



## OFFICE OF THE UNDER SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

4000 DEFENSE PENTAGON  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20301-4000

12 SEP 2017

PERSONNEL AND  
READINESS

MEMORANDUM FOR: SEE DISTRIBUTION

SUBJECT: Department of Defense 2017 National Disability Employment Awareness Month  
Observance

Each year, the Department of Defense (DoD) joins the Nation in commemoration of National Disability Employment Awareness Month (NDEAM) during the month of October. This year's NDEAM theme is "Inclusion Drives Innovation." The theme underscores the value of inclusion of different perspectives and diverse abilities in the success of the total workforce.

At the Department of Defense, we recognize and celebrate the contributions of individuals with disabilities to the strength and readiness of our personnel. We proudly acknowledge that unique and diverse abilities are vital to Total Force effectiveness.

Individuals with disabilities have served and continue to serve valiantly as DoD civilians and members of our Armed Forces. Their exceptional abilities have driven DoD innovation in every capacity – to include science, technology, medicine, and beyond. These individuals are integral to mission success and their perspectives and abilities are essential to modernization of the Force.

DoD honors and recognizes these patriotic individuals for their dedicated service and sacrifice. The Department remains committed to recruiting, hiring, and retaining individuals with disabilities to ensure a diverse and inclusive Total Force.

I encourage DoD personnel to commemorate National Disability Employment Awareness Month as we recognize the achievements and contributions of Americans with disabilities and celebrate the diversity of the DoD Total Force.

Mr. Randy Cooper is the DoD point of contact for this observance and can be reached by telephone at (703) 571-9327, or at [randy.d.cooper3.civ@mail.mil](mailto:randy.d.cooper3.civ@mail.mil).

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "A.M. Kurta".

A.M. Kurta

Performing the Duties of the Under Secretary of  
Defense for Personnel and Readiness

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