



## MITSUBISHI ELECTRIC AMERICA FOUNDATION LAUNCHES NATIONAL M>PWR INITIATIVE, AWARDS \$1.5 MILLION IN GRANTS

*Focused on Empowering Youth with Disabilities to Lead Productive Lives*

WASHINGTON, DC, February 20, 2014 — Mitsubishi Electric America Foundation announces \$1,457,242 in new and continuing grants, as part of its national [M>PWR Initiative](#) designed to empower youth with disabilities and veterans with disabilities so they can lead productive lives.

According to the U.S. Department of Labor, only 21 percent of people with disabilities participate in the workforce, compared to 69 percent of the population without disabilities. “Through the M>PWR Initiative we hope to address this disparity,” says Kevin R. Webb, director of the Mitsubishi Electric America Foundation. “Our goal is to put the collective power of our philanthropic dollars and volunteer efforts, and the expertise of our national and community network to increase employment outcomes for youth and veterans with disabilities as they transition to the workforce,” continues Webb.

As part of its [M>PWR Initiative](#), the Foundation has awarded \$1,020,200 in new and \$437,042 in continuing grants to the following national organizations.

### **Continuing Projects**

- The second year of a \$149,578/two-year grant to the **US Business Leadership Network**, which is working in partnership with the **Employer Assistance & Resource Network (EARN)**, to continue the *Career Link Mentoring Program*. The program places college students and recent graduates with disabilities in a mentoring relationship with business professionals.
- The second year of a \$159,990/two year project with the **US International Council on Disability** to support the *Youth in International Development & Affairs Program*, which places college students with disabilities in summer internships with international affairs organizations.
- The second year of a \$127,474/two year grant to **Wilderness Inquiry** for *Project WILD*. This program provides adventure leadership training to high school students with intellectual disabilities to help the students build their confidence and leadership skills.

## New Grants

- \$260,000 to the **Marriott Foundation for People with Disabilities** over the next three years to support *Bridges from School to Work*, a program that examines ways in which employer networks can successfully implement Ticket to Work to achieve employment outcomes for young employees.
- \$223,000 to **DO-IT at the University of Washington** to support a three-year *AccessSTEM-Careers Program*—a career development model for post-secondary students with disabilities, employers and colleges to create a pipeline of workers prepared for jobs in the technology sector.
- \$187,500 to the **Autistic Self-Advocacy Network** over the next three years to continue its Summer Leadership Academy and extend its successful *Autistic Campus Inclusion* project to the state level beginning with Tennessee in 2014.
- \$150,000 to the **Human Engineering Research Laboratories at the University of Pittsburgh** over two years to support the *Advancing Inclusive Manufacturing (AIM) Program*, a vocational training program in machining and fabrication for veterans and students with disabilities.
- \$149,700 to **The Washington Center** over two years to support its *Leadership Initiative for Students with Disabilities*, which will provide “Mitsubishi Electric Scholars” with inclusive internship opportunities in Washington, DC.
- \$50,000 renewal grant to the **Cincinnati Children’s Hospital Medical Center** to support the *Project SEARCH Training Institute*, which provides training to Project SEARCH sites on best practices on placing students with severe disabilities in competitive jobs.

The Mitsubishi Electric America Foundation, based in the Washington, DC area, was established in 1991 by Mitsubishi Electric Corporation and the Mitsubishi Electric U.S. companies, which produce, sell and distribute a wide range of consumer, industrial, commercial and professional electronics products. The Foundation has contributed more than \$11 million to organizations that are empowering young people with disabilities to lead more inclusive and productive lives.

To learn more, visit the Mitsubishi Electric America Foundation’s website at [www.MEAF.org](http://www.MEAF.org).

###

Contact: Kevin R. Webb, Director  
703/276-8245  
[Kevin.Webb@meus.meaf.com](mailto:Kevin.Webb@meus.meaf.com)