



ReachOut e-Diversity News

An Electronic Publication of the Ohio Developmental Disabilities Council

Important Actions This Month:

1. Join the Next Wave of Change
2. Build Community
3. Make Accommodations
4. Be an Ally

August 2021 Edition | Volume 16, Issue 4

Read, Pass on to Friends,
Family Members, Colleagues
& Constituents



Don't
Miss an
Issue!

It is the policy of the Ohio Developmental Disabilities Council
to use person-first language in items written by staff.
Items reprinted or quoted exactly as they originally appear
may not reflect this policy.

Diversity, Equity, Inclusion in Action!

This month's edition challenges you to make a difference in the lives of the un/underserved populations with disabilities. It has been thirty-one years since the passage of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Barriers continue to exist that prevent all persons with disabilities access to appropriate services and opportunities to share their voice and participate in decision-making.

You are invited to reflect on the information shared and think about ...

**What Can
You Do?**

Join the Next Wave of Change

Build Community

Make Accommodations

Be an Ally

The time is NOW...

The who is YOU...

BE a part of the solution!

Join the Next Wave of Change in the Disability Rights Movement



The American Disabilities Act is based on a basic presumption that people with disabilities want to work and are capable of working, want to be members of their communities and are capable of being members of their communities, and that exclusion and segregation cannot be tolerated. The passage of the ADA prohibited discrimination based on disability in employment, state and local government, public accommodations, commercial

facilities, transportation, and telecommunication – accommodating a person with a disability was no longer a matter of charity, but instead a basic issue of civil rights.

[-READ MORE-](#)

“Building Community That Values Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion”

Napoleon A. Bell II was born and raised in Columbus, Ohio. His parents, Napoleon and Dorothy Bell, were his first mentors and established his North Star, “to be a good person.” Both shaped and contributed in different ways to his outgoing, caring personality, love of sports, involvement in community, politics, and recognition of the value of education

[-READ MORE-](#)



RESTAURANT ACCOMMODATIONS NEW LOOK



Although, most restaurants believe they're following the rules and regulations of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and mandated state codes to make their establishments accessible, many are just doing the bare minimum to get by.

Have you ever tried to sit at the bar at a restaurant while in a wheelchair? Better yet, have you even paid attention to how many people in wheelchairs are sitting at the bar? The answer is probably, none.

[-READ MORE-](#)

Are You an Ally?

Un/underserved populations with disabilities need allies. Allies play an important role in helping to make a difference in the quality of life of these individuals and their families.

An “ally” is not a thing to be, but rather, it is a way to live.

[-READ MORE-](#)



The purpose of “Reach Out” e-Diversity newsletter is to promote interagency collaboration and coordination that result in agencies providing culturally competent services to the unserved/underserved populations in Ohio



Reach Out e-Diversity News is produced by The Outcomes Management Group, Ltd.

This product is funded all or in part by the Ohio Developmental Disabilities Council.

Join the Next Wave of Change in the Disability Rights Movement

This year marks another significant milestone in the fight for the rights of all Americans with disabilities. Until the signing of the Americans with Disabilities Act on July 26, 1990 by President George H.W. Bush, there were no comprehensive civil rights protections for people with disabilities in the United States.

Watch it here:



Photo by Chona Kasinger, Disabled & Here

“Let the shameful wall of exclusion finally come tumbling down.”

President, George H.W. Bush (July 26, 1990)

The American Disabilities Act is based on a basic presumption that people with disabilities want to work and are capable of working, want to be members of their communities and are capable of being members of their communities, and that exclusion and segregation cannot be tolerated. The passage of the ADA prohibited discrimination based on disability in employment, state and local government, public accommodations, commercial facilities, transportation, and telecommunication – accommodating a person with a disability was no longer a matter of charity, but instead a basic issue of civil rights.

“People with disabilities were seen as peers not people needing help.”

With the ADA signed, people with disabilities began to challenge societal barriers that excluded them from their communities, and parents of children with disabilities began to fight against the exclusion and segregation of their children. Local groups to advocate for the rights of people with disabilities were established, and the independent living movement, which challenged the notion that people with disabilities needed to be institutionalized, fought for, and provided services for people with disabilities to live in the community. While there has been significant progress, there is still unfinished work. The following are examples and not intended to be comprehensive.



IDENTITY

Celebrating disability and empowering people with disabilities to lead and advocate for their diverse needs.

COMMUNITY INTEGRATION

Advocating for the right for people with disabilities to live in their homes and communities by providing accessible and equitable transportation and housing--- especially un/underserved populations with disabilities



HEALTHCARE

Strengthening infrastructure in the wake of COVID-19 to ensure people with disabilities have control over their healthcare decisions and equal access to quality, affordable, and comprehensive care — especially un/underserved populations with disabilities

EMPLOYMENT

Eliminating systemic, discriminatory practices that create barriers to community integration, economic opportunity, and self-empowerment—especially un/underserved populations with disability.



POLITICAL PARTICIPATION

Removing obstructions to political participation for people with disabilities--- especially un/underserved populations with disabilities

EDUCATION

Continue to improve access to education from preschool to post-graduate work--- especially un/underserved populations with disabilities



TECHNOLOGY

Continue to advocate for Internet connection with enough speed to allow two-way voice, data and video transfer removes barriers that keep people with disabilities from participating in everyday activities such as employment, education, civic responsibilities, and social connection--- especially un/underserved populations with disabilities

Join the movement and continue to ensure that all people with disabilities including those who are un/underserved are valued, included, treated fairly, and have access to opportunity and advancement.

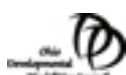


Select an area that YOU are passionate about and join a group, activity, or project and lend your support to bringing about change.

SHARE your action on the Ohio Developmental Disabilities Council social media platforms



The purpose of "Reach Out" e-Diversity newsletter is to promote interagency collaboration and coordination that result in agencies providing culturally competent services to the unserved/underserved populations in Ohio



Reach Out e-Diversity News is produced by The Outcomes Management Group, Ltd.

This product is funded all or in part by the Ohio Developmental Disabilities Council.



“Building Community That Values Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion”

Napoleon A. Bell II, CDP
Director, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion
Franklin County Sheriff's Office

Napoleon A. Bell II is a certified diversity professional who currently serves as the first Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Director, Franklin County Sheriff's Office. Deciding to become a law enforcement officer set the trajectory for him to make discoveries about the diversity of communities, find his passion for helping those who struggle, utilize his gifts, and implement strategies which build communities that value diversity, equity, and inclusion.



ABOUT Napoleon A. Bell II CDP

Napoleon A. Bell II was born and raised in Columbus, Ohio. His parents, Napoleon and Dorothy Bell, were his first mentors and established his North Star, “to be a good person.” Both shaped and contributed in different ways to his outgoing, caring personality, love of sports, involvement in community, politics, and recognition of the value of education.

He attributes his ability to look at things broadly and appreciate differences to his family travels and the educational foundation attained from attending private schools. While he pursued playing football at the Ohio State University and Capital University, he graduated from Capital University with a Bachelor of Arts Degree in Communications (Radio, Television, and Broadcasting).

After graduation, Napoleon Bell II started his career path in sales at AT&T. But it was his decision to sign up and become a Police Officer with the City of Columbus that would be the impetus for his passion to become a community builder. He worked in a lot of inner-city precincts that made it possible for him to see the diversity of people residing in the Columbus community; people from all walks of life, backgrounds, and from all over the world. He discovered that the community was a big melting pot.

As a law enforcement officer, he spent a significant amount of time dealing with people and their problems. In 1993 when he became a Community Liaison Officer, Officer Bell had the opportunity to get to know the community better. An experience he wishes every law enforcement officer would be afforded. After spending time listening to understand different perspectives, talking and breaking bread with community members, he realized that most of the community was comprised of amazing, caring, hardworking people.

This became a defining moment, Officer Bell decided “I have to do something to help people who are struggling.”

He was provided the opportunity when appointed by Mayor Michael B. Coleman in 2005 to the position of Deputy Director, Community Relations Commission and later in 2008 when he became the Director, Community Relations Commission. In 2017, Officer Bell returned to law enforcement and joined Franklin County Sheriff's Community Response Unit where he once again formulated community outreach strategies. Last year, Officer Bell was given another opportunity to build community when he accepted the newly created position, Director of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion. Wherever, you find Officer Bell, you find a community builder who builds trust, establishes fairness, and engages community members.

Q In your law enforcement leadership roles, what strategies have you employed to make a difference in the lives of un/underserved populations with disabilities?

A Given my background in Communications, I seek to utilize various media formats. As early as 2005, my team developed CDs in different languages about the ABC's of the Columbus Police and Fire Departments. This format facilitated the opportunity for community members to access information in different settings including their homes, schools, churches,



**Community Tapestry -
Neighborhood Best
Practices Conference**

recreation centers and other venues where groups gather. Also, the city government's television was utilized to host different educational programs and included guests from different professions outside of law enforcement. Given the influx of Immigrants into the Columbus Community, a New American's Initiative was established to help new immigrants acclimate better and learn how to navigate the system to obtain the services they needed. Hosting Town All Meetings was another vehicle that provided community members with an opportunity to be heard and get their questions answered.

Q As the first Director of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion for the Franklin County Sheriff's office, what are your major priorities?



**FRANKLIN COUNTY
SHERIFF'S OFFICE**

A I believe that findings solutions that are sustainable requires you to identify the root cause. *Collecting data* is paramount to

making sure that you are not making decisions and operating on your assumptions. One of my first actions has been to administer a climate survey. It was disseminated to our 1200 employees. Feedback was received from 500 (42%) which I thought was good for the first time administering this type of survey. Additionally, feedback was obtained from supervisors regarding their DE&I needs, issues, and ideas about resolution. I am partnering with our



Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee to determine the DE&I priorities, goals, and strategies. Having input from individuals who represent different positions and areas of the organization is also essential. I believe organizational success starts with its *leadership*. So, if we want others to value diversity, equity, and inclusion, they must see their leaders behave in ways that demonstrate that value. A *training* program for our leaders has been launched that includes our supervisors from Sergeant on up, a total of about 200 leaders. A *consultant* was hired and is conducting training that focuses on emotional intelligence, cultural awareness,

implicit bias. In December, training will be directed toward all employees. Our *Command Staff* has participated in a retreat that focused on inclusive leadership and understanding my DE&I focus and plans. Most recently, a training for new Supervisors was conducted. This is just the beginning. Many more conversations are necessary for us to create a shared understanding about the value of this work to the communities that we serve. Also, it is important to level set expectations. From my diverse experiences, I know that it takes time. I am grateful to have a core group who understands this and is committed to keep pressing forward and continuing to move the needle.

Q What makes you excited about your work?

A I would love to see other law enforcement agencies create a similar position that embeds diversity, equity, and inclusion into the organization. Recently, I conducted some research to see how many have done so and found only about six. I am hoping that there are more. As I mentioned earlier, getting to know the community that I was called to served was the “best thing that could have happened to me.” It broadened my view and called me to action. I want to see people who encounter corrections met by individuals who understand them.

I am also excited about a new organization that has recently been formed in our county. It is the *Franklin County Diversity, Equity, Inclusion Collaborative*.



Every County agency under the Commissioners is represented by their DE&I leader. Our goals are to develop a Vision and Mission, define core values and guiding principles, create a framework, identify best practices. ***Ultimately this work can create a shared North Star for Franklin County and become a model for other counties in Ohio.***

CONTACT for additional information:

nabell@franklincountyohio.gov 614-525-5006

NOTE: This interview was facilitated by Patricia Larkins Hicks, Ph.D., Reach Out e-Diversity Newsletter Grantee, the Outcomes Management Group, LTD

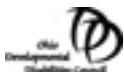


Identify something YOU can do to make a difference in your community for un/underserved individuals with disabilities.

Share what you did on the ODDC social medial platforms.



The purpose of "Reach Out" e-Diversity newsletter is to promote interagency collaboration and coordination that result in agencies providing culturally competent services to the unserved/underserved populations in Ohio



Reach Out e-Diversity News is produced by The Outcomes Management Group, Ltd.

This product is funded all or in part by the Ohio Developmental Disabilities Council.



RESTAURANT ACCOMMODATIONS NEW LOOK

Shari Cooper

This article is a reprint from July 28, 2021, Make Thing Happen, Goodwill Easter Seals, Miami Valley



One thing I love doing in my pastime is eating out at restaurants.

My restaurant time is for “me” time. I chill out, socialize, and eat good food.

Everyone has a pastime he or she enjoys, and for me, that’s visiting restaurants.

Although, most restaurants believe they’re following the rules and regulations of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and mandated state codes to make their establishments accessible, many are just doing the bare minimum to get by.

Have you ever tried to sit at the bar at a restaurant while in a wheelchair? Better yet, have you even paid attention to how many people in wheelchairs are sitting at the bar? The answer is probably, none. The typical restaurant’s bar is too high for a person in a wheelchair to sit at. I have pulled up to bars in my scooter to hang out with friends and family but, I must say, it feels awkward like a sore thumb sticking out.

Luckily, if I’m ever in the Harlem area in New York, I will not have to feel awkward because I’ll make my way to Contento’s. Contento’s is a new restaurant owned and designed by Yannick Benjamin and George Gallego, both are in wheelchairs. The two partners decided to go into business building an all-inclusion accessible restaurant because they were tired of experiencing obstacles that tend to go along with the “typical” restaurant. Narrow walkways, small restroom stalls, and tight table spaces are just some of challenges I’ve faced when visiting restaurants.

Thanks to Yannick and Gallego, accommodations not typically thought of will be put in to play at Contento’s. For people who are visually impaired; they will no longer have to ask someone to read the menu. Contento will be providing an accessible menu with a QR code on it. The QR code will allow one to scan a menu with their cell phone and have the menu read aloud. No longer will a person in a wheelchair feel uncomfortable when sitting at a bar because the partners designed half of the bar to be lowered.



Often, when the word accessible or accommodation is mentioned, people get nervous. People with disabilities aren't looking for an establishment to move mountains, instead, just by adding grab tabs or lowering counter tops, would make a world of difference for persons with disabilities.



I believe full access to the world is an act in process for people with disabilities. Sadly, it may always be a process, but if we have people like Yannick and Gallego at the forefront pushing for equality, things can continue to get better. I think I'll plan a vacation to New York so I can visit Contento and sit at the bar.



TODAY

Click to read TODAY
artical about Contento's

**What Can
You Do?**

Think about something **YOU** can do
to make accommodations for un/
underserved people with disabilities

Share your accommodations on the Ohio Developmental
Disabilities Council social media platforms



The purpose of "Reach Out" e-Diversity newsletter is to promote interagency collaboration and coordination that result in agencies providing culturally competent services to the unserved/underserved populations in Ohio



Reach Out e-Diversity News is produced by The Outcomes Management Group, Ltd.

This product is funded all or in part by the Ohio Developmental Disabilities Council.



Are You an Ally?

August 2021 Edition | Volume 16, Issue 4

Un/underserved populations with disabilities need allies. Allies play an important role in helping to make a difference in the quality of life of these individuals and their families.

An “ally” is not a thing to be, but rather, it is a way to live.

Being an ally is more than being sympathetic towards those who experience discrimination. It is more than simply believing in equality. Being an ally means being willing to act with and for others in pursuit of ending oppression and creating equality. Tenzin Gyatso, the fourteenth Dalai Lama, said, “It is not enough to be compassionate; you must act.” We all benefit from our collective efforts to create a better educated and more understanding world that treats each of us with dignity, respect, and equality. As Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. said, ***“Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere.”***



An active and effective ally engages in the following 5 actions.

1. Listen and Educate
2. Uplift Marginalized Voices
3. Speak Up
4. respect Safe Spaces
5. Get to Work

Click here to
LEARN MORE.



What Can You Do?

Share and post your stories on the Ohio Developmental Disabilities social media platforms of how you have been an ally or benefited from having an ally who advocated for un/underserved populations with disabilities.



The purpose of “Reach Out” e-Diversity newsletter is to promote interagency collaboration and coordination that result in agencies providing culturally competent services to the unserved/underserved populations in Ohio



Reach Out e-Diversity News is produced by The Outcomes Management Group, Ltd.

This product is funded all or in part by the Ohio Developmental Disabilities Council.