



**MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING**  
**Between The**  
**UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE**  
**And the**  
**ASSOCIATION OF UNIVERSITY**  
**CENTERS ON DISABILITIES**

WHEREAS, the Association of University Centers on Disabilities (AUCD) and its member centers and programs have long been committed to maintaining and enhancing a strong, effective, and efficient network focused on empowering individuals with disabilities to achieve education, employment, economic self-sufficiency, independence, and inclusion and integration into our communities; and, WHEREAS, AUCD believes the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) affords unique on-the-job employment opportunities for individuals with disabilities, as student interns and permanent employees, providing opportunities in a work environment that is welcoming and inclusive of all individuals, including those with disabilities; and, WHEREAS, AUCD and its member centers and programs, and USDA recognize the benefits of a non-binding memorandum of understanding (MOU) between them; now, therefore,

The parties have entered into this non-binding MOU to give form or structure to a collaborative relationship to improve the employment of people with disabilities.

**1. PURPOSE:**

This MOU identifies the mutual goals of USDA and establishes general parameters of USDA's and AUCD's cooperation.

**2. SCOPE:**

- a. Both parties recognize the considerable value of the relationship between USDA and the AUCD network of centers and programs. USDA's goals of "connecting" with applicants, such as improving inclusion in the variety of communities it serves and employing and advancing individuals with disabilities, will be strengthened by recognizing and utilizing the invaluable contributions of AUCD network members across the United States.
- b. USDA is prohibited from formally endorsing or appearing to endorse a specific private organization. The parties recognize that this agreement of mutual support is not an enforceable contract by law and that it is not intended to violate any existing laws, regulations, or policies of either party.

### 3. RESPONSIBILITIES:

a. USDA, at its sole and unfettered discretion and without obligation, will:

- 1) Collaborate with AUCD in providing outreach and education to AUCD member centers and programs on USDA's mission-critical job occupations and opportunities for mentoring, employment, advancement, accommodation, and inclusion of people with disabilities.
- 2) Partner with AUCD and its members via teleconferences, Webinars, and conferences to share information and resources, and to assist center and program contacts and individuals with disabilities with the following: the preparation of Schedule A documentation, instruction on applying for USDA job opportunities, résumé review and feedback, and job placement and referral assistance.
- 3) Educate USDA key internal stakeholders such as Mission Area and Agency Recruitment Program Managers; Disability Employment Program Managers; Human Resources Specialists; and supervisors about AUCD members' employment-focused initiatives and their ability to support successful employment and inclusion strategies for individuals with disabilities throughout the Department.
- 4) Promote AUCD member centers and disability employment-related programs, activities, special community events, and collaborative efforts in USDA informational materials such as newsletters and bulletins.
- 5) Encourage all USDA Human Resources Offices, Recruitment Program Managers, and Disability Employment Program Managers to participate in recruitment and job readiness-related events sponsored by AUCD member centers and programs.
- 6) Attempt, whenever possible, to hire qualified individuals with disabilities into permanent USDA employment using competitive and non-competitive hiring authorities.
- 7) Speak, exhibit, and/or appear at mutually agreed upon AUCD member events and programs.

b. AUCD, at its sole and unfettered discretion and without obligation, will:

- 1) Facilitate networking and partnering with AUCD member centers and programs to further promote USDA job opportunities, internships, and mentoring initiatives aimed at employing and advancing people with disabilities.
- 2) Advise USDA and share strategies and best practices for employing and advancing people with disabilities in the variety of work settings (urban and rural) supported by USDA.

- 3) Encourage AUCD and its member centers and programs to invite USDA to speak, exhibit, and/or appear at mutually agreed upon USDA events and outreach programs that would be mutually beneficial toward increasing USDA's employment and advancement of individuals with disabilities.
- 4) Refer USDA Disability Employment Program contacts to AUCD member resources to facilitate staff training on the following: disability awareness, topics and strategies related to successful inclusion of people with disabilities in the workforce, and reasonable accommodations in the workplace.
- 5) Provide consultation, technical assistance, and support on issues relating to successful employment of individuals with disabilities.
- 6) Collaborate with USDA to disseminate information to AUCD member centers and programs, and their interns and trainees, on mission-critical jobs, guidance on the Schedule A application process, and the marketing of USDA's internship and job opportunities.

4. DURATION:

This memorandum will commence on the last date signed below and will be revisited within 4 years.

5. NOTICE:

Either party may withdraw from the agreement upon written notification to the other party, which notice shall be effective when mailed by United States-certified mail, postage prepaid, to the addresses set forth below.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the parties hereto have caused this MOU to be executed by their respective duly authorized officers as indicated below.

United States Department of Agriculture:

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Thomas J. Vilsack  
Secretary

DEC 14 2016  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

Association of University Centers on Disabilities:

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Andrew J. Imparato  
Executive Director

Dec. 21, 2016  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Date