified benefits planner through Virginia Commonwealth University and has her master's degree in Rehabilitation Counseling from Drake University. Ashlea is also Certified Rehabilitation Counselor.

Brian Collins

Based in Redmond Washington, Brian is currently responsible for leading Microsoft's Real Estate and Strategic Planning, Change Management and Accessibility initiatives across the companies 14m square feet corporate headquarters. In addition, Brian leads the Microsoft Real Estate and Facilities Supported Employment Program.

Brian joined Microsoft in 1996 as the Facilities Manager for the Dublin campus, and in his previous roles with Microsoft he was responsible for Facility management for EMEA (Europe Middle East & Africa) where he coordinated facilities activities over 160 locations in 50+ countries, Brian also led the Global Workplace Strategies Group; defining and driving the 'Workplace Advantage (WPA)' program; including Workplace research, knowledge management, change management project consulting across Microsoft's global portfolio.

In 2019 Brian testified at the US Commission for Civil Rights in Washington DC on the abolition of subminimum wage for people with disabilities as he continues to be an ally for people with disabilities.

Brian S. Dennis

Brian S. Dennis has worked in disability and human services for the past 23 years. His career includes residential care, mental health case management, local housing services; and for the past 8+ years, education/training and employment services through Iowa's implementation of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA). Mr. Dennis has worked on both the local and state level serving individuals with significant barriers to employment. He is current the Disability Service Program Coordinator with Iowa Workforce Development's Title I program which provides intensive career and training services for Adults, Dislocated Workers and Youth. Mr. Dennis holds a Bachelor's degree in Psychology, a Master's Degree in Counseling; as well as his CRC (Certified Rehabilitation Counselor) licensure and is a certified SSDI/SSI benefits planner. He is a member of the Board of Iowa APSE, the Iowa Rehabilitation Association, the Brain Injury Alliance of Iowa and the Central Iowa Center for Independent Living. He is also an adjunct professor at Drake University and Des Moines Area Community College where he has taught courses related to Diversity, Disability Policy, Family Counseling and Psychiatric Disorders.

Charles Nalon

Charles Nalon has been with the Miniat Company for over 30 years and has held positions in Sales, Marketing and Executive Management. Chuck was born in Chicago Illinois in 1964 and moved many times around the U.S. following the career path of his father. Chuck attended 3 grade schools and 2 high schools growing up, which he credits to his sense of inclusivity.

Chuck graduated from Purdue University in 1986 with a degree in Communications. Chuck met his wife, Amy at Purdue and married in 1989. Chuck and Amy raised four children in the Western suburbs of Chicago and now live in New Buffalo Michigan.

In his free time Chuck loves music, boating, cooking and being with family and friends. Of all his contributions to the Miniat Companies, the Disability Hiring Program has been his proudest addition.

Claudia L. Gordon

Claudia is Senior Accessibility Strategy Partner with T-Mobile's Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion team. In this role she drives enterprise-wide strategies for disability inclusive culture and an accessible plus equitable work environment. She previously served as Senior Manager for Government and Compliance with T-Mobile Accessibility, a business unit that offers accessible communication products and services for customers with disabilities, including individuals who are Deaf, DeafBlind, or have a speech disability. A native of Jamaica, W.I. plus graduate of Howard University and the American University's Washington College of Law, she has held senior leadership positions with the National Council on Disability, the National Association of the Deaf Law and Advocacy Center, and the U.S. Department of Homeland Security. During the Obama Administration, Claudia served as the Chief of Staff for the U.S. Department of Labor's Office of Federal Contract Compliance Programs and the Associate Director of Public Engagement for the White House Office of Public Engagement. Claudia's advocacy for people with disabilities spans 30 years and she remains selflessly dedicated to creating a world wherein members of this community are seen, heard, valued, and included. For her unrelenting commitment to her work, Claudia has been recognized by the American Association of People with Disabilities, Google, AT&T Humanity of Connection, National Disability Mentoring Coalition, National Association of the Deaf, and The Root 100.

Cynthia A. Miller

Cynthia A. Miller, J.D., received her undergraduate degree from University of Iowa in 1997, graduating with distinction with a bachelor of arts in English. Cynthia received her doctorate of jurisprudence (J.D.) from Drake University Law School in 2000. She was admitted to the State Bar of Iowa in 2000, and is admitted to practice in the state and federal courts of Iowa and the Eighth Circuit Court of Appeals. Cynthia is the Legal Director at Disability Rights Iowa and provides legal representation and systemic advocacy to individuals with disabilities in the State of Iowa in areas including special education, community integration, guardianship, accessibility and employment law.

Daniel Tallon

Daniel Tallon currently serves as the Market Director of Human Resources for MercyOne Central Iowa. Daniel is an army veteran and experienced human resources leader who is passionate about the business of people. Through innovation, he hopes to show leaders that HR is not a compliance function nor a constraint but instead it is a powerful tool that can help organizations empower their people and accomplish their goals.

Emmanuel Smith

Emmanuel Smith attended Drake University where he completed his Bachelors in Political Science. Born with Osteogenesis Imperfecta, he has held a lifelong interest in disability and political action to improve the rights of disabled people everywhere. His work at DRI focuses on barriers to employment, disability discrimination in the workplace, and advocating for effective employment services for people with disabilities.

Jackie Rolow

Jackie Rolow is the Executive Vice President and Chief Talent Officer at SHAZAM. Jackie's energy and supportive personality will inspire you to make your workplace a destination for the best talent in your industry. She has a gift for empowering employees to find their passion and creating a stronger and more effective working environment. Jackie brings expert HR perspective on strategic change, the constantly evolving legal and regulatory issues surrounding human resources, and effective goal setting to her highly engaging presentations.

Jordenne Butler

Jordenne Butler is a 2020 honors graduate from Viterbo University, where she received degrees in Marketing and Creative Media. Upon graduation, Jordenne transitioned into her role as Campus Talent Strategist at Kwik Trip, Inc. in La Crosse, WI from an internship in recruitment. She currently works with community groups and schools in providing awareness of career opportunities that Kwik Trip has. She also participates in creating initiatives for Kwik Trip’s talent pipeline programs. Jordenne is a current board member of The Good Fight, which provides at-risk youth of the La Crosse area with academic support, social support and physical & mental fitness. When not at work Jordenne is involved in the Miss America Organization and loves spending time with family, friends, and her dog, Bentley!

Joseph Jones

Joseph Jones serves as Executive Director for The Harkin Institute for Public Policy & Citizen Engagement. Before joining The Harkin Institute in 2016, Joseph was Senior Vice President of Government Relations and Public Policy for the Greater Des Moines Partnership. Joseph has engaged in a career-long commitment to public service through volunteerism. He serves on the Board of Directors for the Mid-Iowa Health Foundation and Greater Des Moines Community Foundation. Joseph is a Trustee on the American Council of Young Political Leaders Board of Trustees and a member of the Windsor Heights, IA City Council. He is a graduate of Leadership Iowa and was named to the Business Record’s “Forty Under 40” Class of 2009. He is currently an active volunteer with Iowa Radio Reading Information Service (IRIS) and Everybody Wins! Iowa. Joseph earned his BBA in economics from Loyola University New Orleans and a Master of Public Administration degree in public policy and a Certificate in Non-Profit Leadership and Administration from Drake University. Recently, Joseph also completed his PhD at Drake, focusing his research on civic literacy and experiential learning.

Josh Cobbs

Josh Cobbs is Senior Manager of Employment Initiatives at Autism Speaks. His work encompasses managing day-to-day operations and implementing Autism Speaks’ employment ecosystem of services and supports. His past work includes serving as a vocational counselor for the State of Iowa, working with post-secondary institutions on transition and employment programs for individuals with barriers, and founding an autism center. Cobbs twice provided testimony to the Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies on access to telehealth treatments. Serving as Chairperson of the Iowa Governor’s Council on Autism for almost four years, Cobbs helped improve systems and outcomes for Iowans.

Julie J. Christensen

Julie J. Christensen, MSW, PhD, is the Executive Director and Director of Policy & Advocacy at the Association of People Supporting Employment First (APSE). She also currently serves as the Senior Disability Policy Advisor for the Harkin Institute at Drake University. Prior to joining APSE, Dr. Christensen was the Director of Iowa’s University Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities (UCEDD) at the University of Iowa, where she held a research faculty appointment in the Carver College of Medicine, Department of Psychiatry. Dr. Christensen received her undergraduate degrees in advertising and music from Syracuse University, and a Masters in Social Work from Roberts Wesleyan College and her Ph.D. in Health Practice Research at the University of Rochester.

Kevin Nordmeyer

Kevin Nordmeyer, AIA, LEED AP is an architect and a Principal at BNIM Architects in Des Moines. He was the Principal in Charge of the newly completed Tom and Ruth Harkin Center building at Drake University focused on creating a gracious environment for everyone. He has served as a pioneer in sustainable design in Iowa, leading the creation of Iowa’s first model sustainable buildings in the 1990’s and the first LEED Platinum collegiate facilities In Iowa in the late 2000’s. Prior to joining BNIM in 2011, Kevin served as Director of the Iowa Energy Center at Iowa State University (ISU) and also served as a lecturer in the College of Design focused on sustainable design. In 2008, Kevin was awarded the ISU College of Design’s Design Achievement Award in recognition for substantial contribution to the discipline of architecture. In 2017, Kevin received the AIA Iowa Medal of Honor, the highest recognition bestowed upon an individual from the AIA Iowa chapter, for his continued contributions to the profession. A current focus in his work is elevating the discussion of design for equity and inclusivity within the definition of integrated sustainable design.

Kim Chance

Kim is currently the Rural Solutions and Assistive Technology Program Team Lead at Easter Seals Iowa.. Kim supports farm family members with disabilities and provides assistive technology support statewide for children and adults with various diagnosis. Kim holds a Bachelor of Science from Iowa State University, as well as her Masters in Rehabilitation Counseling and Mental Health Counseling from Drake University. Kim is a Certified Rehabilitation Counselor (CRC) and Assistive Technology Professional (ATP).

Kyle Roed

Kyle Roed is the Vice President - Human Resources for CPM Holdings, Inc. In this role, he oversees the aspects of Human Resources for 26 domestic and international locations in 11 countries. Kyle previously held progressive HR roles for Fortune 500 organizations, including MasterBrand Cabinets, Inc. and Target Corp. You can listen to Kyle’s views as the host of the Rebel Human Resources Podcast, a podcast focused on HR Innovation. Kyle is also a board member of the Cedar Valley Society for Human Resources Management, and Co-Founder of Disrupt HR – Cedar Valley. Kyle serves his community as a board member of the Iowa State Rehabilitation Council, One Cedar Valley, and Cedar Valley Kids. Kyle received his bachelor’s in business administration from the University of Iowa Tippie College of Business, and holds the certificates of Professional in Human Resources from HRCI and Society for Human Resources Certified Professional from SHRM.

Lainie Cooney

Lainie’s Hy-Vee career began in 2000 at the Pleasant Hill, Iowa, Hy-Vee store and she was promoted to human resources manager at that location in 2005. In 2014, Lainie joined the Hy-Vee Corporate Office team as a human resources supervisor, overseeing the HR function at 36 stores. In 2015 Lainie was promoted to director, retail human resources, at Hy-Vee, her current role. Throughout her career Lainie has helped with the hiring and recruiting at many Hy-Vee locations. Lainie is passionate about helping retail locations and mentoring new human resource managers to success.

Lester Brown

Lester Brown helped build and staff the Templeton Distillery from the ground up. He ensures that the quality of ingredients and production operations used are of the best quality so that the final product is worthy to be put into a barrel and bottle.

Martha K. Jackson

Martha K. Jackson is the Assistant Commissioner, Employment and President Development, NYC Mayor’s Office for People with Disabilities (MOPD).

Martha joined MOPD in 2015 to create New York City’s first workforce program for New Yorkers with disabilities: NYC: ATWORK, a public-private partnership that is business-led/ business-driven and person centered, connecting over 400 New Yorkers with disabilities to jobs within high growth sectors in the past 3 years.

She established MOPD’s first Business Development Council, developed abilTY, the only Cisco IT Training Academy for New Yorkers with disabilities in partnership with the Institute for Career Development; was instrumental in creating EMPOWERED NYC, the first financial coaching program specifically for New Yorkers with disabilities and their families, in partnership with OFE and National Disability Institute.

Mathew McCollough

As a Filipino American with developmental disabilities, Mathew McCollough is currently the Director for the District of Columbia Office of Disability Rights (ODR), the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliance office for the District Government. Mayor Muriel Bowser appointed Mr. McCollough to ODR Director on July 10, 2017. Previously, Mr. McCollough served as the Executive Director of the District of Columbia Developmental Disabilities Council, which promotes independence and equal opportunity for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities. Prior to assuming this position, he served as the Communications Manager for the DC Office of Disability Rights. Between 2002-08, he served as a Grants Manager and Trainer with the Association of University Centers on Disabilities and for the National Service Inclusion Project—a training and technical assistance provider that advocates on the behalf of individuals with disabilities to fully participate in service and civic-minded programs within their communities.

Mike O’Donnell

Mike O’Donnell is the associate director of the Center for Industrial Research and Service (CIRAS) at Iowa State University. He leads CIRAS’ Manufacturing Extension Partnership program, focused on providing manufacturers throughout Iowa with the tools they need to thrive.

With over 20 years of experience in the manufacturing and engineering sector, Mike has a B.S. and M.S. in Mechanical Engineering from Bucknell University and an MBA from Iowa State University. Prior to joining CIRAS, Mike worked in the defense industry and small appliance industry in a variety of roles in supply chain management, quality, engineering, and program management.

At CIRAS, Mike has led efforts to establish the CIRAS Digital Manufacturing Lab powered by Alliant Energy, launch the Iowa Sustainable Business Forum, and expand CIRAS’s services in strategy and growth. In 2017, Mike was recognized with the Iowa Legends of Manufacturing “Manufacturing Champion” award. He is a founding board member and currently the chair of board for the Foundation for Manufacturing Excellence.

Michelle Krefft

Michelle Krefft, M.S., is the Director of Business Relations for Iowa Vocational Rehabilitation Services. She works closely with Iowa business partners to recognize the success that comes with a diverse workforce including persons with disabilities. Michelle works with Iowa businesses to solve hiring and retention difficulties through identifying barriers and problem solving. She is the chair of the EDRN (Employment Disability Resource Network), sits on the Diversity and Inclusion Council with the Greater Des Moines Partnership, represents IVRS on the National Employment Team and is on the Sector Partnership Leadership Council of Iowa. Michelle received her Master’s Degree in Rehabilitation Counseling from Drake University.

Michelle McNertney

Michelle McNertney serves as the Division Administrator for the Workforce Services Division at Iowa Workforce Development, where she oversees programmatic and fiscal administration for workforce programs in Iowa. As an experienced public service executive leader, Michelle has a demonstrated history of transforming teams, implementing state-of-the-art technological solutions, and optimizing efficiencies within the government administration industry. Her professional career has been dedicated to public service, serving over 16-years for the State of Iowa. Michelle holds a Bachelor of Science degree from the University of Iowa (Go Hawks!) and is a lifelong resident of Iowa.

Musi Lee

Musi Lee is the Vice President, JP Morgan Chase & Co. Office of Disability Inclusion. The Office of Disability Inclusion (ODI) develops and implements a comprehensive strategy to provide programs, products and services to meet the unique needs of the disability community in the areas of employment, acclimation and development, and small businesses in hiring a diverse slate, through various programs within the firm, including the JPMC Autism At Work program.

As the Head of Autism At Work in Latin and North America Regions, Musi is responsible for creating and executing strategies to develop a talent pipeline for the individuals on the Autism Spectrum.

Her additional responsibilities include establishing partnerships with regional autism organizations, academia, research institutes and vendor relations; creating and driving efficient processes and help augment internal recruiting and on-boarding processes. She also ensures best practices for training of managers, recruiters, and colleagues to support employees on the Autism spectrum.

Musi has been with the bank for 16 years and is a member of various Business Resource Groups at the firm, whose mission revolve around Employee Accessibility, Disability Inclusion and Diversity Equity Inclusion (DEI) efforts.

Raising a son with a hidden disability during these unprecedented times of the pandemic and endemic of the social injustice has certainly amplified her “why” in her profession, where her purpose and passion intersects. She is currently a Ph.D student pursuing a doctorate in Public Policy, concentrating in Social Policy.

Musi is based in Dallas, Texas and is heavily involved in Mental Health & STEM volunteer projects in her community. She is intentional in driving inclusion globally.

Sean A. Maiwald

Sean A. Maiwald is a deaf policy wonk, community organizer and advocate, entrepreneur, and writer. He is most passionate about deaf rights, ending language deprivation, and equity for disabled people.

Currently, Sean is a professor at Gallaudet University teaching entrepreneurship and policy. In his free time, he works as a founder both of the Virtual ASL Academy, providing education resouces to deaf children, and at Everyone at Work, a nonprofit that connects disabled people with employment. Sean is also the presidentof the District of Columbia Association for the Deaf.

Sean has authored and lobbied for legislation to advance disability rights in DC, establishing the Office for the Deaf, DeafBlind, and Hard of Hearing which will empower one of the largest deaf populations in employment, education, and language access.

Sean has also established several businesses, with one of them obtaining an investment from a social venture fund. His latest business venture is the Virtual ASL Academy, where he connects ASL fluent tutors with deaf students as well as provides a number of resources.

For fun, Sean enjoys hiking, scuba diving, snowboarding, craft beers, and traveling.

Steve Sukup

President and CEO

Steve currently serves as President and CEO of Sukup Manufacturing Co., a role he has held since February 1, 2020, and oversees all day-to-day company operations. A graduate of Iowa State University with a bachelor’s degree in Industrial Engineering, Steve has also received the Process in Engineering Award from ISU and served as president of the Iowa State University Research Foundation. He currently serves on the State of Iowa Judicial Nominating Commission. In addition, Steve served in the Iowa legislature from 1994 to 2002, including Speaker Pro Tem. Steve and his wife Vicki reside in Clear Lake, Iowa, and have three children, Nick, Crystal, and Emily, and five grandchildren. His son Nick, daughter Emily, and sons-in-law Andy and Matt hold roles at the company.

Senator Tom Harkin

Tom Harkin was first elected to Congress in 1974. He served 10 years in the U.S. House before challenging and beating an incumbent U.S. Senator in 1984. Iowans returned him to the Senate four times. Senator Harkin made history by becoming the first Iowa Democrat to win a consecutive second term in the U.S. Senate and to date is the longest serving Democrat in Congress in Iowa History. As a young senator, he was tapped by Senator Ted Kennedy to craft legislation to protect the civil rights of millions of Americans with physical and mental disabilities. He knew firsthand about the challenges facing people with disabilities from his late brother, Frank, who was deaf from an early age. What emerged from that process would later become his signature legislative achievement – The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). To preserve the intent of the ADA after several court rulings weakened its standards, Senator Harkin and Senator Orrin Hatch (R-UT) introduced the ADA Amendments bill to ensure continuing protections from discrimination for all Americans with disabilities. It was signed into law in September 2008. For his ongoing and dedicated work to people with disabilities around the world, Senator Harkin was twice nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize.

Senator Harkin retired from the U.S. Senate in 2015. Senator Harkin and Ruth Harkin established The Harkin Institute for Public Policy & Citizen Engagement at Drake University in Des Moines, Iowa, to inform citizens, inspire creative cooperation, and catalyze change on issues of social justice, fairness, and opportunity. The Institute works to improve the lives of all Americans by giving policymakers access to high quality information and engaging citizens as active participants in the formation of public policy.

Tracy Keninger

Tracy is currently a director at Easterseals Iowa where she is involved with overseeing services for farm family members with disabilities, veterans, and various statewide assistive technology services for children and adults with disabilities and persons with special needs. Keninger holds a Bachelor of Science degree in Education from Minnesota State University as well as her Masters Degree in Rehabilitation Counseling from Minnesota State University. Additionally, she is a certified Assistive Technology Practioner through the RESNA. Easter Seals Iowa serves more than 2,500 families each year reaching all Iowa’s 99 counties.

Wendy A. Coduti

Wendy A. Coduti, PhD, CRC, is an Associate Professor of Education in the Rehabilitation and Human Services and Counselor Education program at Penn State University- University Park campus. She has 20 years of experience working in the field of vocational rehabilitation as a practitioner, educator, and researcher. Dr. Coduti previously worked in the field of human resources and as a private vocational rehabilitation counselor. She is co-founder/co-director of the WorkLink PSU program at University Park, which is a two year certificate program for students with intellectual disabilities. Dr. Coduti’s research interests include postsecondary students with disabilities, disability management and mental health in the workplace.

Summit Sponsors:

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Planning Committee

- Josh Cobbs, Autism Speaks
- Michelle Krefft, Iowa Vocational Rehabilitation Services (IVRS)
- Katie Stull, Collins Aerospace
- Alex Watters, Morningside College
- Jennifer Schwartz, Principal
- Mary Bontrager
- Ashlea Lantz, Griffin-Hammis Associates
- Jackie Rolow, SHAZAM
- Brian Dennis, Iowa Workforce Development (IWD)
- SueAnn Morrow
- Kathryn Hansen, The Harkin Institute
- Emily Schettler, The Harkin Institute
- Joseph Jones, The Harkin Institute