



## Disability Mentoring Day FAQs

### 1. What is Disability Mentoring Day?

AAPD's Disability Mentoring Day (DMD) Program is a large-scale national effort to promote career development for students and job-seekers with disabilities through hands-on career exploration and ongoing mentoring relationships.

### 2. Where does DMD take place?

DMD has springboarded from a one day event for a small group of students to an extensive national mentoring program for young professionals with disabilities across the United States, territories and abroad.

### 3. When does DMD take place?

DMD was established the third Wednesday in October, in conjunction with National Disability Employment Awareness Month. However, in evolving DMD to a year-long program, events may take place throughout the month of October or throughout the year.

### 4. How did DMD start?

Disability Mentoring Day began in 1999 by a proclamation from President Clinton. Less than three dozen students participated in the first DMD hosted by the White House. In 2001, AAPD committed to serving as the national coordinator for DMD. The program has evolved significantly to encompass participation both nationally and internationally.

### 5. As a student and/or job seeker, what can I expect to gain from being a part of DMD?

Through DMD, students or job seekers are paired with a career professional to learn what it means to work in that field or occupation; observe a typical workday; identify necessary skills; and learn about possible internships or employment prospects. While DMD is a one-day event, mentors and mentees are encouraged to stay in touch after the event. Mentoring is invaluable and beneficial for both the mentor and student, advancing career development and personal growth.

### 6. As a mentor, what will I gain from being a part of DMD?

A mentor is a person who through support, counsel, friendship, reinforcement and constructive example helps another person to reach his or her work and life goals. Some of the benefits of being a mentor include: increased self-esteem, a sense of accomplishment, creation of

networks of volunteers, insight into childhood, adolescence and young adulthood, increased patience and improved supervisory skills

**7. How do I get involved in DMD as a mentee?**

To become a mentee through DMD, please contact AAPD at [dmd@aapd.com](mailto:dmd@aapd.com).

**8. Do I need to be a student to be a part of DMD?**

No, we welcome all people with disabilities who wish to advance their career opportunities to be a part of DMD programs.

**9. Why is DMD important?**

Disability Mentoring Day Program allows employers to connect with people with disabilities outside the typical hiring context, while at the same time exposing all people with disabilities to new possibilities of employment, exciting career-tracks and future educational opportunities. DMD allows students to gain a first-hand look at careers they are interested in pursuing with experienced mentors in the field. By working with mentors, students will be able to develop interview and job skills needed to be successful in their field. In addition, DMD programs educate employers on how to make the workplace more accessible for employees with disabilities and the value hiring people with disabilities.

**10. What are the goals of DMD programs?**

The goals of DMD are to promote disability as a central component of diversity recruitment for a more inclusive workforce, dispel employer fears about hiring people with disabilities, increase confidence among students and job seekers with disabilities, enhance internship and employment opportunities for people with disabilities and serve as a launch pad to promote a year-round, national effort to foster mentoring and career-exploration opportunities.

**11. Who do I contact to find out more about DMD?**

To find out more about Disability Mentoring Day, please contact AAPD at [dmd@aapd.com](mailto:dmd@aapd.com).

**12. I want to start a DMD program in my area, but I live in a rural area where there are not many options for mentors in my area, is there still a way I can host a DMD day/ event?**

Local coordinators in small communities have voiced concerns about finding mentors, but there are still many options to explore. Small towns usually have a school, nursing home, city/county government, for example. Many of the jobs they do fall under the job clusters students have an interest in.

**13. I want to be a mentor for DMD, but I am uncertain how to make my job accessible to people with certain disabilities. Should I still apply to become a mentor?**

Yes, there are many ways to accommodate people with disabilities. For specific questions on making your workplace accessible, please contact the local DMD coordinator in your area. However, the best way to find out how to accommodate a person with a disability is to speak to them directly to find what they need to be successful.

**14. What are the requirements to become a coordinator for DMD?**

To create a DMD program in your area, the first step is to apply to become a DMD Coordinator. The application can be found [here](#). AAPD will then review your qualifications and notify you of the decision. Once accepted, you'll have an abundance of resources to take advantage of to produce your first and successful DMD. Your responsibilities as a coordinator includes, but are not limited to, coordinating outreach to potential hosts and mentors for your DMD, such as businesses, corporations, government agencies, and advocacy organizations. You'll also search for mentees from local high schools and colleges to participate in your DMD event. We've received countless stories from DMD coordinators on the profound difference this one day can have for young people with disabilities, including leading to their first paid internship or job.

**15. What will my organization gain from being a part of DMD?**

Disability Mentoring Day offers employers an opportunity to engage an untapped workforce of citizens with disabilities, to help constituents with disabilities develop confidence about their own employability, to recruit short-term and long-term interns/employees and to demonstrate positive leadership in their communities.

**16. What are the benefits of employing people with disabilities?**

There are many benefits to hiring people with disabilities. Hiring people with disabilities ranked third as an indicator of a company's commitment to social justice, behind protecting the environment and offering health insurance to all. Additionally:

- 91 percent of those that have worked with a person with a disability said that person's job performance was "Very Good" or "Good."
- 98 percent of those served were "Very Satisfied" or "Satisfied" with services received. (Center for Social Development and Education, Jan. 31, 2006).