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# Opening Doors Newsletter

*A publication to promote the inclusion of individuals  
with disabilities within AmeriCorps programs.*

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## **Wall Street Journal Article**

**O**ur Disability Affinity Group received an email pertaining to an article, “Workplace Disabilities Are on the Rise,” from the Wall Street Journal, 5/1/07, looking at the increase in disabilities among American workers. Many of the concerns regarding employees with disabilities can be related to volunteers and service members in national service programs.

**D**isabilities among American workers are on the rise. The article discusses how unhealthy lifestyles, increased filings for disability claims for mental health issues, and higher disability claim rates among women workers have resulted in the need for more and more employers to instill accommodation practices in the culture and policies of their workplaces.

**A** growing number of companies are offering greater scheduling flexibility, and are providing assistive equipment for employees with disabilities on the job. A Sylvania manager stated, “In the future, there will be more pressure on employers to... keep as many people at work as you can.” Another quote from the article is from Robert Taylor, executive director of the insurance industry’s Council for Disability Awareness, who exclaims “The general health of the work force is declining”. As the population becomes less active and ages, there will be more assistance needed for employers to help make modifications and adjustments for workers returning to their jobs after acquiring chronic illnesses or disabilities.

**T**he complete article can be found in the Wall Street Journal archives. (Source- Workplace Disabilities Are on the Rise, Employers Devise Strategies to Accommodate Growing Ranks of Employees Impaired by Age, Obesity and Disease, By M.P. MCQUEEN May 1, 2007; Page D1, Wall Street Journal.)

## **Survey Results**

**A**s there still are a few “Members W/ Disabilities” surveys trickling in I was not able to compile all of the data for this newsletter. I’ll send out a separate email in a format that I hope will be easily readable. To all of you, who made the distinction of regional areas, thanks. April was the date chosen by many of you to complete the surveys, however, if it is more convenient to process the surveys at a different date then by all means let me know. I’ll send you the forms when you want them. I just need to report on these for the Commissioners in July. Most importantly I need the data for requesting funding. Thank you for your efforts completing this process and have a safe 4th of July.

