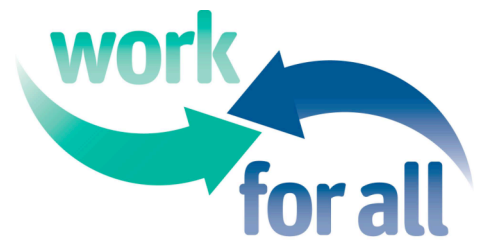


David Schaffert, Project Director  
**Work for All**  
809 Legion Way  
Olympia, WA 98501  
360.357.3362

WorkforAll.biz  
Info@WorkforAll.biz



# PRESS RELEASE

## Chambers Partner in Five County Disabled Worker Initiative

*Work for All Assists Region's Businesses with Employing Individuals with Disabilities*

**Olympia, April 1, 2009:** Once an overlooked talent pool, people with disabilities are contributing to the American economy in ever growing ways. This fact is driving an exciting new initiative, "Work for All," that's being launched this spring across a five county area.

"Work for All is designed to encourage a culture shift that embraces individuals with disabilities as part of the workforce. This is done not as a social model, but by business to recruit talent and better serve their customers," said David Schaffert, President/CEO of the Thurston County Chamber of Commerce. The initiative is crafted after successful national programs that have expanded use of this labor pool. Work for All is being developed in cooperation with Morningside, the WA State Department of Vocational Rehabilitation, and Chambers regionally.

Work for All has an emphasis on outreach, education, and marketing, all in an effort to communicate the workforce potential of people with disabilities. The initiative creates opportunities for employers to share best practices related to employing disabled individuals. It also includes a web-based network for the five county area covered by Pacific Mountain Alliance for Innovation WIRED, a major funder for the project. The counties include Thurston, Lewis, Mason, Pacific and Grays Harbor.

According to Neil Romano, assistant secretary for the U.S. Dept. of Labor, "Employees with disabilities add diversity to the workforce, which, in turn, drives innovation." Innovation is a commonly identified thread for what companies need to be successful in the future.

For more information on Work for All, visit [www.WorkForAll.biz](http://www.WorkForAll.biz) or call 360.357.3362.

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