OFFICE OF THE UNDER SECRETARY OF DEFENSE
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ACQUISITION,
TECHNOLOGY
AND LOGISTICS

SEP 17 2010

MEMORANDUM FOR COMMANDER, UNITED STATES SPECIAL OPERATIONS COMMAND (ATTN: ACQUISITION EXECUTIVE)
COMMANDER, UNITED STATES TRANSPORTATION COMMAND (ATTN: ACQUISITION EXECUTIVE)
DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF THE ARMY (PROCUREMENT)
DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF THE NAVY (ACQUISITION & LOGISTICS MANAGEMENT)
DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF THE AIR FORCE (CONTRACTING)
DIRECTORS OF THE DEFENSE AGENCIES
DIRECTORS OF THE DOD FIELD ACTIVITIES

SUBJECT: National Disability Employment Awareness Month

In 1945, Congress responded to President Harry S. Truman's deep concern about wounded warriors returning from World War II by passing a resolution that established the first week in October as an observance of the need to employ service-disabled veterans and other individuals with disabilities. In 1988, Congress designated October as National Disability Employment Awareness Month (NDEAM). This year's NDEAM theme, "Talent Has No Boundaries: Workforce Diversity INCLUDES Workers with Disabilities," and President Barack Obama's Plan to Empower People with Disabilities emphasizes that men and women with disabilities represent an inclusive and skilled workforce.

NDEAM is an excellent opportunity to recognize and celebrate the AbilityOne Program, which is the largest single source of employment for people who are blind or have other significant disabilities in the United States. Today, more than 2,000 wounded military veterans are part of the AbilityOne Program's 45,000-strong workforce that is employed at more than 600 community-based non-profit agencies across the country. The Department of Defense continues to be the largest customer of the AbilityOne Program, procuring more than $1.64 billion of goods and services in FY 2009. AbilityOne employees proudly support the DoD mission in many ways to include making pens used Department-wide, producing combat uniforms worn by our Armed Forces serving in Iraq and Afghanistan, providing award-winning food services at base installation dining facilities, and more recently by performing contract closeout services.

In recognition of NDEAM, my office and the Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition, Technology and Logistics is hosting the fourth annual DoD AbilityOne Program Recognition Ceremony. I ask that each of you take the time to recognize individuals and teams in your respective organizations who work to increase business with the AbilityOne Program. Your efforts to develop awareness and educate our workforce about the AbilityOne Program will help ensure that the Department of Defense continues to make an important contribution to

creating job opportunities for people with disabilities, who include many of our heroic Warfighters. It is through our collective leadership and commitment that we will successfully increase our business with the AbilityOne Program.

My office and the Committee for Purchase From People Who Are Blind or Severely Disabled, the federal agency which administers the AbilityOne Program, have an established commitment recognition program to express appreciation to individuals in the acquisition workforce who demonstrate concrete support of the AbilityOne Program. This support may be a contract award to an AbilityOne nonprofit agency or an effort to increase contracting opportunities for AbilityOne. The nomination process for the recognition of commitment in action is located on the Defense Procurement and Acquisition Policy website at http://www.acq.osd.mil/dpap/cpic/cp/abilityone_program.html and the Committee for Purchase Website at http://www.abilityone.gov. I am proud of the accomplishments and contributions made by individuals in the DoD contracting community who have made a positive difference in the lives of people with disabilities by signing a contract with a participating AbilityOne nonprofit agency. NDEAM is the ideal time to recognize these individuals by submitting a nomination of commitment in action.

My staff point of contact for AbilityOne procurement policy is Ms. Susan Pollack, OUSD(AT&L)/DPAP, 703-697-8336 or susan.pollack@osd.mil.

Shay D. Assad
Director, Defense Procurement
and Acquisition Policy