

# MEET OUR EXPERTS



**Rodger DeRose**  
**President & Chief Executive Officer, Kessler Foundation**

Rodger DeRose oversees the strategic direction of Kessler Foundation, widely recognized for improving the lives of people with disabilities through innovation in medical rehabilitation research, and its commitment to funding programs that expand employment opportunities. Under his leadership, the Foundation has made strategic investments in innovative technology and expanded partnerships and collaborations, resulting in awards of more than \$70 million in external grant funding from government and private agencies. Since 2012, the Foundation has been recognized annually with state and national awards for workplace excellence.

DeRose has 30 years of experience in the for-profit sector, first working as senior marketing executive at SC Johnson before becoming partner and chief operating officer for Arthur Andersen's Technology Software Division. In 2001, he went on to serve as president and CEO of the Crohn's & Colitis Foundation of America. DeRose currently serves on the board of the Perlman Music Program NY and Suncoast Program, and is often sought after by media for his expertise in organizational management and leadership.



**Elaine E. Katz, MS, CCC-SLP**  
**Senior VP for Grants and Communication Kessler Foundation**

Elaine Katz oversees Kessler Foundation's comprehensive grant making program and its communications department. During her tenure, the Foundation has awarded more than \$39 million in grant support for national and community-based employment programs. For more than 25 years, Katz

has worked with non-profit organizations in the areas of board development, fundraising, marketing, and business development. Katz often speaks about innovative practices for employing people with disabilities, and is the author/co-author of articles and papers on related topics. She currently serves on the board of directors of JESPY House, New Jersey Association of People Supporting Employment First (NJAPSE), Essex/Newark Disabilities Issues Committee, and on the program committee of the Council of NJ Grantmakers. Elaine is also an appointed member of the NJ Veterans and Community Collaborative Network (VCCN). She is the 2016 recipient of the Jackson Drysdale Civilian of the Year Award from the GI Go Fund and the 2015 Betty Pender Award for improving the lives of persons with disabilities from Community Options, Inc.



**John O'Neill, PhD, CRC**  
**Director of Employment Research Kessler Foundation**

John O'Neill, PhD, is a national expert in disability employment, with more than 30 years of experience in vocational rehabilitation research. His research has been funded by federal grants and private sources including the National Institute on Disability, Independent Living, and

Rehabilitation Research (NIDILRR) and the Craig H. Neilsen Foundation. He is project co-director of two NIDILRR-funded Rehabilitation Research and Training Centers (RRTC), as well as a co-investigator of the Northern New Jersey Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) Model System. He is former principal investigator of the RRTC on the Community Integration of People with TBI, and worked for more than eight years on NIDILRR-funded research to improve vocational rehabilitation services for persons with AIDS. O'Neill has served on the NY Rehabilitation Council and is on the faculty of Hunter College of the City University of New York, and the John J. Heldrich Center for Workforce Development at Rutgers University. He is co-editor of National Trends in Disability Employment, a monthly report supported by NIDILRR.



**Andrew Houtenville, PhD**  
**Director of Research, UNH-IOD**

Andrew Houtenville, PhD, is an associate professor of economics at the University of New Hampshire (UNH), and director of research at the Institute on Disability (IOD). Houtenville's research focuses on analyzing time-trends and identifying economic, social, programmatic, and workplace barriers and facilitators to the

participation of people with disabilities in the labor market. He is currently the principal investigator of two NIDILRR-funded Rehabilitation Research and Training Centers (RRTC). He participated in the development and analysis of the 2015 Kessler Foundation National Employment & Disability Survey. In addition, he has held Interagency Personnel Agreements with the Rehabilitation Medicine Division (RMD) of the National Institutes of Health (NIH), in connection with the Social Security Administration (SSA) disability programs. Dr. Houtenville is co-editor of National Trends in Disability and Employment, a monthly report issued by UNH-IOD and Kessler Foundation.



**Kimberly Phillips, PhD**  
**Project Director, UNH-IOD**

Kimberly Phillips, PhD, conducts primary and secondary data research at the University of New Hampshire-Institute on Disability (UNH-IOD), and is responsible for evaluation and project management for several grant-funded efforts in the area of employment and disability. Phillips leads a NIDILRR-

funded Employment Policy and Management RRTC research project, and serves as co-investigator of the New Hampshire Disability & Public Health project, which is funded by the Centers for Disease Control. She is co-principal investigator of the Kessler Foundation Employer Practices Survey research project. Phillips has co-authored publications in several peer-reviewed journals, including the Review of General Psychology, the Rehabilitation Counseling Bulletin; and the Journal of Rehabilitation. She has produced numerous data surveillance reports, and has shared the results of her research at national conferences.