

CAMPAIGN FOR DISABLED SEARCHING FOR JOBS



A fresh campaign in Manitowoc County named Jobs First! is hoping to cut down the unemployment number, specifically for those with disabilities, according to HTR News. Their plan is to alter company's approach of contracting those with disabilities. Some national figures show that if five citizens without disabilities apply for a position, three or four of them will normally find jobs. If those same five were disabled, one or two would get work. Jobs First! is a bond between Manitowoc County Transition Advisory Committee and Step'nStones, a business access point for students of Next Step UW, which is a program for 18- to 21-year-old people with disabilities. It is located at the University of Wisconsin-Manitowoc. This is part of a movement throughout the state of Wisconsin via the Wisconsin Board for People with Developmental Disabilities. It will publicize joint employment for disabled people. Jobs First! began a few months ago. David Koenig, the Next Step UW and transition coordinator for the Manitowoc Public School District, and Bradley Lucia, 20, a student in the Next Step UW program, have conference with community figureheads to spread their message. The Jobs First! campaign is "meeting new people and just being a proud sponsor". Lucia brought along Senator Joe Leibham with her to work to show him what her workplace is like on November 16. Lucia is a lobby attendant at McDonald's. This was a section of the Take Your Legislator to Work Campaign. It is done every October and sometimes into November. The goal for the program is to exhibit the positives of disabled people working in the area – positives for the companies, community and Wisconsin as well as to the worker him/herself. Following this, Leibham drove to UW-Manitowoc and wrangled up all students, mothers, fathers and staff members from UW-Manitowoc and the MPSD to take a big group picture. The image will be part of a banner to publicize Jobs First! Leibham will also appear on a video publicizing the organization's effort. Jobs First! is planning a video shoot to promote disabled people working in the community. It will be shown at every school in the district as well as community members and other entities. The students are planning a road trip to the nation's capital in a few months and show it to whatever governmental figures will watch. The students are also creating a food prep training program along with UW-Manitowoc's Blue Devil Grill. The 12-month program started in late September. There are 16 students involved. They will learn skills, equipment maintenance, customer service, cooking fundamentals, marketing, catering among other things. Students will be awarded a certificate of completion.