

OUR REMARKABLE JOURNEY

2023 ANNUAL REPORT





A LETTER FROM OUR PRESIDENT & CEO, MATT WEIS

TO OUR SUPPORTERS AND COMMUNITIES,

It is an incredible privilege to serve as the President & CEO at National Able Network. Growing up in a tight-knit rural area, I was raised with a profound sense of community, and learned early on that families and neighborhoods are able to achieve enduring strength and shared prosperity by supporting the most vulnerable among them. I've long felt a personal calling and responsibility to make our communities a better place and am both humbled and inspired to have been given the opportunity to lead National Able into this exciting new chapter of its storied history. Each day, I wake up in the company of our team who works tirelessly to elevate individuals, make connections that create lasting economic impact, and cultivate a network of partners who share our vision of ensuring everyone has access fulfilling and family sustaining employment.

My first few months on the job have been nothing short of remarkable. I was able to share my vision for a long and successful organizational future focused on growth and expansion, refine our practices and standards to keep us nimble and responsive to the ever-changing needs of both job seekers and employers, embrace technological innovations to meet job seekers where they are, and renew the organization's commitment to our workforce by adopting workplace flexibilities and investing in our culture to ensure we remain an employer of choice. I even launched a series called **Matt's Minute**, where I share short video clips with the entire agency that helps to create organizational awareness and highlight our internal best practices. It's been truly amazing to see how wonderfully connected we can be even if we aren't in the same physical space.

We are thrilled to announce our new mission statement: **Workforce Solutions and Career Pathways for an Equitable Future**. This mission statement encapsulates some of the incredible success stories that you'll see within this report. These represent a small number of the thousands of individuals who trusted National Able with their most important goals, all of which are centered around the dignity and pride associated with employment.

As we look forward to the future, I thank each of our supporters, partners, our board of directors, and the entire National Able Network staff for their efforts, passion, and unwavering commitment to those we serve. I remain humbled by the great work I see each and every day, and look forward to continuing our organization's remarkable journey together.

IN SERVICE WITH YOU,

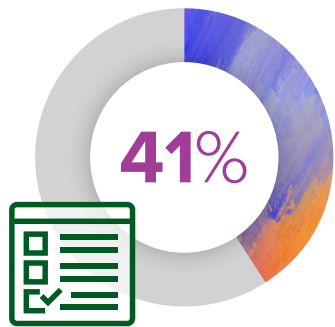
Matt



This year, we reflected on National Able Network’s history, current impact on communities, and our legacy for the change we want to see in the world. Through this introspection, we are thrilled to announce a **new mission statement** to guide our organization into the future:

WORKFORCE SOLUTIONS AND CAREER PATHWAYS FOR AN EQUITABLE FUTURE

We thank our Executive Team, Board of Directors and brilliant staff for this truly inspired mission statement.



41% of National Able Network clients recently surveyed said that they experienced employment discrimination.

In May 2023, Able surveyed clients about their experiences in the program and their current job search. What we learned was not totally unexpected, but it is of critical importance as Able develops service delivery strategies that address inequities in the individuals and communities in which we work.

Far too many job seekers face barriers to obtaining quality jobs because of their individual circumstances, whether that is race, gender, age, or others. Even worse, **41% of clients recently surveyed said that they experienced employment discrimination.**

Workforce participation remains below pre-pandemic levels. There are 1.9 million fewer Americans working today compared to February of 2020.¹

Yet currently there are more than 10.4 million job openings with about 1.2 million **adults in their 40s, 50s and 60s** who make up half of the long-term unemployed.² Even with 10.4 million jobs to fill, older workers remain unemployed at higher rates and for longer periods of time than those in younger age brackets. Many of these workers seek assistance through National Able Network's administration of public workforce programs such as the **Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA)** and the **Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP)**, who make up **half of the long-term unemployed.**³

And there are promising opportunities for aspiring information technology professionals who participate in our signature IT Career Lab program. Overall employment in computer and information technology occupations is projected to grow 15 percent from 2021 to 2031, much faster than the average for all occupations; this increase is expected to result in about 682,800 new jobs over the decade.³ In addition to new jobs from growth, opportunities arise from the need to replace workers who leave their occupations permanently. About 418,500 openings each year, on average, are projected to come from growth and replacement needs.⁴ Of the clients surveyed, we asked if they identified with demographics that typically experience greater challenges to employment.

¹ <https://www.uschamber.com/workforce/understanding-americas-labor-shortage>

² <https://www.dailynews.com/2023/04/30/10-things-to-know-about-older-workers-and-the-labor-shortage/>

³ <https://www.bls.gov/ooh/computer-and-information-technology/home.htm>

⁴ <https://www.bls.gov/ooh/computer-and-information-technology/home.htm>

AT A GLANCE: WHO WE SERVE

WHO WE SERVE⁵

4%

Identify with LGBTQ+

More than
1 in 5

Reported a disability

9%

Have a prior arrest record or were formerly incarcerated

9%

Identify as a Veteran

54%

Are senior citizens (55 years of age or better)

3X

Higher unemployment rate for those who identify as LGBTQ+

Unemployment rate for people with a disability (7.6 percent) was about **twice as high** as the rate for people with no disability (3.5 percent).⁶

27%

National **unemployment rate for formerly incarcerated**⁷

In May 2023, the **veteran unemployment rate was 2.6%, up from 2.2% the previous month.**⁸

31 weeks

Average time spent by 55+ looking for work⁹

WHAT THEY EXPERIENCE IN THE JOB MARKET

⁵ Identification reported by National Able Network 2023 survey respondents.

⁶ U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2023

⁷ U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2022

⁸ U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2023

⁹ <https://www.bls.gov/web/empsit/cpseea36.htm>

IS WORK WORKING FOR OUR CLIENTS?

Each student's journey to employment and self-sufficiency is unique. At Able, we aim to understand and address these needs while connecting participants with solutions that address personal and professional goals. As an organization that leads its mission through the lens of equity, Able is pleased to share that **94% of survey respondents say they value employment opportunities that have well-defined diversity, equity, and inclusion practices**. This shared set of priorities serves as a guidepost for the development of subsidized and unsubsidized employment opportunities for individuals not proportionally represented in the IT sector, as Able's team prioritizes partners with well-defined diversity, equity, and inclusion practices.

Navigating career options can be daunting; **but 1 in 5 clients said that they were not sure** about which industry or occupation they wanted to pursue, and **70% said they were not willing to relocate for a job opportunity**. Able spends a significant amount of time helping clients build an understanding of current labor market conditions and works to match seniors' skills to open opportunities. With a promising 10-year employment outlook, **69% of clients said they feel more confident about the job market** than they did 6 months ago.

TELL US ABOUT YOUR JOB SEARCH

89%

Say they value employment opportunities that have well-defined diversity, equity, and inclusion practices

1 in 5

Say they were not sure which industry or occupation they wanted to pursue

69%

Feel more confident about the job market than they were 6 months ago

80%

Are seeking job search assistance because they need critical resources to support their household

70%

Are not willing to relocate for a job opportunity



“I would tell anyone to enroll in National Able [Network] because my resume got updated and I was able to accept a job offer outside of the corporate world, which was my goal.”

CLIENT SUCCESS: CELEBRATED

NEW CAREER GOALS = NEW REMARKABLE RESUME!

Kym Simmons worked in the banking industry for most of her career, however her dreams and aspirations changed in March 2023. It was during this time that Kym decided to pursue a career outside of the corporate world, so she connected with National Able Network to begin her new career journey.

As she began her career transition, Kym knew she would need to refresh her job search skills including working on her resume and practicing her interview skills. Kym’s career coach, Maria Gomez Macias, recommended that Kym sign up for National Able Network’s RemarkAble Careers training platform. From interview insights to Microsoft Word and Excel training – RemarkAble Careers meets job seekers where they are and helps them grow into the career pathway they are pursuing. Kym says, “The online learning that came from this program was great! I learned a lot and checking the calendar and signing up for teachings became a daily part of my routine as I was job hunting.”

As Kym worked with her Career Coach Maria, they both agreed that crafting a resume was a critical piece of the job hunt. There are so many types of resumes, from chronological resumes to functional resumes and everything in between. Kym says, “I think I took the resume teaching twice because I needed the help, and taking it a second time gave me even more help understanding the changes I made.”

Soon enough all of Kym’s hard work paid off and she was presented with an awesome career opportunity. Career Coach Maria recalls admiring Kym’s tenacity throughout the entire process. Of the entire experience with National Able Network, Kym says, “I would tell anyone to enroll in National Able [Network] because my resume got updated and I was able to accept a job offer outside of the corporate world, which was my goal. I am a case worker within my community and that is a huge change from the banking world for me!”



“National Able Network gave me a new opportunity in life and to get a better job. I really appreciate everything.”

CLIENT SUCCESS: CELEBRATED

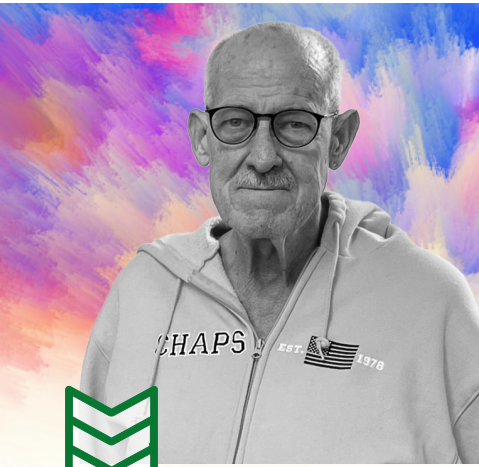
DRIVEN TO SUCCEED: A NEW CAREER AND A NEW OUTLOOK ON LIFE

When Benjamin Raya Rico was 15 years old, he and his family moved from Michoacán, Mexico to Chicago. Benjamin recalls being full of hope and determination and guided by the pursuit of a better life. The memory of this major transition remains very fresh, and Benjamin remembers adjusting not only to a new language, but to a new culture as well. Although high school was challenging, Benjamin successfully earned his GED. He began to work in the landscaping industry and continued in that role on and off for years. Since landscaping was seasonal employment, Benjamin continuously found himself unemployed during the off season and he strongly wanted to create a better life for himself. At the age of 26, he knew he was interested in truck driving, but wasn't sure how to get started. His friend connected him with National Able Network, and Benjamin found the jumpstart he needed to improve his career and his life.

“Before I was in landscaping, and I didn't see a future. I wanted to improve my life,” says Benjamin. He was determined to succeed. In order to pursue a career path as a professional truck driver, Benjamin needed to earn his Commercial Driver's License (CDL). With the help of National Able Network's Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) program, CDL training was finally within reach! “The process was very easy. They gave me the instructions to fill out the application in the Pilsen office, and I just waited,” says Benjamin, “I was really excited to get approved!”

As soon as he was approved, Benjamin connected with his career coach Stephanie Levine. He received guidance on how to improve his resume and get job-search ready – all while actively involved in the CDL training courses. “Benjamin was determined to earn his CDL, and he worked very hard to improve his resume. He was responsive and very involved in all the aspects throughout his time with National Able Network,” says Stephanie.

After all his hard work, Benjamin successfully earned his CDL from the Juarez Driving School! He finally had the key to begin his brand-new career journey! “The CDL training was really helpful and the way they explained things to me was really helpful,” said Benjamin. “National Able Network gave me a new opportunity in life and to get a better job. I really appreciate everything.”



“...working is about feeling appreciated. It’s almost better than a paycheck! ...the world needs to know that even at 65, 75, or 80 – there’s still good people.”

CLIENT SUCCESS: CELEBRATED

NAVY VETERAN NEVER GIVES UP ON LIFE... AND ON CAREER!*

James “Jim” Lewis had always been able to find employment. At the age of 12, he got his first job in construction. “I would show up that day for work, they would give me a work order and by the end of the day, no matter what – it got done,” says Jim. His work ethic only strengthened when he joined the U.S. Navy at the age of 21. “Being in the Navy gave me an idea of what the world is like,” says Jim, “You have to finish the job, you have to produce.” Upon leaving the Navy, Jim returned to work in construction until he was in his sixties. Actually, in fifteen years on the job, Jim was never late and never missed a day! He loved being productive, and always considered his experience an asset. In 2012, Jim faced some health challenges. He was predicted to live between 2 and 6 months. But Jim refused to give up!

Through chemo, hard work, and sheer determination, Jim was able to improve his health conditions. He beat the predictions. And even though he felt a bit weak, and he was older – Jim was more than ready to get back to work! He found a transportation occupation which he thoroughly enjoyed for six years.

Once he was back in job search at the age of 75, Jim faced some challenges. “No one would hire me because of my age. It put me in a bad place, mentally quite frankly,” explains Jim, “I was stone broke. No money, no food, no hope, no one would hire me, and I wanted to work...”

Jim connected to National Able Network’s Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP) and quickly matched with his career coach, Kristi Erritt. Kristi says, “He wanted to get back to work. He was always willing to learn, make phone calls, and take suggestions. He was THE ideal participant!” Prior to working with Kristi, Jim says he did not feel comfortable using any kind of technology, however he began to do research online and pursued his Commercial Driver’s License (CDL) while also participating in job club.

“He’s an amazing human...he never ever gave up,” says Kristi. Jim earned his CDL and found a job. “Without National Able Network I would’ve just given up, and I’d probably be in a nursing home, but I think hope is the big thing that National Able [Network] produces in a person. I was determined to be productive...The job I have now – I wouldn’t have been able to do that without the help from National Able Network. Period...And working is about feeling appreciated. It’s almost better than a paycheck!...the world needs to know that even at 65, 75, or 80 – there’s still good people.”

CLIENT SUCCESS: CELEBRATED

THE TECH CAREER ‘SHAKE’ UP: A JOURNEY TO SUCCESS

Alfred Davis-Shih graduated college in 2010. He quickly pursued his passion at the time working on the production side of TV commercials, short-form documentaries, news stories, and more. However, in 2014, Alfred decided to pursue a different passion: data analytics. He was offered an amazing job at a large, internationally-recognized technology company in Chicago. Alfred and his husband made the move from Tallahassee, Florida to Chicago in the Summer of 2019. His career blossomed and he enjoyed his time there until November 2022 when the company experienced layoffs that directly impacted him.

“Because I was laid off right before the holiday season, I didn’t actively start pursuing a new job until the new year,” says Alfred. “And I’m glad I did because during that time, there were massive layoffs happening all over the tech industry.” This led to a revelation. He wanted to remain in technology, but sought to pursue a career with growing opportunities like those available in data science, machine learning, and artificial intelligence. He knew that he would need to pursue additional training and certifications. Alfred applied to National Able Network’s Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) program and quickly began his new career path. He was accepted at a Data Science and Machine Learning Bootcamp at Northeastern Illinois University.

While training, Alfred worked to fine-tune his job search skills with his career coach Stephanie Levine. “I learned about all these other services available. It was definitely an added surprise! The career fairs connected me to the right companies, and the resume review was super awesome,” Alfred said. Alfred’s hard work and determination paid off and while he was still in training he was hired as the Senior Manager with Finance Data Governance for Shake Shack’s Corporate offices. “It’s been interesting to do the bootcamp while working, because I’ve been able to apply what I’m learning almost immediately,” said Alfred. “It all just came together at the right time. I was very lucky in that sense.”

When reflecting on his experience at National Able Network, Alfred says, “Massive, massive thank you. It was such a nice surprise to find this organization and everyone working in it. I don’t think I would’ve advanced as quickly as I did without having National Able Network be part of my journey.”



“It was such a nice surprise to find this organization and everyone working in it. I don’t think I would’ve advanced as quickly as I did without having National Able Network be part of my journey.”

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

CONSOLIDATED STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES

FOR THE PERIOD ENDED JUNE 30, 2022 AND JUNE 30, 2021

	2023	2022
Revenues		
Total Revenues	\$ 22,678,276	\$ 25,138,071
Expenses		
Program Services	20,621,534	22,980,156
Support Services	1,729,244	1,747,760
Total Expenses	22,350,778	24,727,916
Change in Net Assets	327,498	410,155
Net Assets		
Beginning of Year	4,990,131	4,579,976
End of Year	\$ 5,317,629	4,990,131

CONSOLIDATED STATEMENTS OF FINANCIAL POSITION

FOR THE PERIOD ENDED JUNE 30, 2022 AND JUNE 30, 2021

	2023	2022		2023	2022
ASSETS			LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS		
Current Assets			Current Liabilities		
Cash	\$ 3,828,382	\$ 3,359,592	Accounts Payable – Trade	\$ 1,194,693	\$ 834,480
Net Receivables	\$ 3,531,798	\$ 3,407,881	Other Liabilities	\$ 1,866,891	\$ 966,110
Promise to Give	\$ 200,000	\$ 230,000	Total Current Liabilities	\$ 3,061,584	\$ 1,800,590
Prepaid Expenses	\$ 181,909	\$ 80,282	Long-Term Liabilities		
Total Current Assets	\$ 7,742,089	\$ 7,077,755	Total Long-Term Liabilities	\$ 4,321,454	\$ 371,541
Net Furniture & Equipment ..	\$ 32,371	\$ 24,831	Total Liabilities	\$ 7,374,038	\$ 2,172,131
Right-of-Use Lease Assets ..	\$ 4,857,531	\$ —	Net Assets		
Deposits	\$ 59,676	\$ 59,676	Net Assets	\$ 5,317,629	\$ 4,990,131
Total Assets	\$ 12,691,667	\$ 7,162,262	Total Liabilities	\$ 12,691,667	\$ 7,162,262

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

OFFICERS

CHAIR

Tammy McMiller

VICE CHAIR

Khadija James-Keating

TREASURER

Michael Chrisler

SECRETARY

Maija Renko

DIRECTORS

Matt Weis

Angel Torres

Anthony Onagan

Danya Rosen

Lorenzo Garth

Jonelle Welch

Matthew Vandenack

Patricia O'Brien

PARTIAL LIST OF FUNDERS

GOVERNMENT

United States Department of Labor

Illinois Department of Commerce
and Economic Opportunity

Indiana Department of Workforce
Development

Chicago Cook Workforce
Partnership

Chicago Department of Family
and Support Services

Illinois Department on Aging

Nebraska Department of
Health and Human Services

Illinois Department of
Veterans Affairs

PRIVATE

National Asian Pacific Center
on Aging

Robert R. McCormick Foundation

Chicago Community Trust

Chicago Foundation for Women

Bank of America

Lloyd A. Fry Foundation

United Way Metro Chicago

A Private Family Foundation

Dr. Scholl Foundation



www.nationalable.org

