

## Partnerships to Build the Pipeline

### Higher Education

If you are searching for candidates who have college degrees and specialized education and training, partnerships with colleges and universities are critical. According to the [National Organization on Disability](#) (NOD), 54 percent of the companies who completed their Disability Employment Tracker reported using on campus disability recruiting with 32 percent reporting they hired through this source.



**TIP:**

*Ask to meet jointly with both disability and career services on campus. The groups may not have an established relationship.*

### Workforce Development

If one of your goals is to engage candidates with workforce training and credentials, the [workforce development](#) system may be an ideal partner. In order to maximize the partnership workforce development agencies, get involved. Businesses have many opportunities to participate in the [workforce development system as partners](#) in developing regional talent pipelines. Employers play a major role in the design and delivery of workforce development programs. As members of [Workforce Development Boards](#), employers can advocate for the seamless inclusion of job seekers with disabilities. As partners in the design of skills training and [career pathway programs](#), businesses can help ensure that opportunities are physically and programmatically accessible to people with disabilities. And to the extent that business and industry is involved in curriculum design of career and technical education at secondary and post-secondary levels, it helps ensure that students with disabilities are meaningfully included in programs that result in certification that is recognized by industry. Educating workforce development personnel and helping them understand that companies require a diverse slate of candidates – including those with disabilities – are several ways to influence activities within the workforce development system to benefit job seekers with disabilities.



**TIP:**

*Workforce development programs serve a variety of disadvantaged populations. Many of these groups have higher rates of disability than you might expect.*

## Vocational Rehabilitation

If your organization wants access to candidates with disabilities with a wide range of skills and training, your state vocational rehabilitation (VR) agency can make a great partner. [VR offices](#) are located in each state. Many have business services representatives who can talk to you about your hiring needs.

**TIP:**

*The Council on State Agencies of Vocational Rehabilitation (CSAVR) represents 78 public VR programs and provides companies with a single point of contact without having to build partnerships with individual VR offices. CSAVR can connect you with business consultants where you are hiring. Visit CSAVR's National Employment Team (The Net) webpage to read [partnership success stories](#).*

## Community Partnerships

There are many community rehabilitation providers (CRPs) that can help with your hiring needs. Some serve targeted local areas, while others have state or national programs. [Best Buddies International](#), for example, offers services in 17 states. If you are already working with VR, chances are they can connect your company to local programs. CRPs can help employers tailor recruitment efforts, develop conduits for new talent, and enhance organizational education and knowledge on disability hiring practices among recruiters and hiring managers.

**TIP:**

*Your state vocational rehabilitation agency can connect you with community providers where you are hiring.*