

The latest updates on what is and is planned for the Uniquely Abled Project.



Welcome to the Uniquely Abled Project Newsletter

July 2016

An update as to what has been happening with the Uniquely Abled Project, and plans for the future.

Visit Our
Website

The Uniquely Abled Project

Welcome to our first UA Project Newsletter! Our purpose is to keep all those interested in the UA Project informed as to events and available resources.

The purpose of the Uniquely Abled Project is to

- Shift the societal paradigm from "disabled" to "uniquely abled".
- Provide vocational opportunities to uniquely abled folks

The UA Project currently has two programs: Uniquely Abled Jobs and Uniquely Abled Academy.

[Click here](#) for a brochure on the benefits to employers from hiring the uniquely abled.

Send an e-mail to IRosenberg@UniquelyAbledProject.org to be added to the UA Project Newsletter mailing list.

The Uniquely Abled Jobs Program

The UA Jobs program is focused on jobs that do not need specialized training, generally jobs with a high degree of repetition such as electronic assembly, deburring, buffing, filing, scanning, organizing, inventory management, etc. In collaboration with the Exceptional Children's Foundation, the UA Jobs Program has placed 21 uniquely abled folks at three Los Angeles aerospace companies (Hawker Pacific Aerospace, United Aeronautical Corporation, and Brek Manufacturing).



We plan to secure resources to expand the awareness and utilization of the UA Jobs program in the Los Angeles area, followed by support for expansion to other areas of the country.

The Uniquely Abled Academy Program

The UA Academy program is focused on careers that require specialized training. The approach is to identify the unique abilities of folks with a particular diagnosis, and then match jobs in demand that require those unique abilities. The first career for which training is being provided is CNC (computer numerically controlled) manufacturing machine operator for those diagnosed with high functioning autism.



A very successful Open House for the Glendale Community College UA Academy was held on May 5. Over 50 folks attended including 20-25 potential students



On June 20 the first UA Academy class of 13 students started its 10-week CNC operator training program at Glendale Community College. A celebration is being planned when the program ends on August 26. Currently we are identifying potential employers. If you are or know a company using CNC machines who could use good entry-level CNC operators, please contact [Brian Larson](#) at Exceptional Children's Foundation, who is handling the job placement and job coaching.

Two articles ([Glendale News-Press](#) and [American Association of Community Colleges](#)) have been published about the Glendale CC UA Academy program, generating numerous calls from around the country expressing interest in establishing UA Academies.

The Verdugo Workforce Development Board was [awarded](#) \$178,571 by the State of California Employment Development Department in coordination with the California Workforce Development Board and the California Labor and Workforce Development Agency in support of the Glendale CC UA Academy.

A UA Academy Guidebook is being written to provide guidance for new sites, incorporating lessons learned so far.

In August [American Built Media](#) is planning to produce at least one short video of the Glendale UA Academy which will be available for showing to prospective students and their parents. We also plan to produce a video for prospective employers.

Thank You's

Since the Uniquely Able Project started three years ago, numerous organizations and individuals have contributed time, energy, ideas, support, and finances. Great appreciation is owed to the following organizations (many of whom contributed more than what is listed):



Uniquely Able Project:

- [Kaufman & Friends](#) and [Retinal Slap](#): UA Project logo
- [O'Melveny & Myers](#): UA Project incorporation

Uniquely Able Jobs Program:

- [Exceptional Children's Foundation](#): employee selection and job coaching
- [Hawker Pacific Aerospace](#): being the pilot project

Uniquely Able Academy Program:

- [Glendale Community College](#): CNC operator skills training and student counseling, program support.
- [California Department of Rehabilitation](#)/Glendale Branch; application evaluation and funding
- [Verdugo Jobs Center](#): job readiness skills training and funding. employer recruitment
- [Haas Factory Outlet/Torrance](#): employer recruitment
- [Gene Haas Foundation](#): funding

- [Weingart Foundation](#): funding
 - [Exceptional Children's Foundation](#): program administration, job placement, job coaching
 - [Exceptional Minds](#): guidance on the program, permission to use material they have developed for their own program.
 - [Kaufman & Friends](#): UA Academy brochure
 - [Retinal Slap](#): UA Academy website
 - [Frank D. Lanterman Regional Center](#): funding, publicizing the program
 - [Goodwill/Southern California](#): publicizing the program
 - [Foothill SELPA](#): publicizing the program
 - [Autism Society of Los Angeles](#): publicizing the program
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What's Next

The Strategic Plan of the Uniquely Aabled Project will be reviewed in a future Newsletter. The UA Project's near-term (2-3 year) goals include:

The UA Project:

- The UA Project website has been updated to accommodate the UA Jobs program, multiple UA Academy sites, and for the various UA program sites to upload and download information.
- The UA Project has incorporated as a non-profit.
- There is a full-time staff of at least one person for each of the two UA Project programs.
- Sufficient funds have been raised to assure financial viability of the UP Project for at least the next 4 years.

The UA Academy Program:

- The UA Academy Guidebook has been completed and distributed.
- There have been at least 8 successful entry level CNC training UA Academies at Glendale CC (successful measured by the size of the classes, the number who successfully complete the program, the number who secure good jobs, and the number who still retain and are happy in those jobs 6 months after completing the program).
- At least one educational program beyond entry level CNC training has been conducted at Glendale CC for those who completed the entry level UA Academy course.
- At least 4 UA Academies are operating in the Los Angeles area.
- At least 4 UA Academies are operating outside the Los Angeles area.
- At least 4 UA Academies outside the Los Angeles area are in development
- An information resource has been established that is easily added to and accessed by UA Academies.

The UA Jobs Program:

- Adequate support has been established for the Uniquely Abled Jobs Program, including staff, articles, a repository of information available on establishing and operating an Uniquely Abled Jobs program, and, a Guidebook for establishing a UA Jobs Program.
- The UA Jobs Program is well established and operating within the Los Angeles area, placing at least 10 uniquely abled folks per year.

We are seeing more and more articles being published on the advantages to employers in hiring the uniquely abled. Please send all such articles to IRosenberg@UniquelyAbledProject.org, and we will post them when the website is updated.

Ivan M. Rosenberg
The Uniquely Abled Project
818-505-9915 IRosenberg@UniquelyAbledProject.org
UniquelyAbledProject.org