

U.S. Secretary of Labor to Present "New Freedom Initiative" Award to Booz Allen

Award recognizes exemplary and innovative public-private partnership efforts on behalf of persons with disabilities.

Secretary of Labor Elaine L. Chao will honor recipients of the New Freedom Initiative Award at luncheon ceremonies in Washington, DC, on October 16, 2003. The awards recognize exemplary and innovative public-private partnership efforts on behalf of persons with disabilities by the selected companies.

The global strategy and technology consulting firm Booz Allen Hamilton joins four other corporate award winners, Cingular Wireless, GiantEagle Inc., IBM, and Manpower Inc., that will be recognized by the Secretary in this second year of President George W. Bush's New Freedom Initiative. Four non-profit organizations and one individual will also receive awards from Secretary Chao.

"All of us have to work toward a world where all individuals are respected for who they are, celebrated for their abilities, and encouraged to realize their full potential and achieve their dreams," said Secretary of Labor Elaine L. Chao in her address at the Pathways to Work in the 21st Century seminar in May.

"With our acceptance of this honor comes our continued commitment to making the American workplace accessible to all individuals," said Booz Allen Chairman and Chief Executive Officer Ralph W. Shrader. "We pledge that we will work every day to enhance and expand programs that will continue to make us an employer of choice for individuals with disabilities, and to serve as a model for others."

Booz Allen's involvement with disability programs reaches back to 1995, when the firm initiated a partnership with the Fairfax County Virginia public schools to help students with disabilities transition to the business community.

Highlights of the firm's involvement during the past 12 months have included:

- 2003 — Booz Allen expands Emerging Leaders, a targeted paid summer internship for college students with disabilities, to other corporations. Non-profit partners for the initiative include National Organization on Disability, American Association of People with Disabilities, and the National Business Disability Council.
- 2003 — Booz Allen presents a Best Practices Session at the Annual National Business Disabilities Council conference on the Emerging Leaders Program.
- 2003 — Hillary Clinton presents the National Down Syndrome Society — Voices Award to Booz Allen employee David Egan.
- 2002 — Booz Allen creates a Disabilities Task Force to systematically review all internal processes and services. As a result of the task force, a Disabilities Program Manager was hired and a new reasonable accommodations process was established.

- 2002 — Booz Allen Chairman and CEO Ralph Shrader is awarded the 2001-2002 Exemplary Leadership Award from the National Business Council on Disabilities.
- 2002 — Booz Allen is recognized in the final report of the Presidential Task Force on Employment of Adults with Disabilities.
- 2002 — Booz Allen hosts a State of Science Conference in conjunction with Business Leadership Network and Virginia Commonwealth University. The conference presented research findings on obstacles to employment for persons with disabilities. Dr. Robert Pasternack, Assistant Secretary of Special Education and Rehabilitation Services, US Department of Education, was keynote speaker.
- 2002 — Booz Allen and the Virginia Department of Rehabilitative Services co-host Disability Awareness Training for Northern Virginia Human Resources Professionals.

President Bush introduced the New Freedom Initiative within the first 30 days of his Presidency. The New Freedom Initiative represents a comprehensive set of proposals designed to ensure that Americans with disabilities have the opportunity to learn and develop skills, engage in productive work, make choices about their daily lives, and participate fully in their communities.

The Office of Disability Employment Policy in the Department of Labor has the key responsibility for implementing the employment-related aspects of the President's New Freedom Initiative.