

Dakota County For All:

Recommendations for Disability Inclusion

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Prepared for The Dakota County Communities for All Initiative

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1. Context and Background

Dakota County hired Dendros to conduct primary and secondary research to support the Communities for All initiative during winter and spring 2025.

The report centers on the question: **How do we meaningfully engage Dakota County businesses in becoming more accessible to employees and customers while demonstrating the value of better serving people with disabilities?** To address this, the analysis identifies key barriers to inclusion—such as accessibility challenges, employment disparities, and community support gaps—and proposes actionable strategies to foster meaningful engagement with businesses, improve disability inclusion, and create mutual benefits for employers and the disability community.

This focus on the experiences of people with disabilities as employees and customers of Dakota County businesses purposefully chosen for two main reasons. First, no matter our disability status, we all interact with business and commerce daily. From buying groceries to choosing a phone / internet service provider, our lives are directly impacted by our experiences as both employees and customers. Second, there is a substantial gap in employment between disabled and non-disabled people. In 2024, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics reported that, only 22.7% of people with disabilities were employed, compared to 65.5% of people without disabilities and that “the unemployment rate [7.5%] for people with a disability was about twice that of those with no disability” ([U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2024](#)).

About the Authors

This report was prepared by Denise Pike with support from Angela Carter, Ph.D of Dendros Group, LLC. Pike and Dr. Carter led the research, analysis, and report process with support from DeAnn Prouty and Megan Zeilinger of the Communities for All initiative. Both Pike and Dr. Carter are disabled consultants specializing in disability justice, Pike brings a background in equitable community engagement, while Dr. Carter’s expertise in critical disability studies ensures the findings and recommendations of this report are grounded in both lived experience and evidence-based practices.

This report reflects input from Dakota County residents, business owners, and disability advocates who participated in interviews and community conversations.

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2. Executive Summary

Five key themes emerged across multiple data sources, including community conversations, surveys, existing reports, and interviews with stakeholders in Dakota County.

- Employment disparities, including stigma and lack of employer education
- Accessibility barriers in public spaces, digital platforms, and services
- Workforce shortages in direct support professions
- Transportation limitations that restrict community participation
- Social isolation and the need for stronger peer networks

By synthesizing these findings, this report offers practical recommendations for Dakota County to advance disability inclusion, streamline services, and foster a more equitable and accessible community.

- 1. Strengthen Business Inclusion and Employment Opportunities for People with Disabilities**
- 2. Fund Community Organizing and Affinity Groups to Strengthen Inclusion**
- 3. Increase Awareness through Public Outreach**

The following sections provide a detailed summary of findings, analysis, and recommendations to guide the Communities for All initiative in creating meaningful change.

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3. Summary of Findings

Overview of Research Sources

In the writing of this report the following local and state reports were reviewed:

- Small Community Conversations by ACET
- Olmstead Quality of Life Survey by Improve Group
- Disability Inclusion and Choice Survey from the Olmstead Implementation Office
- ASD Grant Report
- Accessibility Board Workshop slides

Recent years have seen significant growth in attention to disability inclusion within the business sector, both nationally and globally. The following open access sources were reviewed and cited where relevant to inform and contextualize this project's findings and recommendations:

- MN Council on Disability - Employment Fact Sheet
- Career Force - Disability Inclusive Business Partner Training
- DisabilityIN - Research Reports
- WeForum - Why Businesses must take action on disability inclusion by 2025
- Diversity.Com - Disability Inclusion in the Workplace: Moving Beyond Compliance
- EARN - Resource Center

3. Summary of Findings (cont.)

2025 Interviews with Dakota County Stakeholders

The following is a summary of key findings for interviews with Dakota County stakeholders conducted by Angela Carter PhD and Denise Pike in early 2025. Interviewees included members of the Dakota County Disability Advisory Council, business owners, people with disabilities, parents of children and adults with disabilities, community and employment service professionals, and local county and city employees. 11 interviewees identified as disabled and 8 identified as non-disabled or did not disclose their disability status.

Interview findings are summarized into four categories:

A. Business and Employment

B. Community Support and Connection

C. Support Services Access

D. Dakota County as a Role Model

3. Summary of Findings (cont.)

A. Interview Findings: **Business and Employment**

People with disabilities expressed many difficulties in finding suitable employment, especially if they have significant experience or advanced degrees. They desire better job placement and support services that can help them find roles commensurate with their qualifications.

This includes a need for more opportunities for advancement and promotion. People employed to help individuals with disabilities find jobs may not have experience assisting those with degrees or veterans, or in finding opportunities beyond entry-level roles or full-time positions. This indicates a gap in the current employment support services available to people with higher qualifications or specific career goals.

Employers expressed a desire to support individuals with disabilities and recognize them as a potentially untapped workforce who are often dedicated employees. Employers were often hiring employees with disabilities before formalizing a program and without the support of local resources.

Employers suggested that inclusive hiring could be encouraged through education on potential benefits like improved safety and reduced costs. They also found that hiring people with disabilities positively impacted existing employees, leading to professional growth, better communication, and improved morale.

National data from the Bureau for Labor Statistics reports that unemployment rates are higher for PwD across all educational levels. ¹

Unemployment for PwDs is higher among those who are Black or African American (10.7%) and Hispanic or Latino (9.4%) than among people who are White (6.9%) and Asian (6.3%). ²

Employees with disabilities are underrepresented in leadership roles, often due to bias in promotion processes. ³

¹ U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (2024)

² U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (2024)

³ McKinsey & Company (2023)

3. Summary of Findings (cont.)

A. Interview Findings: **Business and Employment (cont.)**

Businesses face numerous barriers in becoming more inclusive:

Fear and Stigma

Employers often lack knowledge about disability inclusion and fear making mistakes. Misconceptions, ableist thinking, and stigma about disability are significant barriers to competitive, integrated employment. There is a fear of increased insurance liability costs.

Paperwork and Complex Processes

Difficulty with paperwork is a barrier. The process to obtain and use job services can be complicated and inefficient. Getting reasonable accommodations at work can be a confusing and time-consuming process.

Lack of Awareness and Education

Employers often don't understand the laws around accommodations or know what resources are available. Many need more training about disability and integration. Employers need to be more educated about disabilities and why people might need certain accommodations.

Cost and Resources

Financial constraints and lack of incentives for businesses to prioritize accessibility were identified as major barriers. Employers often believe it will be expensive to hire people with disabilities, which is a barrier to finding competitive, integrated employment.⁴

⁴ Job Accommodations Network (JAN): It is a widespread misconception that it is more expensive to hire disabled people. According to research from the Job Accommodations Network, 46% of employers interviewed indicated that the accommodations they implemented cost them nothing, 45% reported a one-time cost with the median amount of \$500.

3. Summary of Findings (cont.)

B. Interview Findings: **Community Support and Connection**

Improving community connection and support for people with disabilities is a key area of concern and a significant goal for fostering integration and inclusion. The findings highlight the desire for greater involvement in community life and the challenges that prevent this.

Desire for Inclusion and Participation: People with disabilities want to be included in the community. This includes being able to participate in community and recreational activities.

Addressing Isolation: Isolation is a concern. There is a lack of space or opportunity for disabled people to find each other and a desire for more prominent cross-disability support groups.

Importance of Transportation: Transportation is considered critical for participation in the community. While some families have transit options, many others lack them. There's a need for more buses and transportation options overall. Positive steps mentioned include Metro Transit and Metro Mobility discussing needs with residents and a field trip demonstrating bus use

Enhancing Support Systems: Caregivers struggle to arrange one-on-one meetups due to liability and scheduling issues. Pre-scheduled group activities were suggested to ease coordination challenges. Caregivers need support networks, potentially through community organizations.

Community Mutual Aid: Some participants feel that community mutual aid, where community members assist and support each other, can be an effective alternative or supplement to complex state services. Many interviewees support the view that the state should support giving more money directly to disability community members to provide support for one another..

Culturally Tailored Support: Having culturally responsive offices or centers where disabled people can meet others who share their culture and language was suggested.

3. Summary of Findings (cont.)

C. Interview Findings: **Support Services Access**

Stakeholder interviews reveal systemic barriers in disability support services that create unnecessary hardships for individuals and families. A fragmented system, bureaucratic complexities, and lack of transparency force many to navigate a maze of agencies, paperwork, and eligibility hurdles—what participants describe as a "disability tax." Caregiver shortages and gaps during transitions further compound these challenges, leaving critical needs unmet. These findings highlight urgent opportunities to streamline access, improve transparency, and strengthen support networks for those relying on these vital services.

Difficulty Navigating the System: The overall system of formal supports is complex, and many people struggle to navigate it. Services and supports are often siloed across different agencies (state, county, providers), making navigation challenging. Participants desire simplification and enhanced access across agencies and programs.

Need for Navigation Assistance: There is a clear need for help navigating these systems. Designated contacts for seeking county or state services were found essential for many families, especially those less familiar with disability services or facing additional barriers. This kind of navigation assistance is recommended for ongoing staff positions.

Improving Information Access: Accessing information about available services is difficult, with people not always being directed quickly. It is hard to know what services are out there. Relationship building and transparency is critical when sharing information, particularly in some communities where there is a lack of trust in available resources. There is a need for a centralized application system and simplified guidance for accessing funding and waivers.

Improving Transparency Around Benefits: Participants expressed a desire to access detailed information about their benefits and how eligibility is determined. Specifically, they suggested making all CADI waiver information available online, which would streamline the process and save time for both clients and case workers. This change would enhance clarity, reduce delays, and empower individuals to better understand and manage their benefits.

3. Summary of Findings (cont.)

C. Interview Findings: **Support Services Access (cont.)**

Bureaucratic Burden and "Disability Tax": The process of managing one's disabled life and accessing services creates a "bureaucratic burden" and is part of the "disability tax" – the extra costs in time, emotion, and money people with disabilities expend just to live day-to-day. This can be overwhelming and energy-limiting.

Repetitive and Unnecessary Paperwork/Assessments: Having to fill out the same paperwork year after year, even for lifelong disabilities with no changes, is a barrier. Reassessments are sometimes seen as not genuinely person-centered and a battle to constantly re-prove need.

Limited Choice in Providers: The shortage of direct care professionals significantly impacts people with disabilities, in some cases preventing them from living independently because they cannot find staff to fill approved hours. There is difficulty finding trained and competent PCAs and caregivers. Participants desire more money invested in caregiver wages and believe DSPs need higher wages and better working conditions to address shortages and high turnover.

Challenges During Transitions: People experience difficulty navigating changes in services when moving between counties, sometimes losing services entirely due to a lack of clear transition support.

3. Summary of Findings (cont.)

D. Interview Findings: **Dakota County as a Role Model**

Dakota County has made notable progress in accessibility through initiatives like Communities for All and the Disability Advisory Council (DAC) efforts that stakeholders recognize and appreciate. However, interviews reveal gaps between the county's external reputation and its internal practices. While programs in parks, libraries, and grants receive praise, challenges like inconsistent ADA compliance, reliance on overburdened staff, and a lack of diverse representation in disability initiatives suggest room for growth. Stakeholders emphasize that Dakota County is well-positioned to lead by example—not just in hiring and accommodations, but in fostering a workplace and service culture that truly embodies equity and inclusion.

Existing Foundations and Positive Perceptions

Dakota County has initiatives like the Disability Advisory Council (DAC) and employee resource groups that are seen as distinguishing factors in its accessibility efforts. Some community members perceive the county as "great and supportive" particularly regarding providing grants to community organizations. Efforts by Dakota County Parks and Libraries in accessibility and inclusion were also noted positively.

3. Summary of Findings (cont.)

D. Interview Findings: **Dakota County as a Role Model (cont.)**

Areas for Internal Improvement:

- Multiple interviewees suggested that Dakota County is in a good starting place to better model inclusive and accessible practices as an employer and service provider. This involves not just hiring more people with disabilities at various levels and compensation but also creating a truly inclusive work culture that goes beyond basic accommodations.
- Despite external efforts, there are challenges within Dakota County itself that hinder its ability to model best practices. These include limited resources, lack of awareness, internal resistance to change, policy changes applied without an equity or access lens, rigid cultural norms, and insufficient support for its own employees with disabilities.
- Internal ADA compliance is seen as lacking, and important work like IDEA is reliant on passionate individuals which can lead to burnout.
- **The Dakota County Disability Advisory Council (DAC):**
 - DAC was described as potentially "half hearted" and its application process inaccessible, indicating the county's own initiatives may not fully embody inclusive practices.
 - Some interviewees and focus group participants felt that the DAC should better represent intersectionality in disability. Suggestions included ensuring committee members reflect more racial and ethnic diversity, varying education levels, and lived experiences such as housing instability and police violence.

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As equally important as understanding the barriers, is understanding a pathway toward meaningful inclusion. The following recommendations offer actionable strategies to foster meaningful engagement with businesses, improve disability inclusion, and create mutual benefits for employers and the disability community. These recommendations aim to advance disability inclusion and foster a more equitable and accessible community in Dakota County.

They are organized into three key areas:

A. Strengthen Business Inclusion and Employment Opportunities for People with Disabilities

B. Fund Community Organizing and Affinity Groups to Strengthen Inclusion

C. Increase Awareness through Public Outreach

4. Recommendations (cont.)

A. Recommendation: Strengthen Business Inclusion and Employment Opportunities for People with Disabilities

Dakota County should take a proactive role in supporting disability-inclusive hiring practices by providing education, resources, and incentives for local businesses. This includes targeted outreach to employers, streamlined hiring processes, and dedicated support for high-skilled job seekers with disabilities.

Implementation Suggestion: Expand Employer Education & Outreach

- ◆ **Host regular inclusion workshops** (in partnership with disability advocacy groups) to address employer fears about accommodations,^{5 6 7} legal requirements, and the benefits^{8 9 10 11} of hiring and accommodating people with disabilities.
- ◆ **Establish a Business Partnership Network:** Offer free disability inclusion training for employers, with incentives (e.g., a “Disability-Inclusive Business” certification or recognition program). Provide toolkits on simple, low-cost accessibility improvements (e.g., flexible work policies, digital access).

5 Olmstead Leadership Forum Meeting (2024): Employers often believe hiring people with disabilities will be expensive.

6 Olmstead Leadership Forum Meeting (2024): A significant barrier to integration, choice, and inclusion identified across the sources is ableism, stigma, and a lack of awareness about disability.

7 Inclusion & Choice Survey Report (2024): Survey respondents stated that employers need more education about disabilities and integration.

8 Job Accommodation Network: Employers that make accommodations find that the benefits outweigh the cost. Benefits include increases in employee retention, company morale, and company productivity.

9 Dakota County Interviews (2025): Employers were often hiring employees with disabilities before formalizing a program and without the support or knowledge of local resources. Employers suggested that inclusive hiring could be encouraged through education on potential benefits like improved safety and reduced costs.

10 American Institutes for Research (2018): People with disabilities are as much of an untapped consumer market as we are an underutilized labor force, with working aged PwD having a discretionary income of \$21 Billion.

11 Accenture Report - The Disability Inclusion Imperative (2023): “Companies that have led on key disability inclusion criteria [between 2018 and 2023] have realized: 1.6x more revenue, 2.6x more net income, and 2x more economic profit than other participants in Disability:IN’s annual benchmark survey”.

4. Recommendations (cont.)

A. Recommendation: Strengthen Business Inclusion and Employment Opportunities for People with Disabilities (cont.)

Implementation Suggestion: Reduce Barriers for Employers

- ◆ Offer financial incentives (e.g., small grants, tax credits) to businesses that demonstrate inclusive hiring practices.¹²
- ◆ Simplify paperwork for hiring and accommodations (e.g., a one-stop portal for tax incentives, job coaching requests, and ADA compliance guides).
- ◆ Develop accessible training materials (e.g., plain-language guides, videos with captions/ASL) to help businesses implement inclusive practices.

¹² Inclusion & Choice Survey Report (2024): Respondents wished for more incentives, such as tax credits and partnerships, to encourage businesses to hire people with disabilities

4. Recommendations (cont.)

A. Recommendation: Strengthen Business Inclusion and Employment Opportunities for People with Disabilities (cont.)

Implementation Suggestion: Improve Employment Support for Skilled Workers with Disabilities

- ◆ Provide specialized **career coaching** ¹³ (e.g., resume help, negotiation skills, LinkedIn optimization) including support with being or becoming self-employed ¹⁴ or support for those with advanced degrees. ¹⁵
- ◆ Provide support for returning to **school** and/or attaining **certifications**. ¹⁶
- ◆ Organize **networking events** connecting disabled professionals with employers in their field.
- ◆ Support **mentorship programs** pairing experienced workers with disabilities with those entering the workforce.

¹³ OIO's Inclusion & Choice Survey Report (2024): Respondents emphasized the importance of tailored support services for people with disabilities seeking employment and highlighted the need for more resources in areas such as career exploration, job evaluations, job finding and placement, supported employment, and job training.

¹⁴ U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (2024): national data indicates self employment as a pathway to meaningful engagement in the labor force for disabled people.

¹⁵ Dakota County Interviews (2025): Many interviewees with degrees or extensive experience struggled to find roles matching their qualifications, indicating a need for better career support. These findings primarily reflect challenges faced by college-educated interviewees—a population often erased in disability employment narratives. We emphasize that workers deemed 'unskilled' face parallel crises (e.g., subminimum wages), as all disabled jobseekers navigate systems not designed for their success.

¹⁶ U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (2024): While only 23% of PwD have completed a bachelors degree or higher (compared to 42% of non-disabled people), those who do are more likely to be employed than disabled people without college degrees.

4. Recommendations (cont.)

A. Recommendation: Strengthen Business Inclusion and Employment Opportunities for People with Disabilities (cont.)

Implementation Suggestion: Serve as a Model for Inclusion

- ◆ Encourage disability awareness & inclusion training for all staff, especially leadership.
- ◆ Expand Employee Resource Groups (ERGs) for staff with disabilities and allies, with budget and decision-making influence.¹⁷
- ◆ Implement structured mentorship & career advancement programs for employees with disabilities.

¹⁷ Gutterman, Alan. (2025). "Companies that had an executive sponsor and budget for their ERGs or affinity groups performed significantly better on hiring and promoting persons with disabilities, self-ID rates and advancement of persons with disabilities to management roles"

4. Recommendations (cont.)

B. Recommendation: Fund Community Organizing and Affinity Groups to Strengthen Inclusion

Dakota County should allocate dedicated funding for community organizing initiatives¹⁸ including events, peer support networks, and affinity groups, that foster inclusion, mutual aid, and social connection for people with disabilities.^{19 20 21 22}

Flexible funding could empower communities to self-organize (e.g., disability-led social clubs, cultural affinity groups). Peer support²³ models could streamline access to resources.

By investing²⁴ in community-driven solutions, Dakota County can advance inclusion while creating a more sustainable support ecosystem.²⁵

18 ACET Small Community Conversations Draft Report (2024): “People with disabilities want to be included in an impactful way in the Olmstead planning process and other state systems”. It is crucial to amplify their involvement in decision-making processes and use co-creation models where they are explicitly involved in developing strategies and solutions.

19 OIO’s Inclusion & Choice Survey Report (2024): Isolation is a significant concern for people with disabilities, and they desire more social connection and community engagement. More opportunities for PwD to be out in the community would improve their quality of life.

20 Olmstead Leadership Forum Meeting (2024): Some PwD desire to have support groups and peer-to-peer services.

21 Dakota County Interviews (2025): Interviews revealed a demand for more prominent cross-disability support groups, more social events for connection, and culturally tailored spaces.

22 Improve Group’s Quality of Life Survey Report (2024): The average number of close relationships reported has decreased since 2017 and the percentage of participants listing no close relationships has increased.

23 Improve Group’s Quality of Life Survey Report (2024): Peer-led activities can create organic connections, reducing reliance on formal systems.

24 Dakota and Ramsey County Autism Grant Report (2018): Lessons learned from the ASD Grant recommend that county and state agencies dedicate more funds to building capacity within organizations that serve the general public to better include people with disabilities in their programs and services. This community-centered approach is seen as necessary to realize Minnesota’s Olmstead vision.

25 ACET Small Community Conversations Draft Report (2024): Participants suggested that community mutual aid is an alternative to state services. Due to mistrust of government services, mutual aid is more trusted. Funds going directly to the community can have more impact.

4. Recommendations (cont.)

B. Recommendation: Fund Community Organizing and Affinity Groups to Strengthen Inclusion (cont.)

This could mirror successful models like the Minneapolis' [Neighborhood Revitalization Program \(NRP\)](#) established in 1990. The NRP empowers community members to create Neighborhood Action Plans that describe a vision for the future and develop a strategic plan to implement that vision. Residents formed qualifying neighborhood groups that allowed them to receive funding from the city of Minneapolis. The program was successful and garnered national attention and awards. ²⁶

²⁶ Nrp.org

4. Recommendations (cont.)

B. Recommendation: Fund Community Organizing and Affinity Groups to Strengthen Inclusion (cont.)

◆ *Implementation Suggestion: Adapt NRP Model to Disability Inclusion in Dakota County*

Implementation	NRP Model	Application
Empowerment Through Localized Decision-Making	Residents formed 501(c)(3) neighborhood organizations and developed Neighborhood Action Plans (NAPs) based on grassroots input.	Create and fund disability-led organizations in neighborhoods that develop their own Community Access & Inclusion Plans (CAIPs). These groups would identify local barriers, design community support initiatives (e.g., peer networks, accessible public spaces, wellness events), and directly oversee project implementation.
Dedicated, Equitable Funding Using a Progressive Formula	Funded by tax increment financing (TIF), NRP distributed \$400 million over 20 years, with progressive allocation based on neighborhood need.	Provide baseline funding to qualifying community groups, with extra support for areas with higher rates of disability and socioeconomic disadvantage.
Community Capacity Building and Civic Skill Development	Residents learned budgeting, negotiation, and planning skills through NAP development and implementation.	Offer technical assistance to disability-led groups, including training in advocacy, grants management, city policy, and accessibility standards. This builds civic capacity and prepares leaders for broader public roles. Prioritize Grassroots Leadership: Partner with disability-led organizations to distribute additional microgrants, ensuring activities reflect community needs (e.g., social hours, skill-sharing workshops).
Long-Term, Iterative, and Locally Rooted	Programs evolved over decades with repeated funding cycles, allowing for iterative learning and sustained engagement.	Fund disability groups on multi-year cycles with evaluation and renewal phases, allowing for long-term impact, adaptive change, and deepened community ties.
Reducing Social Isolation Through Mutual Aid and Belonging	Residents reported stronger neighborhood cohesion and civic spirit.	Disability community groups could run peer support networks, arts programs, and shared caregiving initiatives that directly address isolation and foster reciprocal relationships and community belonging.

4. Recommendations (cont.)

C. Recommendation: Increase Awareness through Public Outreach

Dakota County should lead efforts to increase public understanding ²⁷ of disability inclusion by hosting ²⁸ educational events, facilitating community dialogues, and acting as a liaison to foster empathy and connection. These initiatives will help reduce stigma, improve accessibility, and create a more inclusive community.

◆ **Implementation Suggestion: Establish Navigation Assistance for People with Disabilities**

Invest in ongoing staff positions to provide navigation assistance for people with disabilities and their families to help them understand and access systems. This could involve a "one-stop resource" staff person and volunteers. (Similar to South St. Paul Community Liaison position)

Help connect people to services like respite care and PCAs, and organize information about county programs and services.

Support the creation of a centralized system and simplify guidance for navigating complex government services and accessing funding and waivers.

²⁷ OIO's Inclusion & Choice Survey Report (2024): Ableism, stigma, and lack of awareness are significant barriers to integration, choice, and inclusion for people with disabilities. More than 100 comments in the survey reflected the need for education and awareness about disability and ableism.

²⁸ ACET Small Community Conversations Draft Report (2024): Participants explicitly stated, "We don't have somewhere to meet. We don't have somewhere we can share our thoughts, ideas, and challenges.", highlighting a direct need for gathering spaces and opportunities for dialogue.

4. Recommendations (cont.)

C. Recommendation: Increase Awareness through Public Outreach (cont.)

◆ ***Implementation Suggestion: Create “Meet Your Neighbor” Community Events***

Facilitate casual, accessible social gatherings (e.g., coffee chats, panel discussions, art exhibits) where disabled and non-disabled residents can interact in a relaxed setting. Ensure events include accommodations (ASL interpreters, sensory-friendly spaces, captioning).

◆ ***Implementation Suggestion: Speaker Series***

Sponsor a speaker series featuring disabled advocates from diverse backgrounds. The series can be tailored for service providers, businesses, nonprofits, and the public. Sessions can address inclusion strategies, accessibility best practices, and disability justice. The program could educate stakeholders and promote actionable change across sectors. Potential topics include workplace equity, intersectional advocacy, and inclusive design.

◆ ***Implementation Suggestion: Host Regular Disability Awareness Workshops***

Organize sessions at libraries, community centers, and businesses covering topics like disability etiquette, accessibility best practices, and inclusive communication. Partner with local disability advocates, self-advocates, and organizations (e.g., Arc Minnesota, MN Council on Disability) to lead discussions.

29 OIO’s Inclusion & Choice Survey Report (2024): Respondents wished to see media campaigns as well as education in classrooms and places of employment about disability and ableism.

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