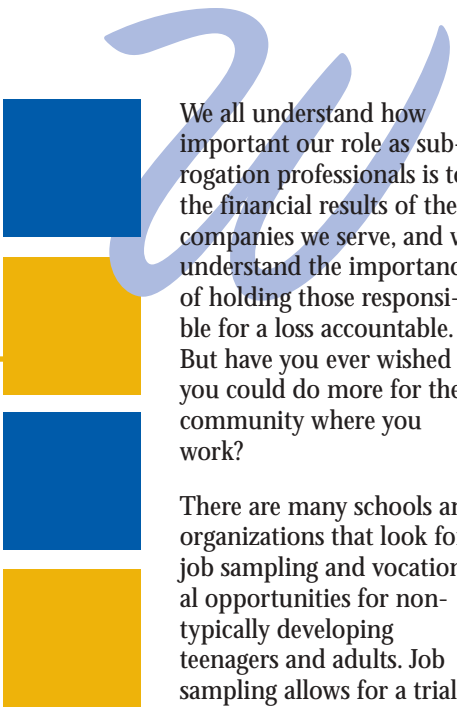


# *A Different Kind of Success Story*

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We all understand how important our role as subrogation professionals is to the financial results of the companies we serve, and we understand the importance of holding those responsible for a loss accountable. But have you ever wished you could do more for the community where you work?

There are many schools and organizations that look for job sampling and vocational opportunities for non-typically developing teenagers and adults. Job sampling allows for a trial at a number of sites and a number of different tasks. For example, a teenager might work in a greenhouse one day, an office the next and a retail store the third. This allows for later placement of this young adult in the community doing a task that will be enjoyed. There are many useful jobs available that can be difficult to fill.

Inclusion in the community for someone that has a developmental disability brings acceptance, confidence and pride. Everyone enjoys feeling useful, participating and being valued for their contributions. We all experience a sense of belonging and develop friendships in our working lives.

There are tremendous opportunities to contribute to your community through your workplace. In my own personal experience I worked for a large insurance company and facilitated a Diversity

Committee. This self-directed volunteer group provided opportunities for learning to value and appreciate individual differences. We also did fundraising activities, which ranged from fishing trips to adopting a family for the holidays. My experience in adopting one family is something I will never forget. We brought gifts and a holiday dinner to a family that was one of two living in the basement of a split-level house. When I got home that night to my comfortable home, my loving family and the smell of chicken roasting in the oven, I broke into happy tears. That night I took nothing I have for granted.

Five years ago I started a subrogation service company. Now as a much smaller organization I asked what sort of community involvement could we accomplish? My answer was inviting a nearby school for autistic children to consider our office for a job sampling location. Once a week, several teenagers come to our office to do mail handling, filing and copying. For some of the participants it is their first time in an office, so appropriate office behavior and etiquette must be learned (e.g., you can't talk to someone when they are on the phone). For others, filing provides an opportunity to utilize math skills. For our part, we look forward to seeing their smiling faces and enjoy being a company sponsor at the school's fundraisers.

So now you say this is a great story, but what does it have to do with subrogation? As Doug Lennick so articulately explained at the NASP conference, we bring our whole self to the workplace, not just a technician. This kind of success can bring a tear to the eye and warmth to the heart. It is also good business. When I feel good about coming to work I am more enthusiastic and productive. My pride in being a part of a company with a corporate conscience is reflected in everything I do. Our accomplishments also contribute to our reputation in the community.

Most of us will not have an opportunity to change the world, but we certainly can make very positive changes to the lives in our corner of the world. If you would like to help identifying organizations to partner with, I would be happy to help. I would also ask the membership if there is an interest, to undertake some effort on behalf of the National Association of Subrogation Professionals.