



ABILITYFIRST LAUNCHES NEW EMPLOYMENT FACILITATION TRAINING SERVICES PROGRAM FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

(CLAREMONT, CA – DECEMBER 16, 2015) AbilityFirst, one of Southern California’s oldest and most respected nonprofit organizations serving people with disabilities announced the launch of a new Employment Facilitation Training Service (EFTS) program in Claremont today. The program will focus on serving individuals with developmental disabilities who are enrolled with San Gabriel/Pomona Regional Center, and who have demonstrated an interest in entering into the workforce as a final outcome. The program will assist up to 30 individuals per year, with the goal of community employment as a final outcome.

“AbilityFirst and the Regional Center believe that providing the proper support and positive environment for individuals with disabilities will result in gainful community employment,” said AbilityFirst CEO Lori Gangemi. “Services will be tailored and individualized to meet each participant’s needs and interests, and our staff-to-client ratio is 1:1, ensuring the best experience possible for both the prospective employee and employer.”

AbilityFirst is fully committed to the goal of competitive integrated employment for individuals with developmental disabilities, and has offered supported employment services to this population for more than 70 years. The EFTS model is a flexible blend of strategies, services, and supports designed to increase employment opportunities for individuals with developmental disabilities. The program helps adults with complex needs, from identification of personal interests, goals and skills, through every step of the process of job search and placement, and throughout the period of employment. The individual participant is the primary source of information and drives the placement process.

The AbilityFirst EFTS program is part of the organization’s Business and Employment Services department, which has quality supported employment as its cornerstone. This department simultaneously furthers the organization’s service mission while directly addressing the state’s identified needs for employment opportunities for individuals with developmental disabilities. The department serves nearly 225 individuals annually; some participants are just beginning the search for their first jobs, while others have been employed for some time and continue to benefit from ongoing career advancement and retention services.

For more information on the Employment Facilitation Training Services program, email BusinessServices@abilityfirst.org

AbilityFirst pioneered some of the very first community services in California for children with disabilities. Additional highlights from our history include: setting a model standard in accessibility with the design and construction of one of the first fully accessible camps in the nation; opening one of the first vocational training programs in the country for adults with disabilities; being a forerunner in supported employment helping adults with developmental disabilities succeed in competitive community jobs; and in 2011 leading a statewide effort to sponsor and secure passage of Senate Bill 309 which ensures that young adults with developmental disabilities can attend after school programs throughout high school. At AbilityFirst, we look beyond disabilities, focus on capabilities and expand possibilities. For more information, visit us online at AbilityFirst.org.

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