



Real Estate and Facilities  
**Supported Employment Program**

# Program Toolkit



Pictured above: Scott Labard (Compass Group)

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# Introduction

The Microsoft Real Estate and Facilities Supported Employment Program Toolkit is an open document and is freely available to other organizations looking to launch a similar program. We urge you to use this to develop employment opportunities for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities in your community.

*For more information contact:*

[supportedemployment@microsoft.com](mailto:supportedemployment@microsoft.com)

# What is Supported Employment?



Pictured above: Julia Flores (Compass Group)

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*"As a father of two kids with autism, I just wanted to say thank you! Thank you so much for working to help people like my kids achieve richer, more fulfilling lives. You have no idea how much it means to me, and I just wanted to reach out and let you know. So, again, thank you!"*

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Adam Hoffman, Principal Software Engineering Lead Microsoft

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## Our mission

Microsoft's mission is to empower every person and every organization on the planet to achieve more.



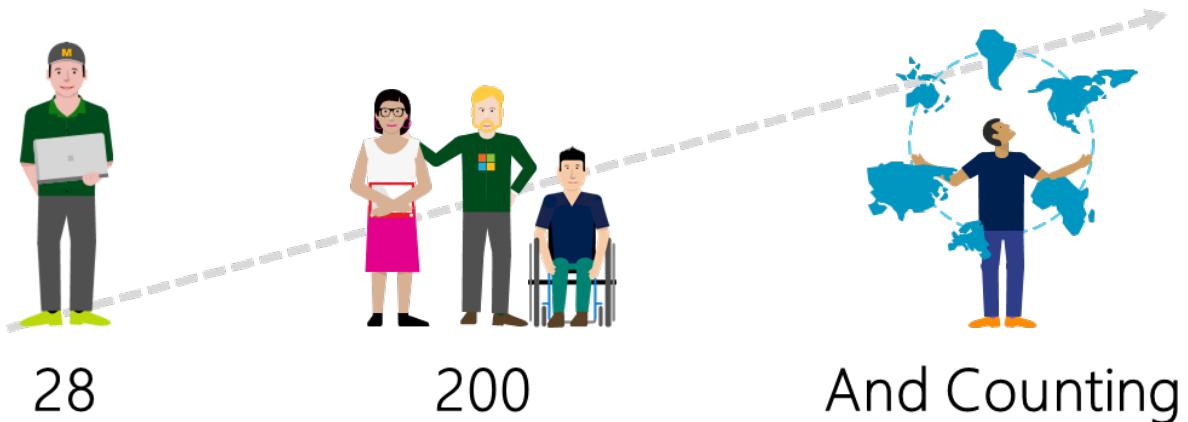
Pictured above: Supported Employment Summer BBQ

We are committed to enabling employment diversity and inclusion at our company, and beyond.

We partner with vendors and local employment agencies to make a substantial difference in the lives of people with intellectual and developmental disabilities who might otherwise be overlooked in the job market.

## Where it all began

In 2013, Microsoft RE&F created the Supported Employment program to provide people with disabilities the opportunity to obtain and maintain employment. Through a partnership with vendors and employment agencies the original 28 Supported Employees of the program has now grown to 200 over the last four years.



Microsoft has an enduring commitment to fulfilling public responsibilities and serving the needs of people in communities worldwide, including those with disabilities. This commitment extends beyond products and services; it includes community and civic involvement to better the lives of under-served populations.

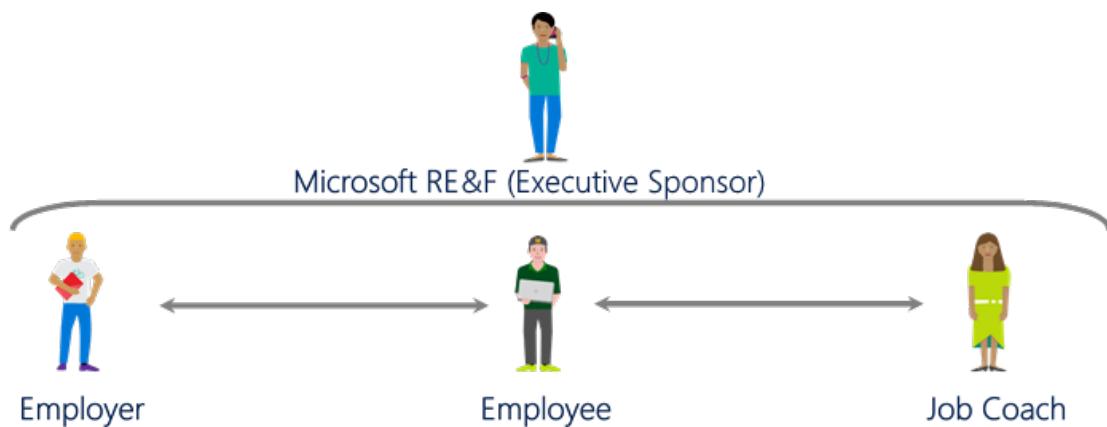
We believe that with the right training and support, each individual can become a successful, productive worker with a job that matches their interests and abilities. Fulfilling employment promotes independence and helps individuals become fully integrated members of their communities.

## Supported Employment program approach

The traditional approach: Coaching agencies traditionally approach employers, build individual relationships, and spend time demonstrating to owners or managers the benefits of hiring employees with disabilities. This process sometimes leads to one or a couple of job opportunities and takes considerable time and resources.



The Microsoft RE&F Supported Employment approach: Microsoft turned the traditional model on its head by working with our vendor employers to identify jobs and tasks that need to be filled. We then ask our coaching agency partners to help fill those jobs and to provide coaching to the employees. We believe this model gives the coaching agencies an opportunity to focus on coaching, an area where they have expertise and can have the biggest impact on employee retention.

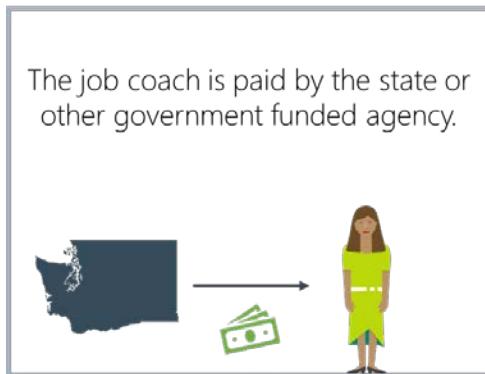


## Funding and services explained

Supported Employment services can be used by individuals with intellectual, developmental, behavioral health disabilities, people with brain injuries, and other physical and sensory disabilities. Funding and eligibility for Supported Employment services varies based on location.

Individuals with disabilities may receive federal SSI and Medicaid benefits, which have income thresholds. This means that if a person earns more than the allowed threshold, they will lose their benefits. While full-time employment may be challenging, part-time employment may be a better fit for individuals who wish to preserve federal benefits.

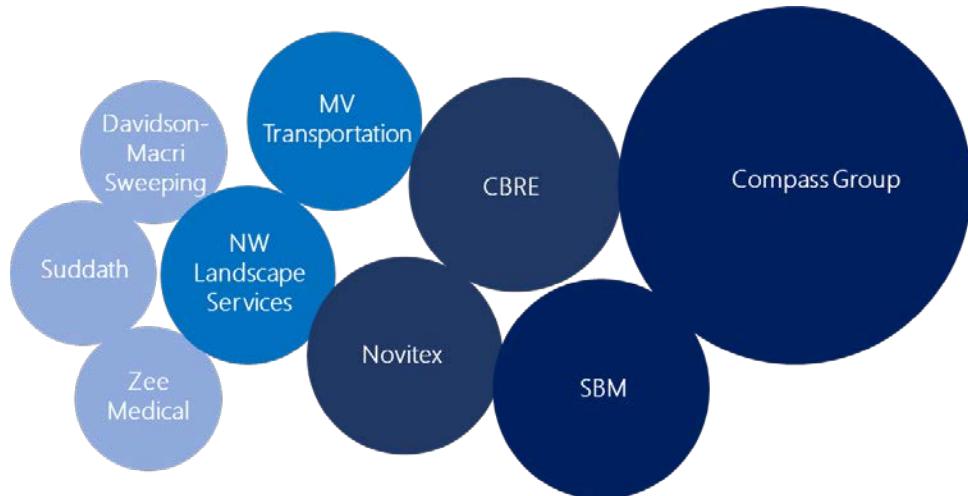
In Washington State, the job candidate often with the help of involved family or guardian select a coaching agency to engage. The coaching agency assigns a job coach, who gets to know the candidate's abilities, skills, and interests. They work together to build an individualized plan to find and retain a job.



## We didn't do it alone

Thanks to our dedicated partners we have been able to grow quickly. As the number and involvement of our vendor and coaching partners has grown, so has the number of Supported Employees. (The size of each circle represents the relative size of each organization)

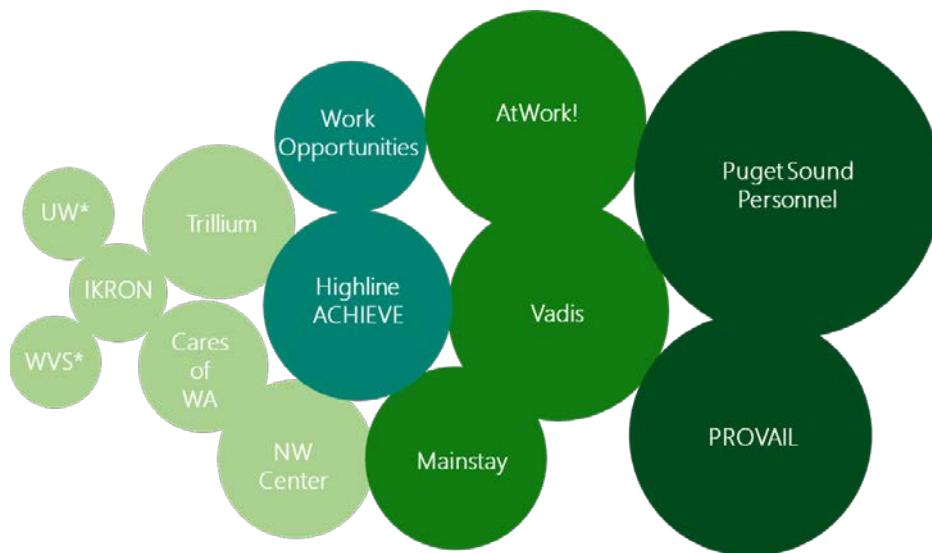
### Vendor partners



### Coaching partners

\*University of Washington Employment Program

\*Washington Vocational Services



## Program foundations

These are the values, goals, and program components of the Microsoft RE&F Supported Employment Program. You can use these guidelines to ensure a consistent program approach.

### Goals:

	Provide jobs in the community, working alongside <u>peers</u> who do not have disabilities.		Pay <u>fair market rate or higher</u> commensurate with the job.
	Generate employment at an organization in the <u>community</u> .		Provide ongoing <u>support</u> for the life of the job, based upon the individual employee's needs.

### Components:

<b>Program Leadership</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Identify executive sponsorship.</li><li>End to end leadership &amp; expertise.</li><li>Tools to support a world class program.</li></ul>	<b>Job Development</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Identify prospective workplaces &amp; tasks for employment.</li><li>Define job description, structure, and hours.</li></ul>
<b>Assisted Sourcing</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Distribute job descriptions through various channels.</li><li>Review job applicant information.</li><li>Identify potential candidates.</li></ul>	<b>Operational Sustainability</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Ensure quality support, coaching, and mentoring.</li><li>Program consistency and reliability.</li><li>Library of resources.</li></ul>

### Values:

<b>Quality Driven</b>  Ensure <u>quality</u> drives the program success.	<b>Scalable</b>  Ensure program structure supports <u>growth</u> .	<b>Sustainable</b>  Dependent on process not people; <u>culture driven</u> .
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## **Who uses Supported Employment services?**

In Washington State, the funders of Supported Employment include the Department of Social and Health Services, Developmental Disabilities Administration, and Division of Vocational Rehabilitation. These state law definitions helped us focus our scope.

### **What is a Developmental Disability?<sup>1</sup>**

A disability attributable to:

- Intellectual Disability
- Cerebral Palsy
- Epilepsy
- Autism\*
- Neurological or other condition similar to intellectual disability which:
  - Originated before the individual attained age eighteen.
  - Continued or can be expected to continue indefinitely.
  - Results in substantial limitations to an individual's intellectual and adaptive functioning.

\*Microsoft has developed an innovative Autism Hiring Program<sup>2</sup>

### **Who is eligible for Division of Vocational Rehabilitation services?<sup>3</sup>**

A person is eligible for DVR services if they:

- Have a physical, mental or sensory impairment that results in a substantial impediment to employment.
- Require vocational rehabilitation services to get or keep a job.
- Are capable of working as a result of receiving VR services.

# Why create a Supported Employment program?



Pictured above: Gunnar Magley (Compass Group)

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*"The Microsoft program grows supported employment in exponential ways. This initiative brings other corporations along by exposing those companies to an experience which can be expanded to their diversity hiring initiatives across their other locations."*

*Susan Harrell, Assistant Executive Director Washington Initiative for Supported Employment (WISE)*

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## Program benefits

Supported Employment is a win-win proposition for employers and employees. It meets the employer's needs for labor while creating job opportunities for an underemployed segment of the community.



**Increase community engagement:** 87% of customers prefer businesses that hire employees with disabilities <sup>4</sup>

**Decrease turnover rate:** 8% for employees with disabilities vs. 45% for other employees <sup>4</sup>

**Untapped segment of labor force:** 21% employment of people with a disability vs. 68.3% employment of people without a disability <sup>5</sup>

**Return on investment:** Employers see a \$28.69 return on each dollar invested in accommodations <sup>4</sup>

## Hiring workers with disabilities: myths and facts

Below are common misconceptions of hiring an individual with a disability.

*Myth: hiring workers with disabilities increases insurance compensation rates.*

**Fact:** Insurance rates are based solely on the relative hazards of the operation and the organization's accident experience.<sup>6</sup>

*Myth: the ADA forces employers to hire unqualified individuals with disabilities.*

**Fact:** Unqualified candidates are not protected under the ADA. An individual must first meet all requirements for a job and be able to perform its essential functions.<sup>7</sup>

*Myth: employees with disabilities are more often absent.*

**Fact:** Studies show that employees with disabilities are not absent more than employees without disabilities.<sup>6</sup>

*Myth: under the ADA, an employer cannot fire an employee with a disability.*

**Fact:** Employers can terminate employees with disabilities under 3 conditions: 1) Termination is unrelated to the disability. 2) Employee does not meet legitimate requirements for the job. 3) Due to the disability, the employee poses a direct threat to the health and safety in the workplace.<sup>7</sup>

*Myth: providing accommodations for people with disabilities is expensive.*

**Fact:** Of the majority of people with disabilities who do need some sort of special equipment or accommodation, 57% of these cost less than \$500, many costing the employer nothing at all.<sup>7</sup>

# How to create a Supported Employment program



Pictured above: Holly Murahashi (Compass Group)

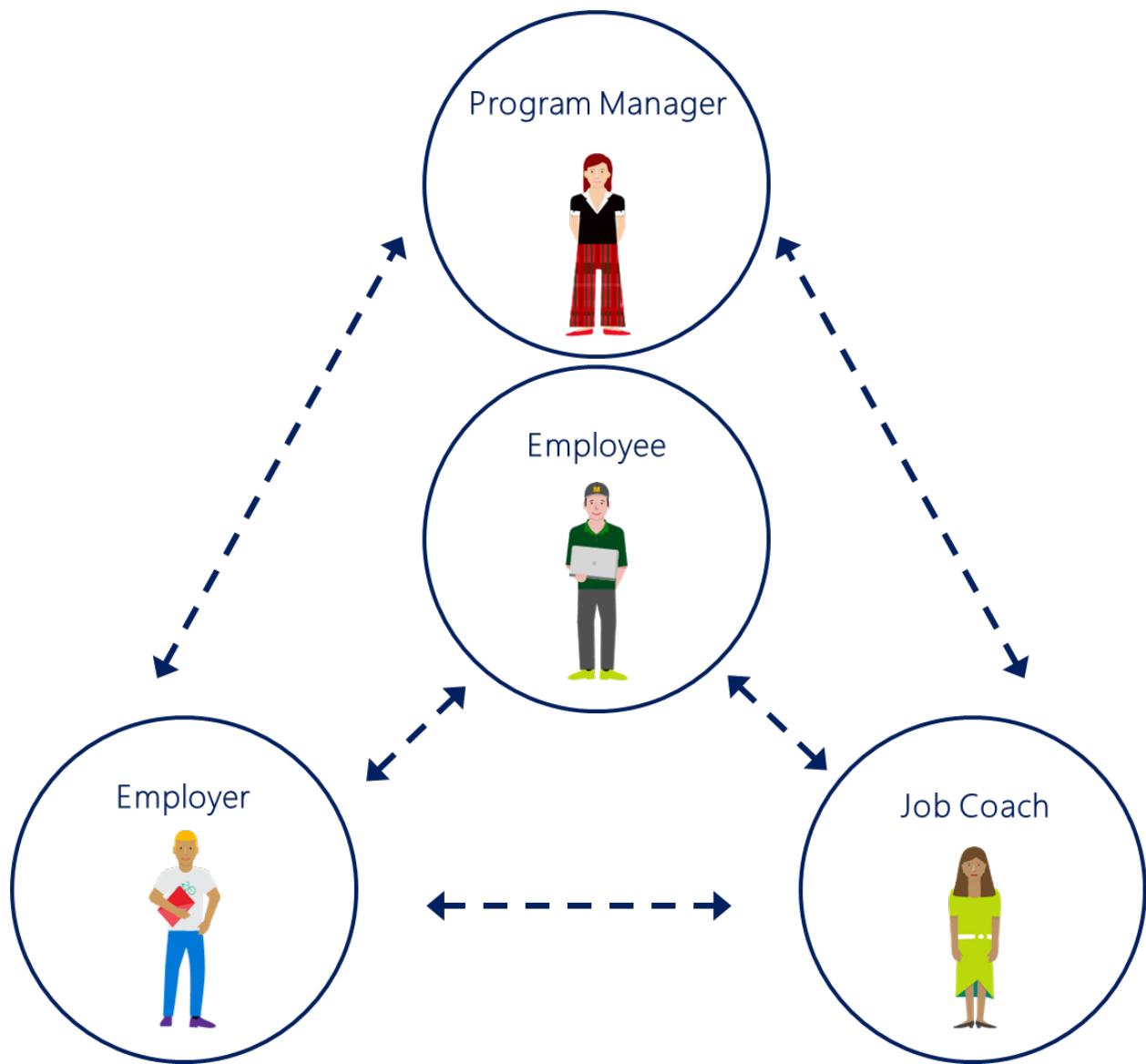
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*There are some smooth moves happening on campus. To find them, all you need to do is look for Holly attending to her job as a food service ambassador for Compass. You'll know her by her warm smile and positively rocking dance moves as she busses dishes and keeps the cafeteria as sparkling as her personality. With training from her job coach, Holly has simply blossomed. In fact, her employment success has her dancing for joy!*

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## Partner relationships

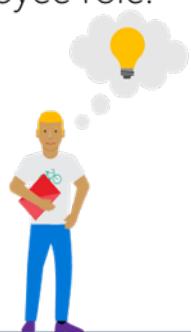
The key partners in the Supported Employment Program are the Supported Employee, the employer, the job coach, and the program manager. This graphic illustrates the relationships between the partners.



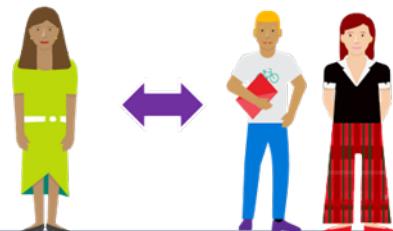
## Program overview

The roles and relationships between the Supported Employee, employer, job coach, and the program manager are described below.

The employer identifies opportunity for a Supported Employee role.



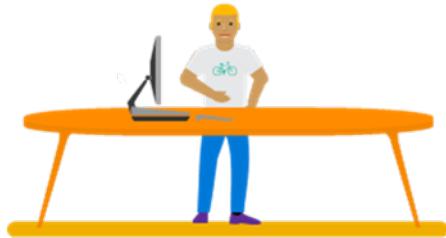
The program manager or coach collaborates with employer to create a job description.



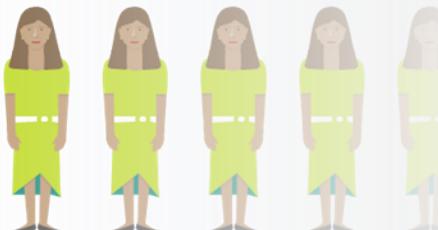
The job coach identifies candidates and supports the candidate through the interview process.



The employer schedules and conducts interviews, selects candidates, and hires and supervises Supported Employee.



The job coach provides customized job supports to the employee, which can remain or phase out over time.



The program manager supports job development, education, program reporting, and process consistency.



## Building a strong foundation: executive sponsorship

An executive level sponsor will keep the program appropriately resourced, growing, and maintain focus on the program. A Supported Employment program needs a level of authority in order to execute effectively.

### How to Identify potential sponsors

To find the right executive sponsor in your organization, try reaching out to:



Executives who are already involved in disability hiring initiatives.

Executives with a personal connection with disability; individuals who experience disability, parents of or family members of people with disabilities.

Executives involved in internal networking groups with a passion for diversity, disability or accessibility.

### How to measure success

It is important to determine goals that fit your organization. Here are some metrics you may use to gauge the success of your program.

# of Supported Employees hired 	# of employer and coaching agency partners 	Parts of your organization involved 	# of job types developed 
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## Building a strong foundation: provider alignment

Aligning your partners to the same shared goals is critical to your program's success. Sharing materials such as these videos will help you illustrate how hiring individuals with intellectual/developmental disabilities will bring value to the workplace, foster community involvement, and align to your partners' business goals.



**118 stories and counting:** Watch as four employees, along with their families and job coaches share their stories and the impact this partnership has had on their lives. [Link to 118 stories and counting video](#)



**Amanda finds her dream job:** Amanda has wanted to work in an office for as long as she can remember. Now she is finally getting that chance. Watch as Amanda shares her story. [Link to Amanda finds her dream job video](#)



**Jonel is a leader:** Jonel never thought of himself as a leader and then one day he was given the opportunity to supervise a team. Watch as Jonel rises to the challenge. [Link to Jonel is a leader video](#)

[Learn more about Supported Employment here](#)

## Building a strong foundation: enduring commitment

Use these approaches to continue to nurture each individual throughout their employment:



Pictured above: Bheki Madlala, Frank Hartmanns, Adam Curry, Alex Navarro (Novitex)

**Inclusion:** Historically, people with disabilities have been served in separate and exclusive settings such as institutions, with no access to public schools or integrated employment opportunities. By contrast, Supported Employment develops paid, competitive employment opportunities for individuals with disabilities in integrated work settings.

**Natural supports:** The employer, supervisor, and coworkers are encouraged to develop natural supports for the Supported Employee, just as would usually happen naturally for most employees. Job satisfaction grows as an employee feels included in company activities.

**Celebration:** Recognizing your company's efforts around Supported Employment will help build morale and buy-in to the program. Acknowledgements and awards from local organizations will boost morale and keep the program energized.

**Career progression:** A Supported Employee's first job may not be the only job they will ever want to perform. Movement, challenge and variety can be very important to staying invested in a job. Ask yourself, in what ways can Supported Employees be encouraged to grow as employees? Can tasks be added to a job to increase variety? What educational and training opportunities exist or can be developed that a Supported Employee could participate in?

## Supported employee roles

The Microsoft Real Estate and Facilities program provides over 30 types of roles including:

Dining Room Attendant

Receptionist

Warehouse Assistant

Space Reset Specialist

Event Services Greeter

Human Resources

Transportation Ambassador

Landscaping Specialist

PC Recycling Assistant

Janitorial Services



Top left: Eric Angelo (SBM), Top right: Desi Reeser (Compass Group), Bottom left: Lajwanti Bharani (Compass Group), Bottom right: Tim Dobner (Novitex)

## Engaging community partners

To engage the natural partners to your program in your area, reach out to the organizations listed below. They share a vision of increased employment opportunities for people with disabilities and they can help you learn how Supported Employment works in your community.

**Government offices:** Staff at government offices can describe how Supported Employment services are funded and provided in your area. They are subject matter experts on income and benefits. Look for social and health services for people with disabilities and vocational rehabilitation services.

**Supported Employment coaching providers:** Coaching agencies serve clients with disabilities who are actively searching for jobs in integrated, community-based companies. Search for the nonprofit and private coaching providers serving your community.

**Advocates serving individuals with disabilities:** Advocacy organizations provide information and referral around disability rights issues. They can be valuable subject matter experts on how the social services system works and who is providing coaching services. They may also provide training and current thinking about disability-related employment rights and services. In the United States, search for:

- Arc. State and local Arc chapters: [Link to find a local Arc Chapter](#)
- Protection and Advocacy System
- State protection and advocacy systems: [Link to State Protection and Advocacy Systems](#)

**Strengthening existing partnerships:** Seek out opportunities to attend and share information at your local disability-related meetings, conferences and events. Examples include:

- Conferences on assistive technology or community living
- Governor's Committee on Disability
- People First Conventions
- Self-Advocacy Conferences
- Special Olympics events
- School-to-work transition fairs

## Develop and support employers

Provide information and support to partners to successfully integrate individuals with disabilities into the workplace. Training, 1:1 consultation, assistance with job development, and problem-solving are effective tools for aligning facility staff and partners.

**Continued learning:** Engage local subject matter experts to provide group training to direct supervisors, managers and co-workers. Training topics may include:

- Definition of disability.
- History of supported employment.
- Job coach role.
- Job development: Job analysis; Task bundling; Customizing positions.
- Interview and resume options.
- Retention strategies.
- The benefits of creating an inclusive and integrated workplace.
- Laws affecting the rights of employees with disabilities.
- Low cost and high impact of providing job accommodations
- Addressing performance and workplace issues

**1:1 training & consultation:** Coaches are an invaluable source of 1:1 training and consultation for the employer and supervisor. The number of coaching hours is individualized based on the employee's needs and their source of Supported Employment funding.

- Hours can change over time, fading away as the employee learns and masters their job skills.
- Hours can be increased as job responsibilities change or grow or to support the employee with performance issues.

**Problem solving:** Coaching agencies usually develop an employment plan in collaboration with the supported employee. Coaches and employees can provide the following:

- Coach and Backup coach name and contact information.
- Family or legal guardian contact information.
- Number of coaching hours and schedule of coaching.
- Who to contact for help with adding new skills or resolving workplace issues.

## Develop a communication plan

Develop a plan to keep your audiences informed and engaged. Keep it clear and accessible by using plain language, avoiding jargon, and offering multiple formats and translations.

**The candidates:** Individuals with disabilities and family members, legal guardians or job coaches who may assist with the application and hiring process. This is what they need to know:

- New job openings and how to apply.
- How your program works and who to contact to get involved.
- Your commitment to employing individuals with disabilities.
- Upcoming events.

**The employers:** Human Resources teams, leadership, supervisors, managers, and co-workers. This is what they need to know:

- Your commitment to employing individuals with disabilities.
- How the program works and their role in it.
- How to develop new job opportunities and clear job progression.
- Ways to nurture and promote natural supports for on their teams.
- Practical ways to develop and nurture an atmosphere of inclusion.
- Resources for addressing performance issues.
- Upcoming events.

**The coaching agencies:** This is what they need to know:

- Your commitment to employing individuals with disabilities.
- How the program works and their role in it.
- How your company functions, how they will access the workplace.
- How they can help employers develop new job opportunities.
- Upcoming events.

**The community:** The community of people with disabilities and their families, advocacy and grassroots organizations, local partners at colleges, universities, government social services offices, local businesses, and coaching agencies. This is what they need to know:

- Your commitment to employing individuals with disabilities.
- How the Supported Employment Program works.
- Goals, accomplishments, and stories of the personal impact of employment on real people.

## Next steps



Pictured above: Eddie Hutson (Compass Group)

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*"Supported Employment is about inclusion. It's about including people who have traditionally been excluded from the workplace."*

Heather Weldon  
City of Seattle Supported Employment Program

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## **What's next?**

Microsoft Real Estate and Facilities are working on Supported Employment Program 2.0! We have three strategies to move us forward:

**Improvement:** What have we learned and how can we improve?

**Expansion:** How can we increase the number of individuals with disabilities employed?

**Advocacy:** What stories can we share to amplify the impact of the program?

Contact us at [supportedemployment@microsoft.com](mailto:supportedemployment@microsoft.com). We are eager to share what we have learned along the way with other corporations who are motivated to create a more diverse and inclusive workforce. This document will continue to be updated and refreshed as the program grows.

Stay tuned at this link for updates to the [Supported Employment Toolkit](#)

## Program expansion

In the past year, Microsoft RE&F expanded the Supported Employment Program to several North American Field Sites (NAFS). Though the field sites have a considerably smaller headcount than the Puget Sound region, the program has transferred successfully and proven to be scalable. The map below shows the NAFS team participation across North America.



Just as we rely on our partners in the Puget Sound. The new sites have created relationships with the following Coaching Agencies and Employers to help continue to grow their business.

Location	Supported employees	Job descriptions	Employers	Coaching agencies
Las Colinas, Texas	1	Porter	ABM	Camden & Camden, LaunchAbility, LifePath, Texas Workforce Commission
Charlotte, North Carolina	1	Porter	Compass Group	Advocations, Innervision NC, InReach
Fargo, North Dakota	3	Porter Dishwasher	ABM, Compass Group	Connections, Community Living Services, Community Options,
Mississauga, Ontario, Canada	1	Dishwasher	Compass Group	The Bennett Edge
Reno, Nevada*	TBD	TBD	TBD	TBD

\*Reno's program began in December 2017

# Tools



Pictured above: Afroz Abadian, Nancy Sotelo, Maxwell Jordan, Camille Ganir (MV Transportation)

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*"I work on the Microsoft campus, and often see the participants in the Supported Employment Program. As the father of a child with a developmental disability, I appreciate our commitment to this initiative. It is a powerful demonstration of our corporate values and makes me proud to be a Microsoft employee."*

Matthew Baldwin, Senior Content Publishing Manager  
APEX, Microsoft

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## Program tools

Click on the items below to find references and tools for your Supported Employment program in each category.

### FAQ

[Microsoft Real Estate and Facilities Supported Employment Program FAQ](#)

### Job analysis

[Customized Task Documentation Library](#)

[Task Analysis Library](#)

- Task Analysis – Building & Custodial Services
- Task Analysis – Business & Office Services
- Task Analysis – Grounds & Motor Pool

### Job descriptions

[Job Description Library](#)

- Job Description – Audio Visual Assistant
- Job Description – Bus Washer
- Job Description – Busser
- Job Description – Common Area Reset
- Job Description – Grounds Keeper

### Program design

[SE Program Charter 2013](#)

[Request for Information](#)

[Program Manager Job Description](#)

[Program Setup Plan](#)

## More information

Visit the [Microsoft RE&F Supported Employment Program](#)

### Disability employment subject matter experts

Advisory Committee on Increasing Competitive Integrated Employment for Individuals with Disabilities: <https://www.dol.gov/odep/topics/WIOA.htm>

Association for People Supporting EmploymentFirst (APSE) - <http://apse.org/>

Governor-Appointed Committees on Disability. For example, Washington State Governor's Committee on Disability Issues and Employment: <https://esd.wa.gov/GCDE>

Institute for Community Inclusion - <http://www.communityinclusion.org/>

Respect Ability - Fighting Stigmas, Advancing Opportunities - <https://www.respectability.org/>

United States Business Leadership Network: <http://www.usbln.org/>

Washington Initiative for Supported Employment (WISE) - <http://gowise.org/>

### Answers for employees and employers

Job Accommodation Network. Employers and employees with questions about job accommodations and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), and related legislation can contact Jan at <https://askjan.org/>

ADA National Network. Employers and employees can find information on the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), and the organization that serves each geographic location in the United States at <https://adata.org/>

### Employment statistics - United States of America

National employment and unemployment rates from the US Bureau of Labor Statistics -  
<https://www.bls.gov/news.release/disabl.nr0.htm>

State by state comparisons of the rate of employment for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities - <https://www.statedata.info/>

### Supported Employment program examples

[King County Supported Employment Program](#)

City of Seattle Supported Employment Program

Contact Heather Weldon, Program Manager,  
Seattle Department of Human Resources:  
[heather.weldon@seattle.gov](mailto:heather.weldon@seattle.gov) or (206)-684-7922

### United Nations

United Nations Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities - [Article 27: Work and employment \[PDF\]](#)

### Media

[Busting Myths About Hiring People with Disabilities](#)

## Accolades and citations



Pictured above: Carissa Linn (Compass Group), Brian Collins (Microsoft RE&F), Holly Warnick (CBRE), Tod Nissle (Compass Group)

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*When Microsoft initiated its Supported Employment Program with the goal of hiring 200 supported employees, our region experienced a significant and positive impact that a large employer-led initiative can bring. It changed the landscape of supported employment services to one that was employer driven, exciting the community, and helping people with the most significant disabilities achieve better lives.*

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Richard Wilson, MPA  
King County Program Manager, School-to-Work, Washington

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## **Accolades**

Microsoft Real Estate and Facilities Supported Employment program is the proud recipient of the following awards from national and Washington state leaders in the fields of employment and civil rights for people with disabilities.

**2017 Breaking Barriers Business Leader Award - Disability Rights Washington**

**2015 Large Employer Award - National APSE (Association of People Supporting EmploymentFirst)**

**2015 Excellence in Partnership – Cares of Washington**

**2014 Governor's Large Private Employer of the Year - The State of Washington Governor's Committee on Disability Issues and Employment**

## Citations

1. Washington State Legislature, "RCW 71A.10.020(5)", Accessed November 30, 2017, <http://app.leg.wa.gov/RCW/default.aspx?cite=71A.10.020>
2. Microsoft, "Inclusive Hiring for People With Disabilities", Accessed November 30, 2017, <https://www.microsoft.com/en-us/diversity/inside-microsoft/cross-disability/hiring.aspx>
3. Washington State Legislature, "WAC 388.891.1000", Accessed November 30, 2017, <http://app.leg.wa.gov/WAC/default.aspx?cite=388-891-1000>
4. Association of People Supporting Employment First (APSE), "Resources for Employees", Accessed November 29, 2017, <http://apse.org/resources/resources-for-employers-and-businesses/>
5. United States Department of Labor, "Office of Disability Employment Policy", Accessed November 29, 2017, <https://www.dol.gov/odep/>
6. United States Department of Labor, "Myths and Facts about Workers with Disabilities", Accessed January 12, 2018, <https://www.dol.gov/odep/pubs/fact/ada.htm>
7. United States Department of Labor, "Employers and the ADA: Myths & Facts", Accessed January 12, 2018, <https://www.dol.gov/odep/pubs/fact/ada.htm>