

THE WALL STREET JOURNAL.

September 10, 2008

Work & Family Mailbox

Columnist Sue Shellenbarger answers readers' questions

Q: *My adult son is disabled and confined to a wheelchair. Are there Web sites offering employment for the disabled? He has access to public transportation.*

--R.H., Paterson, N.J.

A: I'm not aware of such a Web site, but other resources might help. Among surveys of employers, "Careers & the Disabled" at eop.com/cd.html publishes an annual list of 50 top employers for people with disabilities; many have offices in your area. And DiversityInc magazine lists the "Top 10 Companies for People with Disabilities"; see diversityinc.com/public/department212.cfm.

If your son would like to work at home and has telephone, communication and basic computer skills, he might work as a home-based agent. Among several companies I contacted, a spokeswoman for VIPdesk.com, which contracts with 2,000 home agents, says, "The virtual environment lends itself well" to qualified applicants with a disability. At Alpine Access, about 5% of 7,500 home agents have disabilities, a spokeswoman says. Convergys accommodates people with disabilities among its more than 1,000 home agents; LiveOps also contracts with people with disabilities. And Hilton Hotels plans to more than double its home reservations agents to 2,000 by the end of 2009; Hilton's Russ Olivier, who heads the unit, says such positions are "tailor-made for people with disabilities."