Able South Carolina changing culture of disability employment, one individual at a time

“There is a remarkable workforce right here, ready to be hired,” says Kimberly Tis- sot, executive director at Able South Carolina. “We educate on discrimination, connect all parties with supports they need, and promote a greater understanding that employing individuals with disabilities will help communities thrive.”

Hire Me SC was created thanks to a five-year federal grant secured by Able South Carolina and the South Carolina Disability Employment Coalition.

Initiatives include hosting an employer summit to educate businesses on the benefits of hiring inclusively, providing statewide workshops to dispel myths about employment and disability benefits, and working to decrease employment barriers.

A social media portion allows young individuals with disabilities to voice career ambitions, discuss barriers faced, and share successes using the hashtag #HireMeSC. “You may be told by the employer, ‘Sorry, but we have gone with another applicant.’ It is important that you do not put your head down,” says Derrick Means, full-time library assistant at Spartanburg High with cerebral palsy. “It is important that you get up, dust yourself off, and try again.”

“Stories from individuals like Derrick encourage others to pursue their career ambitions and understand that employment with equal salary and wage is attainable,” says Tissot.

In year two of the grant, they have more to conquer. “We are excited to see the footprint of this campaign extend, and the impact it will have along the way on the lives of individuals with disabilities. We invite all to join us in this mission by going to our Hire Me SC Facebook page.”