

NATIONAL DISABILITY EMPLOYMENT AWARENESS MONTH

October 2020



LEGACY



“Our debt to the heroic men and women in the service of our country can never be repaid. They have earned our undying gratitude. America will never forget their sacrifices.”

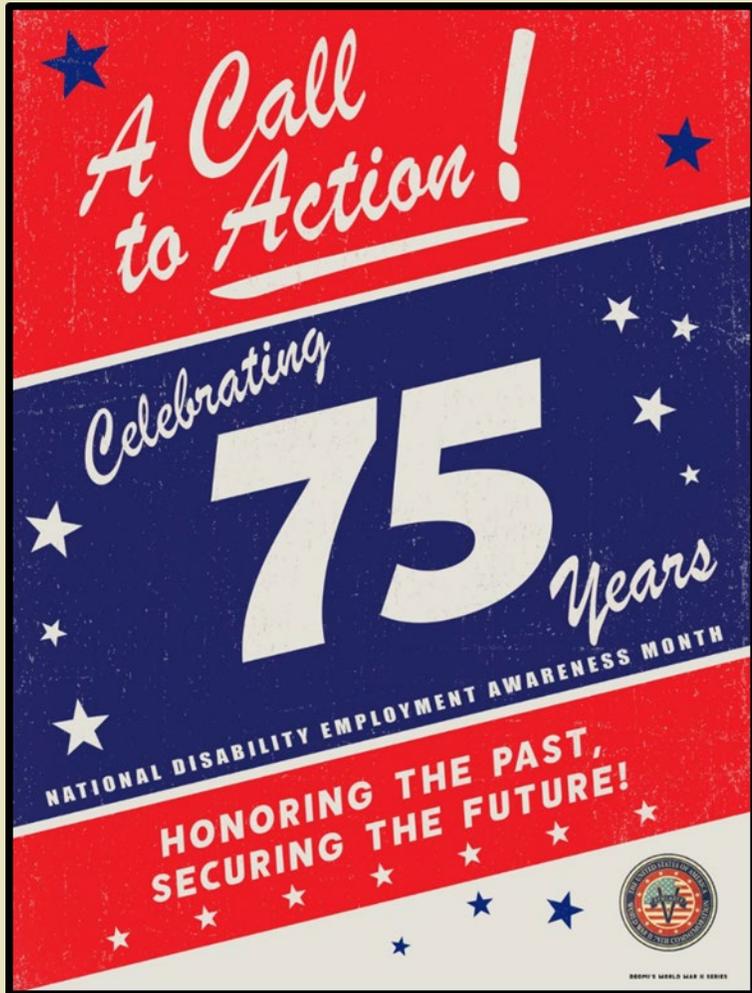
President Harry S. Truman

THE 75TH ANNIVERSARY

Each October, around the nation, Americans celebrate the need for inclusion in employment and the contributions of workers with disabilities.

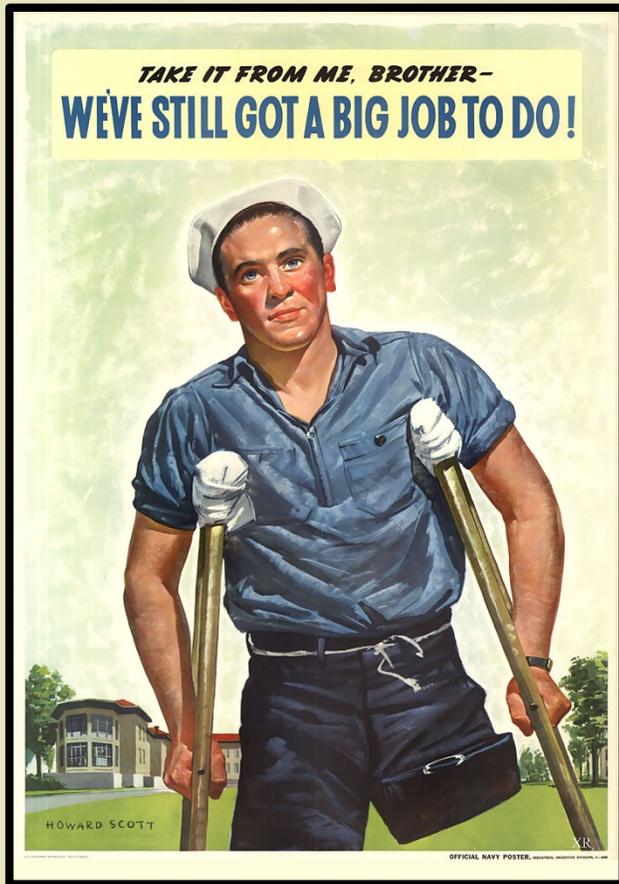
This year marks not only the 75th observance of National Disability Employment Awareness Month (NDEAM) but also the 30th anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

POSTER/PRESENTATION



This presentation provides a brief historical timeline leading to the establishment of National Disability Employment Awareness Month. It highlights legislation and advancements that have been made since the end of World War II to promote an inclusive work force.

1945



The return of Service members with injuries from WWII raised public interest in the contributions of people with disabilities in the workplace.

Between the war years of 1941 to 1945, more than 16 million Service members were deployed and approximately four million served in combat zones.

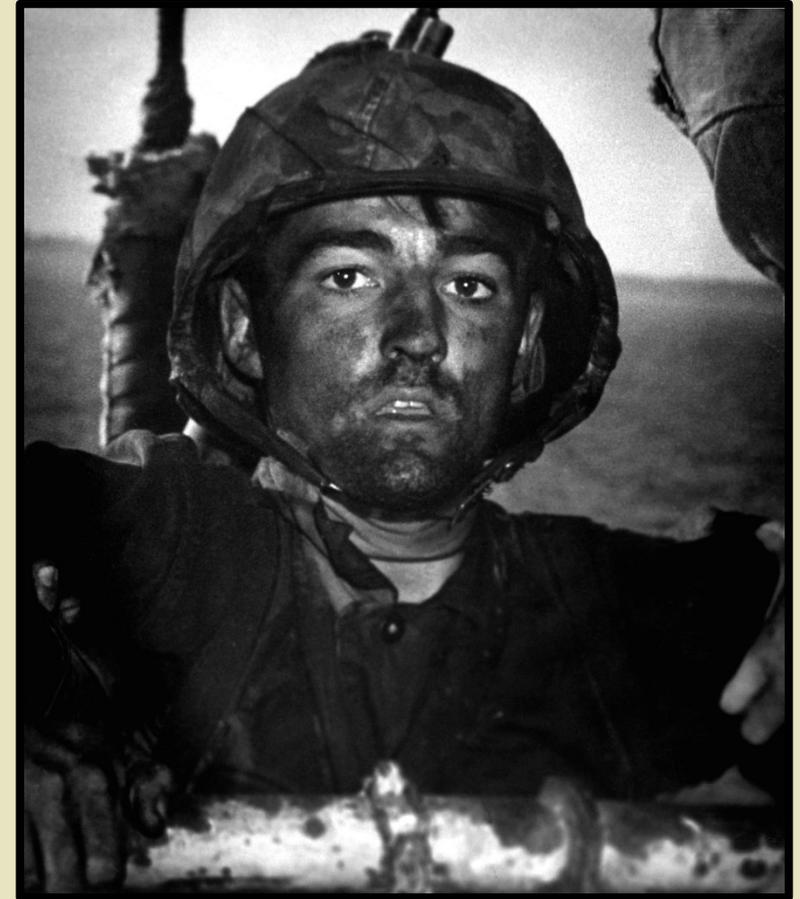
By September 2, 1945, when the Japanese signed the Instrument of Surrender on the USS Missouri, over 407,000 Americans had died and over 671,000 were wounded.

“COMBAT FATIGUE”

Not counted in these numbers, were the thousands of Service members who returned home from the war with psychological wounds or “combat fatigue.”

The prevailing belief was that with time and relaxation the trauma from the war would disappear.

Post Traumatic Stress Disorder was not a clinical diagnosis until 1980, when it was added to the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders.



PRESIDENT HARRY S. TRUMAN



In 1945, Congress enacted Public Law 176 and declared the first week of October “National Employ the Physically Handicapped Week.”

On August 11, 1945, President Harry S. Truman approved the Congressional resolution declaring the commemorative week.

PRESIDENT TRUMAN

In 1946, President Truman wrote, “...*the people of this Nation are determined to do their utmost to restore to normal living those of their countrymen who have become physically handicapped and to assist them in developing their potential power for service to themselves and to their fellows...the people of this Nation are profoundly conscious of the immeasurable debt they owe to the heroes who went bravely forth to battle and returned with physical handicaps...*”

SOCIAL SECURITY DISABILITY INSURANCE 1956

In 1956, President Dwight D. Eisenhower signed into law the Social Security Amendments, which created a Social Security Disability Insurance program for workers with disabilities aged 50 to 64.

Two years later, the benefits were extended to the dependents of workers with disabilities.

1962/1988

In 1962, the word “physically” was removed from “National Employ the Physically Handicapped Week” to recognize the employment needs and contributions of individuals with all types of disabilities.

Congress later expanded the observance to include the entire month of October and changed the name to National Disability Employment Awareness Month in 1988.

ARCHITECTURAL BARRIERS ACT

1968

The Architectural Barriers Act addressed the most significant obstacle to employment for people with disabilities: the physical design of buildings and facilities.

This act requires that all buildings designed, constructed, altered, or leased with federal funds be made accessible to people with disabilities.



THE REHABILITATION ACT

1973

The Rehabilitation Act extended vocational training programs and prohibited discrimination on the basis of disability by federally funded and assisted programs, federal employers, and federal contractors.

The Act was modeled after previous laws which banned race, ethnic origin, and sex based discrimination by federal fund recipients.

It was also historic because for the first time people with disabilities were viewed as a minority group.

AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT

1990



President George H. W. Bush signed into law the Americans with Disabilities Act, the most comprehensive disability rights legislation in history.

This milestone legislation ensured a more inclusive America. Among its provisions it prohibits discrimination in hiring, and guarantees equal access to education and public facilities.

THE ADA AMENDMENTS ACT 2008

The ADA Amendments Act of 2008 made important changes to how “disability” was defined in the Americans with Disabilities Act and favored a broad and inclusive interpretation.

These changes made it easier for a person seeking protection under the law to establish eligibility.

CONCLUSION

Americans with disabilities have long served our nation in all walks of life. Rather than being defined by disability they worked to clear barriers, implemented new ideas, and proved the value of a diverse workforce.

The Department of Defense joins the Nation in paying tribute to the immeasurable accomplishments of those with disabilities whose work helps keep the nation's economy strong and by reaffirming our commitment to ensure equal opportunity for all citizens.

End

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Patrick Air Force Base, Florida
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