

Andrew D. Houghton

Andrew D. Houghton is well known for employing solid business practices in the development and implementation of programs that promote economic self-sufficiency, employment and full participation for people with disabilities. He is president and founder of Disability Inclusion Solutions, Inc., a small business specializing in the production of print and visual media for nonprofit, public and private sector companies related to the recruitment, hiring and promotion of employees with disabilities. Mr. Houghton has conducted marketing, training and outreach programs for Fortune 500 companies, which improved customer service while increasing the recruitment, hiring and retention of people with disabilities. He has produced, directed and written numerous media projects, including "Roll Models 24/7," a documentary about people living with spinal cord injuries. Recent projects include production of an educational training video on Customized Employment in the state of Ohio and a Public Service Announcement that was viewed by nearly 20 million people across the country. He also serves on numerous boards for local and national nonprofit organizations.

Mr. Houghton was appointed by President George W. Bush to the non-partisan Committee for Purchase From People Who Are Blind or Severely Disabled (Committee) in February 2003, as a private citizen representing the interests of nonprofit agency employees with severe disabilities. In May 2006, Mr. Houghton was reappointed to serve a second term, and in July 2006 and 2008, he was unanimously elected by his peers as Committee Chairperson. In July 2010, Mr. Houghton was again unanimously elected as Chairperson to unprecedented third term. He is the first private citizen and the first person with a disability to chair the Committee. Mr. Houghton's unprecedented five year service as Chairperson ended on July 14, 2011. The Committee is an independent Federal agency responsible for overseeing and administering the AbilityOne Program, which has a nationwide workforce of more than 47,000 Americans who are blind or who have other significant disabilities. These individuals work for more than 600 nonprofit agencies across the country.

His major accomplishments as Chairperson included the Quality Work Environment Initiative (QWE). Through QWE, nonprofit agencies participating in the AbilityOne Program must

continue to evaluate and adopt state-of-the-art practices that enhance employee productivity and foster opportunities for advancement and outplacement into community-based employment opportunities. He also spearheaded program re-branding, resulting in the adoption of "AbilityOne" as the new program brand and nationwide implementation of the moniker on all program-related products and services. Mr. Houghton worked closely with members of Congress and both the Bush and Obama administrations to ensure that the Committee's vision for the AbilityOne Program is consistent with contemporary disability and procurement policies. At the same time, he built consensus and support among internal and external program stakeholders.

Previously, Mr. Houghton was appointed by then-Governor Jeb Bush in 2004 to serve on Florida's Blue Ribbon Task Force (BRTF) on Inclusive Community Living, Lifelong Transition, and Employment of Persons with Developmental Disabilities. In 2005, he was subsequently appointed to serve on the Florida Rehabilitation Council, where he served as First Vice Chairman. Mr. Houghton's state-level work also includes his service as Gubernatorial-appointed State Commissioner for the Washington Commission on Community and National Service from 2000-2002.

Internationally, Mr. Houghton has advised transitional governments on disability policy and assisted them in developing and implementing sports and recreational programs that benefit their citizens with disabilities. In November 1999, he visited Kosovo to explore post conflict disability infrastructure and needs of the disability community. In June 2001, he returned to Kosovo on a six month consultancy for Vietnam Veterans of America Foundation to develop and implement policy and programs that improve quality of life for people with disabilities. In 1996, Mr. Houghton assisted the International Rescue Committee in developing advocacy training, sports, return-to-work, and support group programs for people with disabilities in Bosnia. He returned to Bosnia in 1997 with the International Medical Corps to conduct the Bosnia Wheelchair Basketball and Land Mine Awareness Tour, where he led a team of seven gold medalist paralympians on an 11-day, seven-city tour through Bosnia and Croatia.