



DEPARTMENT OF THE TREASURY  
WASHINGTON, D.C.

SECRETARY OF THE TREASURY

October 17, 2003

**MEMORANDUM FOR ALL TREASURY EMPLOYEES**

**FROM:**

John W. Snow

**SUBJECT:**

Javits-Wagner-O'Day Program--National Disability Employment Awareness Month

October heralds the beginning of a new fiscal year and this year, the beginning of National Disability Employment Awareness Month. As a part of this observance, I want to encourage each of you to reflect on the importance of the Javits-Wagner-O'Day (JWOD) Program. Under the JWOD Program, Government Purchase Card users and acquisition personnel buy supplies and services furnished by nonprofit agencies employing people who are blind or who have other severe disabilities.

The theme of this year's JWOD Program celebration is "JWOD Works for America." I am especially proud of our agency's efforts to provide employment and training opportunities for people with severe disabilities through our support of the program. Under JWOD, supplies and services purchased by Treasury and other federal agencies currently generate jobs for nearly 40,000 Americans who are blind or who have other severe disabilities. I ask all Treasury employees to help increase this number by identifying more contracting opportunities with the JWOD Program.

With an unemployment rate of 70 percent, people with disabilities continue to represent the nation's largest untapped pool of talented, skilled, knowledgeable and dedicated workers. President Bush cites these statistics in his *New Freedom Initiative* for people with disabilities, and pledges the Administration's commitment to increasing the ability of Americans with disabilities to integrate into the workforce. The major challenges to productive employment of qualified people with disabilities are attitudinal barriers and false assumptions about what people can and cannot do. People with disabilities can be productive members of the workforce. Your efforts to develop awareness and to educate about this important issue will help ensure Treasury makes an important contribution to President Bush's goal of fulfilling America's promise to Americans with disabilities.

Please learn more about the important role you can play in the JWOD Program at [www.jwod.gov](http://www.jwod.gov) and make a special effort to show your support as we all observe National Disability Employment Awareness Month.