



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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October is Disability Employment Awareness Month
AbilityFirst Awarded \$10,000 Grant from Bank of America for Workforce Training Program

(PASADENA) October 26, 2018 – As Disability Employment Awareness Month comes to a close, AbilityFirst is highlighting employees from Bank of America across the San Gabriel Valley who joined AbilityFirst on Thursday, October 18 at the AbilityFirst Pasadena Work Center to directly support the nonprofit’s employment trainees, as well as present the nonprofit with a \$10,000 grant to support the AbilityFirst Supported Employment program, which helps more than 300 adults with disabilities find and retain jobs in their communities.

While the majority of working-age adults with developmental disabilities want to work, in California, only 13% have any type of paid employment at all, and of those, only 22% have jobs in integrated worksites in the community. Empowering individuals with disabilities to participate in the lives of their communities through integrated, competitive employment of their choosing is an urgent priority for AbilityFirst, and the impact can be scaled with support from partners like Bank of America. On Thursday, Bank of America employee volunteers worked alongside adults with disabilities, packaging and sorting items and getting to know each other, and witnessing firsthand the impact of the bank’s grant funding.

“We are very honored and proud to have such an incredible relationship with our local Bank of America Regional Council and are looking forward to continuing to build the partnership. Thank you, Bank of America for all you do in the Pasadena (and Los Angeles) community!” said Adam Pilder, Director of Development, AbilityFirst.

AbilityFirst serves over 2,000 people annually with services that include person-centered interest assessment and job matching; pre-employment skills training and counseling; job search and placement services; and ongoing employment support including intensive on-the-job training and supervision, long-term case management, and job coaching. AbilityFirst has promoted employment and provided job opportunities for individuals with developmental and physical disabilities for more than 70 years.

“Bank of America values the role that each individual plays in our economy and community, which is why we are proud to partner with AbilityFirst, an incredible organization that creates opportunities for

inclusion in the workforce for thousands of individuals and families experiencing disabilities,” said Raul Anaya, Bank of America Market President for Los Angeles. “Through access to education and mentorship, AbilityFirst is simultaneously empowering a group of adults to participate in their communities and working to combat stigmas that can limit the opportunities available to them.”

For more information about the AbilityFirst employment programs for individuals with disabilities in Los Angeles County, please contact Adam Pilder at (626) 243-4853 or apilder@abilityfirst.org.

About AbilityFirst

AbilityFirst provides a variety of programs that have a common mission: to help people with disabilities realize their full potential throughout their lives. As we celebrate more than 92 years of service, we are focusing our efforts on programs that are proven to have the greatest impact on a person’s success: basic life skills enhancement through our children’s and adult programs; higher education and employment readiness; and, independent living and social and recreational programming. AbilityFirst looks beyond disabilities, focuses on the capabilities of each individual and breaks through any preconceived limitations, opening up a world of possibilities. Preparation, socialization, communication, education – all leading to helping people achieve their personal best. More at www.abilityfirst.org

About Bank of America Environmental, Social and Governance

At Bank of America, we’re guided by a common purpose to help make financial lives better, through the power of every connection. We’re delivering on this through responsible growth with a focus on our environmental, social and governance (ESG) leadership. ESG is embedded across our eight lines of business and reflects how we help fuel the global economy, build trust and credibility, and represent a company that people want to work for, invest in and do business with. It’s demonstrated in the inclusive and supportive workplace we create for our employees, the responsible products and services we offer our clients, and the impact we make around the world in helping local economies thrive. An important part of this work is forming strong partnerships with nonprofits and advocacy groups, such as community, consumer and environmental organizations, to bring together our collective networks and expertise to achieve greater impact. Learn more at about.bankofamerica.com, and connect with us on Twitter at [@BofA_News](https://twitter.com/BofA_News).