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*From the desk of: Martha Garber*

A microenterprise is defined as a business with 5 or fewer employees and startup costs of \$35,000 or less. The [Association of Enterprise Opportunity \(AEO\)](#) estimates 24 million microenterprises in the country, which represents 87% of all businesses.

The decision to pursue self-employment is not for everyone, but for those with an entrepreneurial spirit, it can be a rewarding choice. Rehabilitation professionals who assist and support an individual's decision to pursue self-employment are often at a loss for resources and a good model to evaluate feasibility. In this issue, we will look closer at the microenterprise.



**Editorial Staff**

- Editor  
Martha Garber  
Project Director
- Contributing Authors  
Margaret J. Cortez  
Marcy Haag  
Jim Humes  
Yvonne Raffini  
Zach Sneed

Principal Investigator  
Linda Holloway

Any comments about the content or design of this e-Newsletter should be directed to [Martha Garber](#)

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***The Abilities Fund***

[The Abilities Fund](#) is a nationwide community development group that gears its services to advancing entrepreneurship opportunities for Americans with disabilities. Originators of the [Feasibility First Model](#) of business planning, the Abilities Fund educates rehabilitation professionals and prospective entrepreneurs on the steps required to develop and launch a successful business idea from initial information gathering workshops to idea feasibility to funding. The Abilities Fund now also provides or backs loans for small businesses.

***Start-Up USA!***

[Start-Up USA](#) (Self-employment Technical Assistance, Resources, & Training) is another resource for individuals with disabilities who are interested in entrepreneurship. Resources listed at this site address self-employment issues for [veterans](#), [Native Americans](#), and other individuals with disabilities. There is also help for [developing business plans](#), and an [entrepreneur's network with success stories](#) and tips for aspiring small business owners. Other helpful links include a [Webcast training series](#) (check out the webcast on [Using Work Incentives to Fund Microenterprise](#)) and a comprehensive list of [small business resources](#).

***Training Schedule***

July 10, 2008:  
[Employment of People with a Disability and a Criminal Background](#),  
Dallas, TX

July 11 & 18, 2008: [Conflict Resolution for Vocational Rehabilitation Professionals](#), Online  
Webinar

July 16-17, 2008:  
[Supported Employment Basic Skills Clinic](#),  
Lubbock, TX

July 25, August 1 & 8, 2008:  
[Social Security Disability Benefits & Impact of Work](#), Online Webinar

August 12-14, 2008:  
[Certificate in Employment Services](#),  
(Session II: Sept 16-18),  
Dallas, TX

August 27-28, 2008: [Job Coaching](#), New Orleans, LA

[For a list of all of our training programs, visit our calendar!](#)

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## Comments

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and story ideas to e-  
News Bulletin

[Project Director &  
Editor, Martha  
Garber.](#)

## *Supports for Small Business & Microenterprise*

Probably one of the oldest and best small business support organizations around, SCORE, Counselors to America's Small Business, has expanded over the years and now boasts service and support for small business in a variety of formats. The experts database can be accessed 24/7, online support and training is available, templates for developing business and/or financial plans for start-up or established companies can all be accessed through their website at <http://www.score.org/index>

Veteran small business consultant and author, Alice Weiss Doyel, has tips, tricks, and article excerpts from her book, No More Job Interviews! Self-employment Strategies for People with Disabilities, available on her [website: Bold Consulting Services](#)

[DisabilityBiz](#) is another great resource for aspiring entrepreneurs. Their site features discussion forums, success stories, and coming soon, an Ask the Experts feature.

## *The Association for Enterprise Opportunity*

The [Association for Enterprise Opportunity \(AEO\)](#) is the national leadership organization for microenterprise information. Comprised of member lending organizations in each state, AEO is a resource for entrepreneurship news and policies, as well as training events on topics such as business plan development, feasibility studies for small business ideas, technical assistance, and access to capital and markets. Click here to see a short video on microenterprise featured June 23, 2008 on [MSNBC's Today's Money](#) segment. There are member AEO organizations in all 50 states. Below is a sampling of AEOs in Region VI. For a complete list of microenterprise lending organizations in Region VI, visit our [Resources Page](#).

Arkansas: <http://www.altconsulting.org/>

Louisiana: <http://goodworknetwork.org/>

New Mexico: <http://www.accionnewmexico.org/>

Oklahoma: <http://sbac.cherokee.org/>

Texas: <http://www.acciontexas.org/>

## *Transitions*



**Happy Birthday E-News!** We are one year old this month!! E-news was born from the recommendation of our advisory committee in April of 2007. It appears from your responses that

## Employment Training in Lubbock

### *FINAL CALL!*

Registration for the **Supported Employment Basic Skills** training July 16-17 in Lubbock, TX officially ends July 2. However, registration will remain open until July 8, unless it reaches capacity prior to that. New vendors or others may be interested in this last call for registrations.

[Click here for program details and a link to the registration page.](#)

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### *New Webinar Features Conflict Resolution*

**Conflict Resolution for Vocational Rehabilitation Professionals:** Through this two-part, 3-hour class July 11 and 18, participants will learn skills and techniques to handle disagreements between themselves and others more effectively; disagree with others without being offensive in the process; de-escalate a situation that is becoming or has become volatile; and much more. [For details and to register, click here.](#)

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### *Upcoming Conferences*

E-news was a good idea.

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The **ADA Restoration Act of 2008 passed the House of Representatives with a vote of 402 to 17.** The bill, now being referred to as the ADA

Amendments Act of 2008 because of the several amendments made to it so far, restores the protections passed in the ADA Act of 1990 which have been weakened over the years by a series of unfavorable judgements in ADA-cited discrimination cases.

The bill now goes to the Senate for consideration. If enacted, it becomes effective on January 1, 2009.



[Workforce Innovations 2008](#), July 15-17, 2008, New Orleans, LA

[2008 Annual Conference on Independent Living](#), July 21-24, 2008, Washington, DC

[Texas Rehabilitation Association Conference](#), Aug 3-5, 2008, South Padre Island, Texas

[Louisiana Rehabilitation Association & Regional NRA Conference](#), October 1-3, 2008, Baton Rouge, LA

[Texas Rehab Action Network Conference](#), October 2-4, 2008, Dallas, TX

[2008 NRA National Training Conference](#), October 23-26, 2008, St. Louis, MO

[CSAVR Fall Conference 2008](#), November 16-19, 2008, San Diego, CA

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