



October 13, 2014

Employees of Fedcap

Fedcap

633 Third Avenue, 6th Floor

New York, New York 10017

To: The Advisory Committee on Increasing Competitive Integrated Employment for Individuals with Disabilities

Dear Committee Members:

The employees of Fedcap are honored to nominate Fedcap Chief Executive Officer Christine McMahon to Serve on The Advisory Committee on Increasing Competitive Integrated Employment for Individuals with Disabilities. We nominate Ms. McMahon under the constituent area “Providers of employment services, including those that employ individuals with intellectual or developmental disabilities in competitive integrated employment.”

In a career that spans over 30 years, Ms. McMahon has brought an amazing level of innovation, energy and impact to increasing integrated, competitive employment opportunities for youth and adults with significant disabilities.

As Chief Operating Officer of Easter Seals New Hampshire, Ms. McMahon founded the Autism Support Network. She implemented a network of community-based services and a continuum of care system that a special education school, an employment model, and a family advocacy initiative, all established under her leadership.

These and other innovations spearheaded by Ms. McMahon led Easter Seals to become the country's leading provider of services for people with autism. During her tenure as COO, Ms. McMahon grew the

small agency to one that encompasses New York, Vermont, Maine and Rhode Island, and is now the largest Easter Seals affiliate in the United States.

In 2009, Ms. McMahon became Chief Executive Officer of Fedcap, a New York City-based nonprofit that was established in 1935 as the Federation for the Handicapped. A pioneer in vocational rehabilitation, Fedcap's mission is to create opportunities for people with barriers to move toward economic independence as valued and contributing members of society.

Fedcap, a \$150 million agency, currently employs 314 workers with disabilities under 29 separate contracts with AbilityOne, and over 160 individuals with disabilities under non-AbilityOne contracts, primarily with NYSID – New York State Industries for the Disabled - and ACCSES New Jersey. These individuals work in competitive wage jobs with career ladders. Fedcap is the largest employer of people with disabilities in New York City.

Ms. McMahon has never been willing to accept the status quo – including enclave work, productive as those jobs are. With the same level of energy and innovation that she employed at Easter Seals, she is leading a profound and systemic shift at the national level that recognizes the capacity of people with intellectual/developmental disabilities to thrive in supported, community-based employment.

A 2013 consent decree between the U.S. Department of Justice and the State of Rhode Island directed the state to replace its sheltered workshops with day services and community-based employment. Fedcap is leading that effort in partnership with the Rhode Island Department of Behavioral Healthcare, Developmental Disabilities and Hospitals (BHDDH).

Ms. McMahon and her team established the Center for Excellence and Advocacy (CEA) in Providence, Rhode Island, to implement this change. To date, the CEA has placed 47 individuals with significant developmental/intellectual disabilities in jobs and engaged well over 60 businesses in the employment of individuals with I/DD. The CEA has designed training curriculum for community-based providers and is training and certifying job coaches, working to ensure the full inclusion of individuals with disabilities in the workforce and community.

A front-page article in the October 5th edition of the Sunday New York Times told a wonderful story about the marriage of two former residents of TTP, a sheltered workshop in Rhode Island that Fedcap has managed for the past 18 months, who have moved on to community-based jobs and independent, self-sufficient lives. The article stated: “The decree has put the 49 other states on notice that change is coming; that in the eyes of the federal government, sheltered workshops can no longer be default employment services for people with disabilities.”

Ms. McMahon is building a replicable model for competitive integrated employment for the entire nation, and as the New York Times reported, it is working.

Ms. McMahon’s accomplishments as a champion of people with disabilities, and her success as a chief executive don’t begin to describe the depth and breadth of her leadership capabilities, or why she would make an ideal member of The Advisory Committee. She is a brilliant, forceful and passionate speaker who is equally at home in front of business, government and nonprofit audiences. Her encyclopedic knowledge of integrated employment and the challenges faced by people with disabilities is augmented by an intuitive genius that anticipates a need and how to fill it, and always puts her at the cutting edge of innovation. Her capacity for bringing out the best in people is unmatched. She is compassionate and wise, and respected by all.

We hope you will consider Christine McMahon’s nomination as a representative member of The Advisory Committee on Increasing Competitive Integrated Employment for Individuals with Disabilities.

Sincerely,

The Executive Team of Fedcap

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