

NISH

Workplace

September 2011

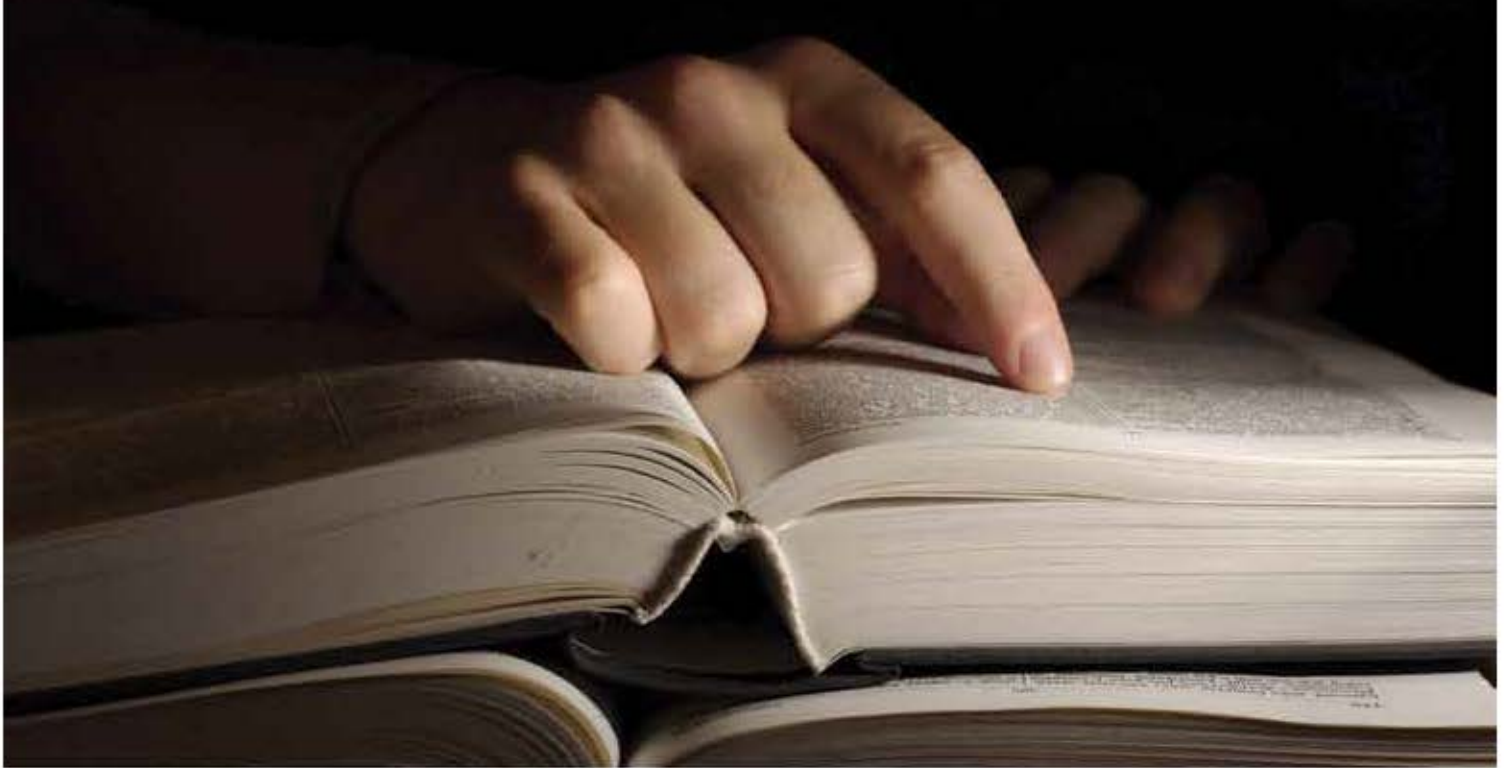
**Contract Management
Services Provides
High Returns for
Federal Customers**

**Finally a Uniform
that Fits Women**

**Phoenix Huntsville
Helps Restore the
National 9/11 Flag**



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Workplace

6 Contract Management Services Provide High Returns for Federal Customers

A relatively new line of business from the AbilityOne® Program is providing critical support to federal contracting offices, returning dollars in unused contract funds to the U.S. Treasury and opening the door to a professional career track for people with significant disabilities nationwide. AbilityOne Contract Management Support (CMS) services achieve all of these benefits and more.

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On the cover: Kevin Gregore stands in front of Opportunity Center Inc. (OCI) office building where contract closeout services are performed.

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Lynne Harris
lharris@nish.org

Managing Editor

Vatrice Jones
vjones@nish.org

Contributing Feature Writers

Chianti Cleggett
Rachel Crowell
Sarah Gray
Heather Loveridge
Gisele McAuliffe
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*“These processes
and outcomes give
us a model that can
be used for future
partnerships.”*

A Win-Win Situation

September marks the end of the summer. For our federal customers (and for NISH as well) it also means the end of the fiscal year...time to close out the books for the fiscal year just completed. However, for contracting officers throughout the federal government, “close-out” is a never ending, on-going process. Once the contract is physically complete, the contractor has made all deliveries or performed all services and all option provisions have expired, the contract has to be “closed-out” to determine if any funds remain that can be reallocated for some other purpose.

However, because contracting officers are so busy negotiating new contracts, executing option years, and administering existing contracts, closing out contracts often goes to the bottom of the pile and does not get done...and, as a result, precious dollars are not recovered. This is a problem at any time, but is particularly troublesome in our current environment when federal budgets are so tight.

One of the AbilityOne® Program's newest business lines provides a solution for clearing out these backlogs and providing timely close-out. Included in this issue is a feature article about Contract Management Services (CMS). The article presents in detail the Department of Defense (DoD) need for the services provided and the benefit to both the government and the AbilityOne Program.

In addition to providing the government with a valuable service and creating jobs for people who are blind or have significant disabilities, the CMS project has been ground breaking in many ways. First, there has been a unique level of collaboration among the Department of Defense, the Committee for Purchase, National Industries for the Blind (NIB) and NISH to take a federal procurement need and find a way to perform

the work through the AbilityOne Program.

Secondly, this initiative involved the first use of the ‘Lead Agency’ concept where one central nonprofit agency (CNA), in this case NIB, took the lead to represent both NIB and NISH agencies on this line of business opportunity. Third, there was a willingness by DoD to provide funding for a demonstration pilot that validated the services model.

Fourth, after the successful pilot, all the parties collaborated to create a unique contracting vehicle to allow this work to be added to the Procurement List. And finally, the Department of Defense also went on to obtain a \$12 million appropriation from Congress to fund an additional pilot that is focused on maximizing employment of wounded veterans through CMS.

As described in the feature article, the results of this initiative, in terms of funds recovered, have been extremely impressive. But, so have the lessons learned for future initiatives—collaboration, the Lead Agency concept, innovative contracting, a first ever appropriation for an AbilityOne pilot, jobs for people who are blind or have other significant disabilities, support for wounded veterans—while at the same time returning money to the federal coffers...wow!!

These processes and outcomes give us a model that can be used for future partnerships. Please read the article. This is a great example of how AbilityOne can create solutions that result in a win for the federal customer and a win for people who are blind or have other significant disabilities. ★

Tim Byrnes Expands AbilityOne® Program on Base; Adds Nearly 100 Jobs

by Heather Loveridge, contributing feature writer

This is an AbilityOne Procurement Champion!

Timothy “Tim” Byrnes
Contracting Division Chief
Mission & Installation
Contracting Command
U.S. Army White Sands Missile Range
Las Cruces, N.M.

In just one year, Timothy “Tim” Byrnes has added close to 100 jobs for the AbilityOne Program, 86.31 to be exact and all on the White Sands Missile Range. Those who know him have described him as a catalyst for the program, working tirelessly behind the scenes educating those around him on the value of the AbilityOne Program.

The results he gets speak for themselves – his efforts have resulted in a new food service project for the 2nd Engineering Battalion, employing 16.93 FTEs; a base wide custodial requirement employing 47.32 FTEs; and a HVAC and building maintenance service contract employing 22.06 FTE’s.

“Tim has put action into words in creating job opportunities for people with significant disabilities, including wounded warriors, and is an avid supporter of the AbilityOne Program,” said John Cantwell, NISH deputy regional director, south central region. “Fellow team members have stated we need more contracting officials like Tim.”

A graduate of New Mexico State University who majored in finance, Byrnes started his career as an intern at the Naval Air Warfare Center, Weapons Division at Point Mugu, Calif. His goal was to work at White Sands and by 2007 he had been accepted and started his new position. Today, as chief of the contracting division, Byrnes is responsible for planning, managing and executing contracting and acquisition programs in order to meet the needs of White



Sands. He serves as a senior advisor to commanders, directors and other key personnel on all aspects of contracting and acquisitions programs and also supervises and directs the workload for the contracting division.

Though Byrnes had heard of the AbilityOne Program, he had never been directly involved until coming to White Sands. He started working on the command’s current contract with Community Rehabilitation Program Tresco and then added additional requirements to the procurement list.

“My director, Beverly Stotz, was instrumental in the increase in AbilityOne at White Sands. She has been a big proponent in the program and encouraged the approach,” Byrnes said.

“Initially we faced substantial resistance. Much of it was tied to peoples’ misunderstanding of how the program works (will there be a decrease in performance?) and the false perception that it will cost more. Also, people are creatures of habit. They don’t like change and going AbilityOne was definitely a big change.”

Up for the challenge, Byrnes focused on educating and constantly communicating with those around him in order to change their perspectives.

“It was really a collaborative effort with AbilityOne. They were willing to provide presentations describing what

the AbilityOne program was all about,” Byrnes said. “In addition, they brought subject matter experts out to help the customer fine-tune their requirements packages. Ultimately, it was a substantial amount of additional time spent with the customer alleviating their fears and building trust about the whole process.”

For the CRPs working on base, having someone like Byrnes backing them has been critical to their success.

“Tim clearly understands the mission of Tresco and the AbilityOne Program and is very supportive of ensuring our employees with disabilities can be successful on the job,” said President/CEO Pam Lillibridge, Tresco, Inc. “He is very professional, cooperative, responsive and easy to work with.”

Lillibridge recalled working with Byrnes on the food service project.

“Tim worked as a liaison with the Army’s 2nd Engineering Battalion at White Sands to explain how the AbilityOne Program works and how their Army cooks would be working with our employees,” she said. “He facilitated an open conversation about any concerns they had and how Tresco would address them.

“Because of our positive relationship with Tim, we hope to provide more employment for people with disabilities as opportunities come up at White Sands.”

NISH extends sincere thanks to Tim Byrnes for his dedication and support of the AbilityOne Program. ★

Comments regarding AbilityOne Procurement Champion articles and nominations can be addressed to Sarah Gray, manager, Marketing, at sgray@nish.org.



Contract Management Services

Provide High Returns for Federal Customers

By Gisele McAuliffe, contributing feature writer

A relatively new line of business from the AbilityOne® Program is providing critical support to federal contracting offices, returning dollars in unused contract funds to the U.S. Treasury and opening the door to a professional career track for people who are blind or who have other significant disabilities nationwide. Spearheaded by National Industries for the Blind (NIB), AbilityOne Contract Management Support (CMS) services achieve all of these benefits and more.

Contract closeouts present a three-fold challenge for the federal customer: (1) there is a shortage of contract specialists employed by the federal government; (2) government demand for contracted goods and services is increasing and (3) there now exists a massive backlog of unclosed federal contracts.



ABILITYONE CMS MENU OF SERVICES

1. Contracts Inventory preparation
2. Contract Close Out (in accordance with FAR/DFAR)
3. Digital Imaging
4. Document Destruction
5. De-obligation Modifications prepared and distributed
6. Government site or Contractor site facilities

The Pilot

In 2009, a nine-month concept pilot for CMS services was collaboratively established by National Industries for the Blind (NIB), NISH and the Department of Defense (DoD). The total cost to the federal government was \$1.18 million. By the end of the year, AbilityOne employees closed 4,415 contracts, reported zero mistakes and returned \$10.3 million in de-obligated funds to the federal government. In June 2010, contract closeout services were added to the AbilityOne Program Federal Procurement List.

As this line of business has vast potential in the marketplace, a new “Lead Agency” concept was developed. The concept allows NIB and NISH to work together in a collaborative partnership for the CMS program. Task Orders received are assigned on an alternating basis between the two agencies. This approach allows for balance, greater growth and flexibility within the program.

The pilot program for the Army team was led by Ben McCarter, assistant deputy assistant secretary of the Army (procurement) Iraq/Afghanistan and Carol Lowman, deputy director of the Army Contracting Command. “This is what motivated people can do,” Lowman said. “Sarah Corley, the mission and installation principal assistant responsible for contracting; Dale Williams, contracting officer at Ft. Knox and the NIB/NISH team are truly motivated to create employment for those who are blind and severely disabled.”

About CMS Services

AbilityOne CMS services include: post-award activities; contract closeout in all systems; de-obligation modifications; digital scanning of contracts; secure document destruction; warehousing; storage solutions and digitized inventories.

In June 2010, NIB executed an Indef-

inite Delivery/Indefinite Quantity (IDIQ) contract with the Department of the Army for provision of CMS contract closeout services for all of DoD. The Acquisition and Procurement Office (A&PO) for the Washington Headquarters Services (WHS) contracted NIB to close out some 2,500 contracts annually. NIB subcontracted the NISH-affiliated nonprofit agency (NPA) Service-Source in Wilmington, Del. to perform the work.

“I am very excited about our agreement with AbilityOne,” Linda Allen, director of A&PO said. “Not only does it achieve an important public purpose, by creating employment opportunities for people with disabilities, including wounded warriors, but it also allows me to focus my staff on our core business areas of providing outstanding customer service through innovation and

Contract Management Continued on Page 8

Contract Management Continued from Page 7 creative contracting solutions. The AbilityOne pricing was also less than what we estimated it would cost to have a commercial firm provide these services, so this represents a real win-win situation.”

An Appealing Career

One of the goals of AbilityOne CMS is to employ wounded warriors and veterans with disabilities who qualify for the program in relatively secure, well-compensated professional fields.

According to NISH CMS Program Manager Cheri Pierce, there are several reasons why a career in CMS services would appeal to service disabled and wounded warriors. “It is a good fit in many cases because veterans have prior experience working with the federal government and in some cases, dealing with government military contracts,” Pierce said. “This program ultimately affords individuals with disabilities, including disabled veterans, the prospect of a challenging, salaried career in the government or commercial arenas. Eighty percent or more of the individuals perform-



Kevin Gregore (left) and Steven Hoffman (right) process contracts for the CMS line of business.

ing as contract specialists in this program are college educated or have extensive prior experience in government contracting. It attracts experienced and highly educated people who can no longer pursue their original careers and are seeking a new, upwardly mobile vocation.”

Intensive Teamwork

ServiceSource currently employs six people with significant disabilities in CMS services. In CMS industry terms, the ServiceSource group

represents one “team.” Each team typically is composed of at least five individuals including one supervisor, three contract closeout specialists and a general clerk.

In California a team of five AbilityOne employees from NISH-affiliated nonprofit Los Angeles Habilitation House, Inc. (LAHH) recently began performing contract closeouts at the Navy Medical Center San Diego. To date, LAHH has enrolled 48 people with disabilities

Current AbilityOne CMS DoD Customers:

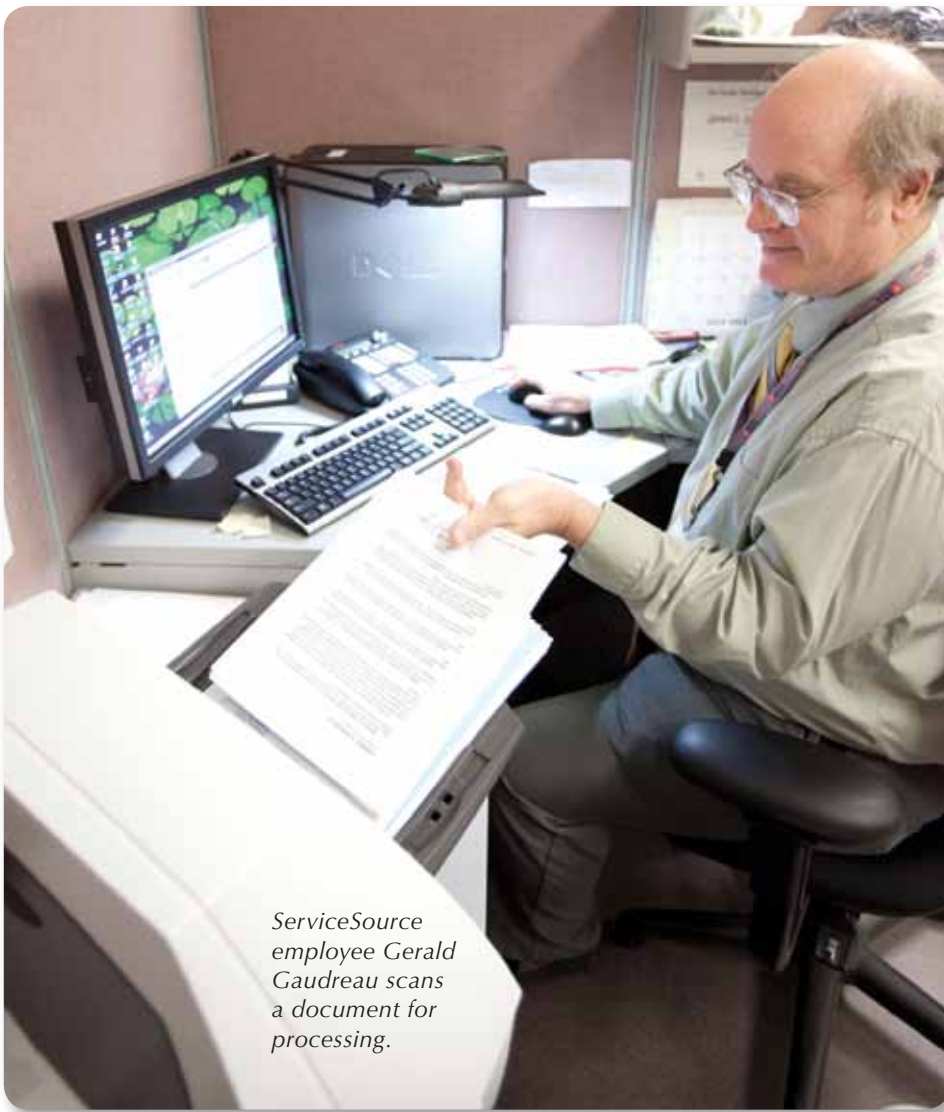
NISH

- Navy Medical Logistics– Bethesda, Md., Portsmouth, Va., San Diego, Calif.
- Washington Headquarters Service (WSH), Acquisition and Procurement Office (A&PO, Arlington, Va.)
- Defense Logistics Agency (DLA) Philadelphia
- Defense Information Systems Agency, Fort Meade, Md.

NIB

U.S. Army Mission and Installation Contracting Command (MICC)

- Ft. Bragg, N.C.
- Dugway Proving Ground, Utah
- Ft. Irwin, Calif.
- Ft. McPherson, Ga.
- Ft. Sam Houston, Texas
- Ft. Dix, N.J.
- Ft. Belvoir, Va.
- Ft. Huachuca, Ariz.
- Navy, Commander, Fleet and Industrial Supply Centers (COMFISC) – San Diego, Calif.
- Rock Island Arsenal, Ill.



ServiceSource employee Gerald Gaudreau scans a document for processing.

“It is important for everyone, no matter what level, what type of job or job responsibilities, to be able to see the value of their work and how it aligns with organization goals and national goals. CMS gives us this. In year one, our goal is to employ 10 people with disabilities in CMS at a time when the nation is suffering through a high unemployment rate. Everyone can cheer for this and get behind how much of a positive impact it will have both on the nation and on people with disabilities who face a 70 percent unemployment rate.”

— Nancy Albin,
LAHH Vice President
and Founder

into Defense Acquisition University (DAU) Contracting (CON) 100 courses—a prerequisite for anyone interested in pursuing a career in AbilityOne CMS. This group is composed of nine wounded warriors, 13 service connected veterans, 10 veterans with disabilities and 16 individuals with disabilities. According to LAHH Vice President and Founder, Nancy Albin, the agency decided to offer CMS services because it liked the professional career track it opens, especially for wounded warriors and service disabled veterans.

Broad, Positive Impact

“It is important for everyone, no matter what level, what type of job or job responsibilities, to be able to see the value of their work and how it aligns with organization goals and national goals,” Albin said. “CMS

gives us this. In year one, our goal is to employ 10 people with disabilities in CMS at a time when the nation is suffering through a high unemployment rate. Everyone can cheer for this and get behind how much of a positive impact it will have both on the nation and on people with disabilities who face a 70 percent unemployment rate.”

Retired U.S. National Guard and Army Sergeant First Class Steve Hoffman is a veteran with disabilities currently employed by ServiceSource as a contract closeout specialist. He describes AbilityOne CMS services as an excellent, new career opportunity. “I like my job a lot,” Hoffman said. “Every day is different. Some contracts are very small and straightforward and some are large and complex, so it is always interesting. It is kind of like contract CSI (crime

scene investigation). You are getting work, training and on-the-job experience so that you become fully marketable to a private employer who does contracting services or to the federal government.”

Dennis Dapolito, executive director of ServiceSource’s Wilmington, Del. office, notes that contract closeout has provided new job opportunities for people with disabilities in careers previously not available to the AbilityOne Program. “CMS services allows us to serve a demographic that may not have been interested in the AbilityOne Program in the past,”

Contract Management Continued on Page 10

CMS TEAM STRUCTURE

- One supervisor (GS 12 +) – Defense Acquisition Workforce Improvement Act (DAWIA) II Certification; former warranted contracting officer.
- Three contract specialists GS 5 or 7 – bachelors degree with 24 business credit hours; Defense Acquisition University (DAU) Contracting (CON) 100+ courses
- One general clerk II – completion of DAU Con 100



Julie DeFrank, director of Business Services discusses CMS procedures with Steven Hoffman.

Contract Management Continued from Page 9

Dapolito said, “It allows us to work with wounded warriors and other people with disabilities that may not have seen ServiceSource as a vehicle for upwardly mobile careers.”

Today, the AbilityOne Program is the single source selected to perform all Department of Defense (DoD) outsourced contract closeouts. During the past 12 months, 50 individuals with significant disabilities, including wounded warriors and service disabled veterans, have been placed in AbilityOne contract closeout specialist positions.

As of July 2011, the end of the first performance year under the IDIQ contract, AbilityOne Program employees have analyzed and presented more than 14,500 contracts as ready-to-close to government contracting officers, with none returned for rework, while identifying more than \$15 million in funds for de-obligation/recoupment. The associated governmental cost for this work is \$5.63 million. Clearly, the return on investment is significant. ★

For more information about AbilityOne CMS services, contact NISH CMS Program Manager Cheri Pierce at cpierce@nish.org. NIB Manager John Farrar may be reached at jfarrar@nib.org or by calling 1-866-573-3748.





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Finally a Uniform that Fits Women

For ReadyOne Industries (ROI), the Woman's Army Combat Uniform (ACU) Program started in July 2009 when NISH posted a Product Opportunity Notice, entitled "ACU Coat & Trouser, Women's Fit" along with specifications and a statement of work making changes to the men's ACU in use at that time.

ReadyOne Industries (ROI) responded and was awarded the coat portion of the project. NISH is the prime contractor and ROI is subcontracted to work on the women's ACU coat.

Later, in August 2010, ReadyOne

Industries received patterns to make women's coats and trousers as part of a pattern validation exercise. Geronimo Medina and the production team ran some prototypes only to discover that the patterns did not yield the dimensions that the program office was looking for in a finished ensemble. The ROI's team suggested slight changes to the patterns in September 2010.

Using these patterns, ROI ran 1,500 sets of the women's uniform for validation purposes. Later, Kelly Fratelli, of Natick Textile Technology visited ROI and offered further recommendations to the patterns

and manufacturing process.

In February 2011, fresh off the momentum of the pattern validation exercise, ROI received a contractual request to make 300 sets for a woman's ACU in a universal camouflage print (UCP). The ROI's production team made some preliminary samples of the women's uniform that were reviewed by Fratelli and Tammy Chiang (Natick) in mid-April of this year.

A few, minor manufacturing and pattern changes were necessary. After this exercise, the production team then started a 300-piece production run in both coats and trousers (Type 1, Class 1) in UCP pattern. The 300 trousers and 300 coats were completed at the end of April. Chiang and Linda Mullenix (Army, Ft. Belvoir) reviewed the finished dimensions, construction, etc. In the immediate future, this effort will yield another run of woman's ACU of 140 sets in a Type 2, Class 2.

The entire effort is well within ROI's capabilities for short order execution. ROI's product lines and manufacturing equipment is very flexible. Coupled with the enormous amount of sewing and apparel construction experience, ROI is able to execute on short-order samples as well as high-volume production. ★



View from



By Tony Young, senior public policy strategist, and Dana M. Kehoe, Esq.

Tax Reform Likely to Impact People with Significant Disabilities

Virtually every federal lawmaker has put fundamental tax reform at or near the top of his or her priority list in the coming months. There is a growing consensus among the President and both parties that Congress must reform the complex tax code very soon.

Most lawmakers think of tax reform as an effort to simplify current tax rules. Those who serve on the committees with jurisdiction for writing tax rules are thinking in terms of lowering both individual and corporate tax rates while at the same time broadening the tax base by eliminating or restricting current special tax rules.

The result, lawmakers say, will be a code that is both more fair and less complex; one that will spur economic growth, enhance U.S. competitiveness in a world-wide market, and raise at least as much revenue as the current tax law.

But, like any fundamental reform effort, the tax reform debate will also result in winners and losers. And in most cases, any specific interest group—or indeed, any particular person or business entity—will both “win” and “lose” relative to the taxes they pay under current rules. This is also true for people with significant disabilities and their advocates.

On the plus side, a tax code that accelerates economic growth means businesses will hire more workers—including workers with significant disabilities. This is a net “win” for the community of people with disabilities and their advocates. However, the base-broadening that is an intrinsic part of tax reform will also put at risk both current and proposed special rules that target and benefit this constituency.

For example, employer-provided health insurance is currently tax-free to employees. Other health-related tax benefits include flexible spending accounts, health savings accounts, and cafeteria plans. Long-term care insurance is subject to favorable tax rules. These rules could change under a reformed tax code.

In addition, there are two tax credits currently in place—the Work Opportunity Tax Credit (WOTC) and the New Markets Tax Credit—that specifically encourage companies to hire people with disabilities. Both of these tax credits will be at risk in the base-broadening (elimination of special tax credits) that will accompany tax reform.

Further, there are multiple proposals that would specifically benefit people with disabilities that will become that much harder to enact in any tax reform plan that limits special tax rules. These include special tax-favored savings accounts available to both people with disabilities and to those who are responsible for paying for their care.

The tax reform debate is likely to be prolonged and intense. To start, there will be a premise-level debate over whether to devise new tax rules that increase the level of revenue collected by the federal government. This will be a debate framed by the need to manage and/or reduce the current \$1.0 plus trillion federal deficits.

Adding to the intensity and complexity of the debate, there are deeply entrenched heartfelt differences of opinion on whether to reform the tax code in a revenue-neutral manner (i.e., devising new rules that raise no more and no less tax revenue than the current tax code), or whether instead to raise revenue, or even to write the “right tax rules” and let the revenue they collect fall where it

may. There will also be continuing debate over the appropriate share of tax that should be paid by wealthy (as compared to middle-income and low-income) Americans. And of course, there is the fundamental issue of the degree to which businesses should pay taxes and thus lessen the tax burden on individuals.

Lawmakers and observers alike expect that constituencies of current tax rules will fight hard to keep these rules in place. They also anticipate that advocates for new (laudable) tax incentives will also struggle to win approval for these ideas.

The timing of this tax debate is a bit uncertain. It could start with the “super committee’s” \$1.2 to \$1.5 trillion deficit reduction plan that is required to be submitted to Congress by November 28, 2011. It could come as Congress deals with a massive package of tax rules that expire at the end of 2011 and 2012 (rules like the alternative minimum tax, the payroll tax cut, and income, capital gains and dividends tax rates). Or, it could come to a head in 2013, after the 2012 elections tell the tale of whether the country will operate under a more conservative, more liberal, or—as is the current case—divided government.

In short, tax reform is virtually inevitable, possibly as soon as this year but almost certainly within the next two to three years. It will impact people with significant disabilities. Whether that impact will be felt most from the benefits of a lean, fair set of tax rules that frees up businesses to hire, including people with disabilities; or from loss or gain of special tax rules that specifically benefit people with significant disabilities, tax reform will have a profound impact on virtually every American, including those with significant disabilities. ★

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Fort Sam Houston, TX
Contracting Officer: **Christopher Toste**
Fort Sam Houston, TX
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Nonprofit Agency: South Texas Housing and Community Development Corp, Inc
San Antonio, TX

Services

Administrative

Communications Security Logistics Activity (USACSLA) Aberdeen Proving Ground, MD

Communications Security Logistics Activity (USACSLA) Fort Huachuca, AZ

U.S. Army Information Systems Engineering Command (USAISEC) Fort Huachuca, AZ

Department of the Army
W4GV FLD OFC FT HUACHUCA

Fort Huachuca, AZ
Contract Specialist: **Stephan Murphy**

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(520) 538-6360

Nonprofit Agency: DePaul Industries
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Custodial

USDA APHIS – Plant

Protection and Quarantine, & Veterinary Services
8100 NW. 15th Place

Gainesville, FL
Department of Agriculture
Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service
Minneapolis, MN

Contracting Officer: **Joanne Mann**
Minneapolis, MN

(612) 336-3224

Nonprofit Agency: The Arc of Bradford County
Starke, FL

White Sands

Missile Range, NM
Department of the Army
W6QM White Sands DOC
White Sands Missile Range, NM
Contracting Officer: **Timothy Byrnes**

White Sands Missile R, NM
(575) 678-5413

Nonprofit Agency: Tresco, Inc.
Las Cruces, NM

San Francisco Maritime National Historical Park

Building E, Lower Fort Mason
San Francisco, CA
Department of the Interior - National Park Service
Pacific West Region
Oakland, CA

Contract Specialist: **Colleen Broussard-Perry**

San Francisco, CA

(415) 561-4792

Nonprofit Agency: Toolworks, Inc.
San Francisco, CA

FCC--Equipment Developmental Group

3600 Hiram-Lithia Springs Road, SW.
Hiram, GA

Federal Communications Commission
Washington, DC

Contract Decision Maker: **Arnett Rogiers**

Washington, DC

(202) 418-1973

Nonprofit Agency: Bobby Dodd Institute, Inc.
Atlanta, GA

NOAA

Atlantic Oceanographic & Meteorological Laboratory (AOML)

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Miami, FL

Department of Commerce

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

Kansas City, MO

Contract Specialist: **Sharon Walker**

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PL Additions Continued on Page 18

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-Marsha Berry, Vice President, Goodwill Industries of Kentucky

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PUBLIC POLICY

CORNER

Super Committee Members Reflect Political Diversity

By Tony Young, senior public policy strategist, and Danae M. Kehoe, Esq.

The August 2011 debt ceiling-deficit reduction law created a special joint committee of Congress tasked with putting together a bill to reduce the federal deficit by at least \$1.2 trillion over 10 years. The “super committee” plan will get fast-track Congressional consideration—the bill will not be amendable, and will be subject to a simple majority vote in both the House and Senate by December 23, 2011. The super committee must submit its plan to Congress by November 23, 2011.

Twelve sitting members of Congress serve on this special committee. There are six Democrats and six Republicans, three of each from the House and Senate. So who are these lawmakers who now hold such extraordinary power?

The committee members are:

Co-Chair Sen. Patty Murray (D-WA): Sen. Murray, first elected to the U.S. Senate in 1992, is the chair of the Senate Democrats’ committee to elect Democratic Senators. A progressive, she sits on the Senate’s Budget and Appropriations Committees.

Co-Chair Rep. Jeb Hensarling (R-TX): Rep. Hensarling, first elected in 2003, sits on the Financial Services and Budget Committees. He is the House GOP Conference Chair (number four leadership slot). A conservative Republican, he is Tea Party endorsed.

Sen. Max Baucus (D-MT): Sen. Baucus is chair of the tax-writing Senate Finance Committee. A 33-year

veteran of the Senate, Sen. Baucus is viewed as a moderate Democrat with conservative leanings on fiscal issues.

Sen. John Kerry (D-MA): The Democrats’ presidential candidate in 2004, Sen. Kerry is a liberal Democrat who sits on the Senate Finance Committee. He is also chair of the Senate’s Foreign Relations Committee. He was first elected to the Senate in 1984.

Sen. Jon Kyl (R-AZ): The Senate GOP Whip (number two spot in the leadership), Sen. Kyl is retiring at the end of this Congress (2012). He sits on the Senate Finance Committee and is a staunch conservative.

Sen. Rob Portman (R-OH): A freshman Senator, Sen. Portman has served in the House of Representatives, as director of the Office of Management and Budget, and as U.S. Trade Representative. A moderate, he is a member of the Senate Budget Committee.

Sen. Pat Toomey (R-PA): Elected to the Senate in 2010, Sen. Toomey is a conservative endorsed by the Tea Party. A former member of the House, he is also a former president of the conservative Club for Growth. He serves on the Senate’s Budget Committee.

Rep. Dave Camp (R-MI): Rep. Camp, a 20 year veteran of the U.S. House of Representatives, is currently chairman of the tax-writing Ways & Means Committee. He is a member of both the moderate Republican Main Street

Partnership and the conservative Republican Study Committee.

Rep. Fred Upton (R-MI): Chairman of the House Energy & Commerce Committee (the committee of jurisdiction over most health issues), Rep. Upton is a moderate Republican who has served in the House since 1987.

Rep. Xavier Becerra (D-CA): A progressive Democrat, Rep. Becerra has served in the House since 2003. He is a member of the Ways & Means Committee. He is vice chair of the House Democratic Caucus.

Rep. Jim Clyburn (D-SC): Rep. Clyburn holds the number three leadership spot for House Democrats, Assistant Democratic Leader. He has been in the House of Representatives since 1993. A progressive, Rep. Clyburn sits on the Judiciary and Transportation and Infrastructure Committees.

Rep. Chris Van Hollen (D-MD): First elected in 2003, Rep. Van Hollen is the ranking member of the House Budget Committee. He is a former member of the House Ways & Means Committee, and former chair of the House Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee.

The super committee will look at all spending—discretionary, mandatory, entitlement—as well as revenue (taxes). If the committee’s plan fails to win Congressional approval, \$1.2 trillion in automatic across-the-board spending cuts (half from defense) will kick in, in 2013. ★

Phoenix Helps Restore The National 9/11 Flag in Huntsville

Phoenix, a NISH-affiliated AbilityOne® nonprofit agency, participated as a sponsor in the restoration of The National 9/11 Flag in late July. Local service heroes proudly assembled to help restore the flag that is making its way across the United States before its permanent display at the National 9/11 Memorial Museum.

Destroyed in the aftermath of the attack on the World Trade Center on Sept. 11, 2001 and stitched back together seven years later by tornado survivors in Greensburg, Kansas, The National 9/11 Flag is a living testament to the resilience and compassion of the American people. It is quickly becoming recognized as a modern day version of The Star Spangled Banner.

Nearly 100 million people to date have experienced The National 9/11 Flag through national and local TV news coverage, public displays in small towns, and major cultural and historic events. “We are honored that Phoenix is supporting our Foundation’s efforts to restore the National 9/11 Flag,” stated Jeff

Parness, founder of New York Says Thank You. “This extraordinary sponsorship is testament to all of the sponsors’ spirit of kindness and neighborliness—a spirit that united our Nation on 9/12 and proves that nothing is impossible when Americans come together to help one another recover from disaster”

“Phoenix is proud to sponsor the tour of The National 9/11 Flag in Alabama,” said Bryan Dodson, Phoenix’s CEO. “Our employees have made more than 1.4 million burial flags used to honor the service of deceased military personnel. Many of our employees are veterans with disabilities. Our mission lines up with the mission of The National 9/11 Flag.”

The New York Says Thank You Foundation is currently taking The National 9/11 Flag on a journey across America where local service

heroes in all 50 states will be given the historic privilege of stitching the flag back to its original 13-stripe format using pieces of fabric from American flags destined for retirement in each state. Once the flag is restored and made whole again by the 10 Year Anniversary of 9/11, The National 9/11 Flag will become a part of the permanent collection of the National September 11 Memorial Museum being built at the World Trade Center.

50-State Restoration Tour

“The fabric of our American history is quite literally being stitched into The National 9/11 Flag, currently making its way across the United States before it reaches its final destination at the National 9/11 Memorial Museum,” says Parness. “The flag has been stitched by soldiers and schoolchildren who survived the shooting in Fort Hood, Texas and by World War II veterans on the deck of the USS Missouri in Pearl Harbor.

Most recently, the flag was flown at the funeral of Christina Taylor Green, the 9-year-old girl born on 9/11 who died in the Tucson shooting this year. The flag, stitched by descendants of Martin Luther King Jr., made history when a piece of the American flag that cradled Abraham Lincoln’s head when he was shot at Ford’s Theater was added to the flag. This project brought together wounded warriors, first responders and members of the U.S. space program to contribute a stitch at the The Kennedy Space Center.

About The New York Says Thank You Foundation

Started in 2003 at the suggestion of

a 5-year-old boy, The New York Says Thank You Foundation has grown into one of the nation’s leading organizations to transform the 9/11 Anniversary into a positive, hands-on platform for national volunteer service. Each year on the 9/11 Anniversary, The New York Says Thank You Foundation sends hundreds of volunteers from New York along with disaster survivors from around the country to help rebuild communities around the United States recovering from disaster. It’s the group’s way of saying “Thank You” for all the love and support Americans from across the country extended to New Yorkers in the days, weeks, and months following September 11. For more information, please visit www.NewYorkSaysThankYou.org

About Phoenix

In 2010, Phoenix served nearly 1,000 persons with disabilities including more than 75 employees working on AbilityOne® product contracts such as the one-point release harness and VA interment flags. Nearly 400 Phoenix employees provide essential support services to the local federal community through the AbilityOne Program, including custodial and grounds maintenance.

Phoenix works with local businesses to place people with disabilities in jobs throughout north Alabama and is a private, nonprofit agency, founded in 1973, whose mission is to assist individuals, primarily those with disabilities, to improve the quality of their lives. ★



Front View

Back View



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Alliance Business Services Selected to Serve Maryland Historic Sites



Alliance, Inc. Business Services Division is proud to have been chosen by NISH to provide custodial services to Fort McHenry National Monument and Historical Shrine and Hampton Historical Sites. Alliance, Inc. began providing services in February, 2011 under the NISH/AbilityOne® contract. Leonard Johnson, Donnie Blackburn, Roydon Beard, Brian Kennealy and Genesis Collins are providing services at the sites. The AbilityOne Program is the largest source, in the United States, for employment of people who are blind or have significant disabilities.

Fort McHenry National Monument and Historical Shrine is best known for its role in the War of 1812 when it successfully defended Baltimore Harbor from an attack by the British navy in the Chesapeake Bay. It was

during this bombardment of the fort that Francis Scott Key was inspired to write “The Star Spangled Banner”, that would eventually become the national anthem. Fort McHenry was built after America won its independence to defend the important Port of Baltimore from future enemy attacks. It was positioned on the Locust Point peninsula which juts into the opening of Baltimore Harbor, and was constructed in the form of a five-pointed star surrounded by a dry moat.

Hampton National Historic Site is located north of Towson, Md. and preserves the 18th century estate, including a Georgian manor house, gardens, grounds, and the original stone slave quarters. The estate was owned by the Ridgely family for seven generations, from 1745 to 1948. The Hampton Mansion was the largest private home in America when it was completed in 1790 and today is considered to be one of the finest examples of Georgian architecture in the U.S. Its furnishings, together



with the estate’s slave quarters and other preserved structures, provide insight into the life of late 18th century and early 19th century landowning aristocracy. Hampton was the first site selected as a National Historical Site for its architectural significance by the U.S. National Park Service.

The grounds were widely admired in the 19th century for their elaborate formal gardens, which have been restored to resemble their appearance during the 1820s. Several trees are more than 200 years old. Visitors may tour the mansion, overseer’s house, slave quarters and grounds. ★

PL Additions Continued from Page 14

Dining

Dining Facility Attendant and Cook Support
 Army 7th Special Forces Group - Building 4570
 Eglin AFB, FL
 Department of the Army
 W6QM FT Bragg Contract Center
 Fort Bragg, NC
 Contract Specialist: **Laura Cannady**
Fort Bragg, NC
(910) 394-5507
Nonprofit Agency: Lakeview Center, Inc.

Pensacola, FL

Janitorial

Mustang Armed Force Reserve Center (AFRC)
 Mustang, OK
Norman Armed Force Reserve Center (AFRC)
 Norman, OK
 Department of the Army
 W7NV USPFO Activity OK ARNG
 Oklahoma City, OK
 Contracting Officer: **Sarah Lane**
Oklahoma City, OK • (405) 228-5502
Nonprofit Agency: Dale Rogers Training Center, Inc.

Oklahoma City, OK

Muskogee Armed Force Reserve Center
 6800 S. Cherokee Street
 Muskogee, OK
 Department of the Army
 W7NV USPFO Activity OK ARNG
 Oklahoma, OK
 Contracting Officer: **Sarah Lane**
Oklahoma City, OK • (405) 228-5502
Nonprofit Agency: Golden Rule Industries of
 Muskogee, Inc., Muskogee, OK

PL Additions Continued on Page 19

Pathfinder, Inc. Celebrates 40 years Fostering Independence

Pathfinder Inc. is located in various counties around central Arkansas. These counties include: Pulaski, Independence, Craighead, White, Lonoke, Benton, Crittenden, Conway, and Saline. Pathfinder has been assisting employees with disabilities since 1971.

Pathfinder Inc. celebrated its 40th anniversary on August 1 by inviting the citizens of Arkansas to support individuals with developmental disabilities, their families, staff members and the Board of Directors.

The celebration included a proclamation ceremony declaring the month of August the official Pathfinder 40th anniversary. Mayor Gary Fletcher, of Jacksonville, Ark., along with Arkansas House of Representative Mark Perry, Arkansas State Senator Jonathan Dismang, Pathfinder Board of Directors, clients and staff were in attendance for the proclamation ceremony.

Several activities rounded out the celebration, including a parade, mini health fair, blood drive, company picnic, balloon releases and awards ceremony. The grand finale will be held at the Governor's Mansion on November 3.

The proceeds from the grand finale will be used to provide specialized playground equipment for both Pathfinder preschools.

Pathfinder is a private, nonprofit, community-based organization which provides an array of services for the citizens of Arkansas with developmental disabilities. These services includes developmental therapy, preschool services, residential services, waiver services, adult training programs, mental health service, employment contracts and transportation.

Pathfinder, Inc. has many employment opportunities and provides training to more than 1,300 employees including 537 individuals within the AbilityOne® Program who are blind or have other significant disabilities, enabling them to have more productive lives. Pathfinder, Inc. fosters independence for individuals with disabilities and provides services to help them reach their level of independence.

Pathfinder, Inc., under the AbilityOne Program, provides employment services such as custodial, food service, mail operations, switchboard operations, supply-

and warehouse management, mail management, grounds maintenance, and numerous other services at the skills training center.

Pathfinder, Inc.'s goal is for each participant to glean independent living skills and to become a self-supporting, productive member of society.

This celebration is a way for Pathfinder to acknowledge the employees and community that helps make Pathfinder, Inc. a successful organization. By working together, a difference can be made for the citizens of Arkansas with developmental disabilities by providing the support they need to thrive.

If you desire additional information, on how you can be a part of the Grand Finale, or to donate Silent Auction Items, please contact Sha Stephens, Public Relations liaison & event chairperson at 501-982-0528 x1252 or e-mail at sha.stephens@pathfinderinc.org. ★

PL Additions Continued from Page 18

Mail

CDC Transshipping Facility

3719 North Peachtree Road
Atlanta, GA
Department of Health and Human Services
Centers for Disease Control
Atlanta, GA
Contract Specialist: **Germaine Mullins**
Atlanta, GA • (770) 488-1938
Nonprofit Agency: Tommy Nobis Enterprises, Inc.
Marietta, GA

Maintenance

U.S. Military Academy Preparatory School

West Point, NY
Department of the Army
XR W6BA ACA West Point
West Point, NY
Contracting Officer: **Denise Conklin**
West Point, NY • (845) 938-5102
Nonprofit Agency: New Dynamics Corporation
Middletown, NY

HVAC/Building Maintenance

White Sands Missile Range, NM
Department of the Army
W6QM White Sands DOC
White Sands Missile Range, NM

Contracting Officer: **Timothy Byrnes**
White Sands Missile R, NM • (575) 678-5413
Nonprofit Agency: Skookum Educational Programs
Bremerton, WA

Yakima Training Center and Multipurpose Range Complex

Multipurpose Training Range
Yakima, WA
Department of the Army
W6QM FT Lewis, Directorate of Contracting
Fort Lewis, WA
Contracting Officer: **Carole Benson**
Fort Lewis, WA • (253) 966-3494
Nonprofit Agency: Skookum Educational Programs
Bremerton, WA

DWI Celebrates 40 Years of Success

By Chianti Cleggett, contributing feature writer

“Development Workshop, Inc. (DWI) was started by a group of parents who wanted services for their children,” said Gerry Hodges, DWI vice president of Industrial Services. “They approached the State of Idaho and received funding to start a program in 1971.”

In 1973, the organization became a nonprofit. “We started with 12 consumers and four staff members,” he continued. “Now we serve over 600 individuals through our programs and we have about 125 staff members.”

Hodges has been with DWI for 39 years, watching it rise from a small organization to one of tremendous growth. In his position, Hodges oversees all NISH contracts, with a specific focus on janitorial and administrative support programs. “We have 24 products and four service contracts in procurement with NISH,” said Hodges.

“Our first NISH, or JWOD (Javits-Wagner-O’Day), contract was in 1974 with survey stakes. Then, in 1978 we received contracts through AbilityOne® for flashlights,” said Hodges, adding that today DWI has 134 employees working on the AbilityOne products and services.

The production of flashlights and message droppers—which began in 1978—has become DWI’s longest-held contracts. However, the contracts for tape dispensers, which began in



NISH Northwest Executive Director Rick Van Hoose, Gerry Hodges, VP, Industrial Services and Mike O’Bleness, President and CEO hold flashlights produced at DWI.

1994, have proven extremely successful for the organization, as well. “Out of the service contracts, flashlights are probably our biggest contract dollar-wise,” said Hodges.

Based in Idaho Falls, Idaho, DWI has created countless opportunities for its community since the beginning. “Forty years means a very successful program here in our community. If we did not have the workshop and the AbilityOne Program, there would be hundreds of people who would not have benefitted from the services we have been able to offer them—both, in training and placement of jobs as well as in the quality of life they are

enjoying,” Hodges said. “It’s a win-win situation with the AbilityOne Program. It’s good for us and the clientele and consumers we work with.”

Great successes continue for DWI. Two of DWI’s proudest moments were in 2001, when it received the National Performance Excellence Award in managing a JWOD contract, and in 2006 when its then-CEO received the Milt Cohen Award, stated Amy Kidwell, director of Communications for DWI.

“Building upon DWI’s strong foundation and previous success is essential,” commented DWI President and CEO Mike O’Bleness. “As we look forward, we see the importance of respecting where we’ve come from in the disability movement,” he said. “Moving forward, we will continue to be a dynamic and changing organization as the needs of people with disabilities change.”

Hodges agreed, adding that the success of individuals served by DWI is most important. “It is a great pleasure to work with these individuals. You get to see them accomplishing their life goals.” ★

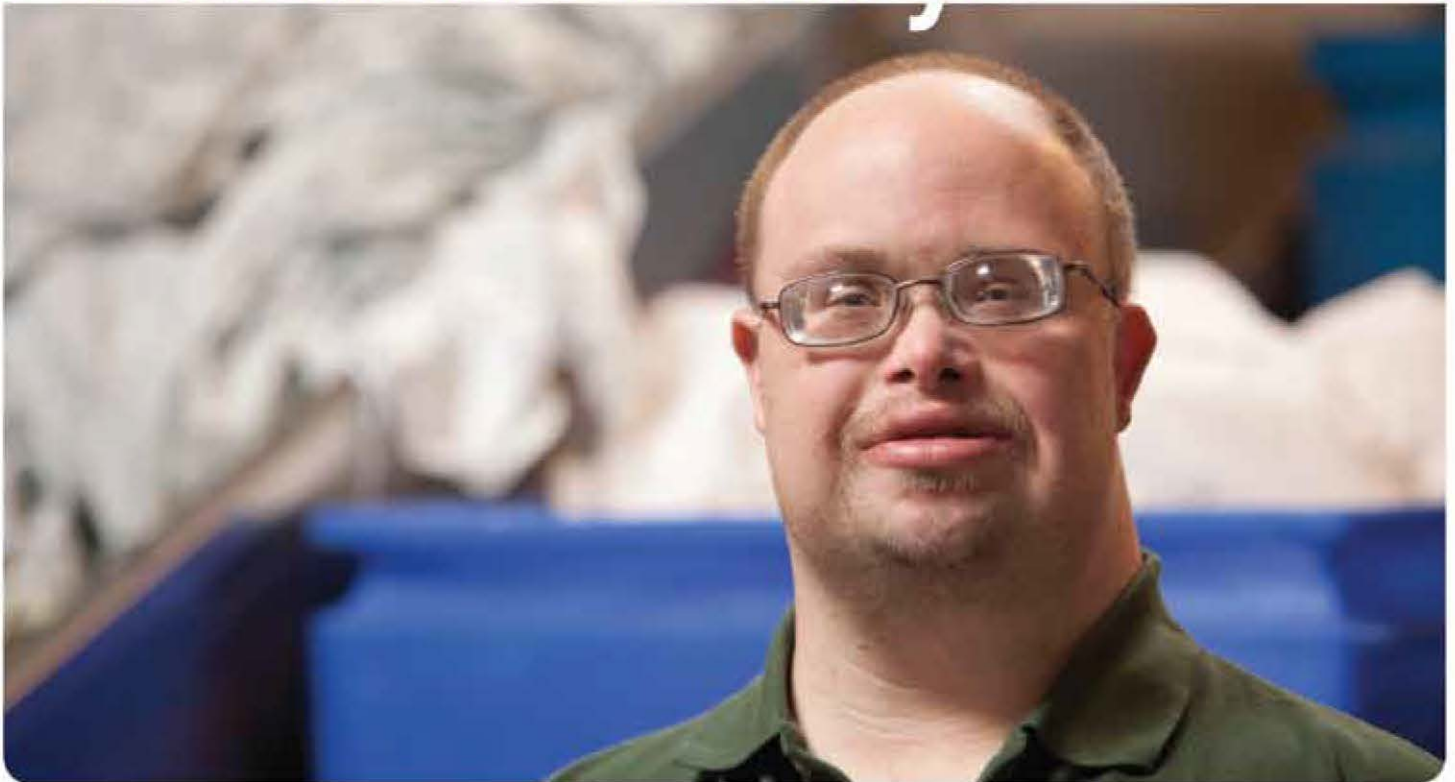


Highway Safety Tool Kit



The production of flashlights and message droppers—which began in 1978—has become DWI’s longest-held contracts.

sustainability



AbilityOne employee, Luke Grossman, Norfolk, VA

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For over 70 years the Program has met demanding Federal contract requirements for quality products and services at a fair market price. In addition, AbilityOne enables people who are blind or have other significant disabilities to be independent and productive citizens.

Learn more about going green
with the AbilityOne Program at

AbilityOne.org/green



Touching and Improving Lives for People

Bobby Hanna, an AbilityOne® employee who works with LA Habilitation House, has taken six online courses through DAU and is now ready to take his first classroom DAU course. CON 120 will be taught in El Segundo. Hanna's interest in the contracting field led him to pursue Defense Acquisition University (DAU) courses. After completing the CON120 course, Hanna will have all of the governmental technical training required to obtain the goal of becoming a contract officer/specialist.

"I have a better understanding as to how the government works and the private sector as well as small business companies in the solicitation of bids, contracts and other matter pertaining to contracts. Almost in every endeavor that you do dealing with purchasing, you will need some type of contract from either the users of the supplier and the individuals/companies that order the services."

Prior to exiting a regional opportunity center, Hanna needed additional income to be able to afford subsidized housing. Although he had completed all other requirements, there was one still standing in the way—financial stability. Hanna discussed his situation with a counselor at the center and she asked with his administrative background and experience would he be willing to work in the Department of Vocational Rehabilitation office at the federal building for non-paid work experience (NPWE)? In exchange for his work, he would receive on the job training and a subsistence allowance.

Hanna began working with the program specialists and learning the different governmental computer systems and filing systems. The chief of the division thought it would be a good idea for Hanna to work directly with the contract specialist, which would allow him to receive hands-on experience within the contracting field.

Working as a NPWE afforded him the chance to regain his confidence back and get use to being in a professional working environment with other employees. He also gained valuable knowledge and received a laptop that will be very helpful in his future endeavors of contracting to keep certifications current.

Hanna's life is changing for the better and it is having a positive effect on the people around his work site. "My supervisor, the chief of the division, is the one who wanted me to take the classroom course and the assistant chief informed me that anything to do with education, they will still pay me and whenever I need to take off [from work], just go ahead! Isn't that great! God knows how much you have done not only for me but, for all of the people you have helped. All I can say is keep on doing what you're doing," exclaimed Bobby Hanna, U.S. Air Force, AbilityOne CMS CON 100 Graduate. ★



"My supervisor, the chief of the division, is the one who wanted me to take the classroom course and the assistant chief informed me that anything to do with education, they will still pay me and whenever I need to take off [from work], just go ahead! Isn't that great! God knows how much you have done not only for me but, for all of the people you have helped. All I can say is keep on doing what you're doing"

— Bobby Hanna,
U.S. Air Force,
AbilityOne CMS CON
100 Graduate

AbilityOne® Program Success Story

Marlon Wilkins Advances Career Through AbilityOne Program

By Heather Loveridge, contributing feature writer

Though confined to a wheelchair due to restricted mobility and partial paralysis from Transverse Myelitis, Marlon Wilkins hasn't let his disability prevent him from excelling at work. He's worked for Linden Resources, Inc. (formerly SOC Enterprises) for the past 17 years and received numerous exceptional performance awards as well as several promotions.

Wilkins began his career at Linden as a production worker with a disability document clerk working on the GSA Office of Transportation Audits contract. Within a few years he was promoted, eventually landing a supervisory role on the GSA contract. There he was responsible for receiving around 300,000 billing documents and supporting information from approximately 730 federal reporting activities each month. In 2008, he was promoted to assistant project manager on Linden's AbilityOne Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms (ATF) project.

"Every day Marlon demonstrates outstanding leadership, determination and commitment to meeting high quality standards," said Linda Chandler, CEO of Linden. "When the ATF project relocated to a new site in 2008 and the project manager left, Marlon stepped in to quickly ensure that high quality standards continued. Under his leadership, the team maintained a 99 percent accuracy rate despite a backlog that occurred because of the move. Later, while dealing with an increased workload,



Marlon brought on six additional workers that he trained and supervised to meet the contract obligations.

"Marlon has a can-do attitude about his supervisory position and all the tasks he performs. He goes out of his way to perform above and beyond in every job he takes to ensure continued success for the contract. And he also makes himself available to his employees to help them be successful and handles pressure and extraordinary circumstances with humor and a calm, get-the-job-done demeanor."

Wilkins' strong desire to succeed has helped him turn a job into a career – and one that he enjoys.

"I really like working alongside the people we serve, consumer and production workers," Wilkins said. "They make the work day fun and it's amazing to watch them. They may have various types of disabilities but it doesn't stop them from excelling in life and being the best they can be."

For Wilkins, being part of the AbilityOne Program has been a crucial component to advancing his career.

"The program has offered various opportunities for personal growth," he said. "And it's helped me advance to a project manager on one of Linden's largest contracts.

"I think the key to my success has been my drive, determination and most of all the managers I've worked with in the past and present. They have helped me improve my managerial skills. Without them giving me the opportunity for success, I wouldn't be where I am today."

Those who work with Wilkins on a daily basis have also noticed his determination to succeed.

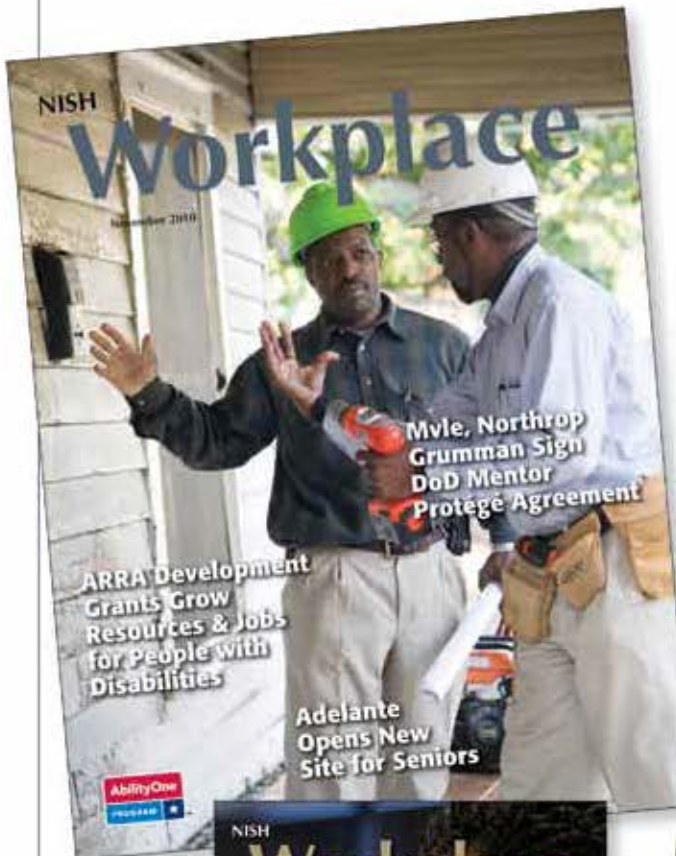
"It is truly a pleasure to work with Marlon. I admire his ability to stay calm under pressure and keep focused on solutions to challenges," said Diane Woods, lead management analyst, COTR/ATF Distribution Center. "His leadership and ability to get things done are an inspiration to us all, and really help make the Bureau of ATF's Distribution Center the success that it is. Thank you, Marlon, for all that you do! We couldn't do it without you."

When not working, Wilkins also enjoys coaching little league basketball and spending time with his wife and their children. ★

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Pictured left to right, Scott Elliff, CCISD Superintendant; Dennis Mark Gonzalez, student and Diane Lowrance, MHMR Executive Director.

MHMR of Nueces County Behavioral and Development Health Services won this year's "i-Achieve Partners in Education Partnership of the Year Award" from the Corpus Christi Independent School District. MHMR partners with CCISD students in their last few years of high school who are interested in working on the AbilityOne® contract through the Corpus Christi Army Depot at Naval Air Station Corpus Christi. Student Dennis Mark Gonzalez presented the award to Diane Lowrance, MHMR Executive Director who states, "Some students have graduated from high school and kept their job with us. The students are productive and hard workers. This has been a great partnership for all involved. We share this award with NISH and AbilityOne!!!"

Group picture includes student Dennis Mark Gonzalez, MHMR Executive Director Diane Lowrance, MHMR Board and Advisory Committee Members and a Corpus Christi Army Depot representative.

PARC Receives Three-Year Accreditation

The Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities (CARF) recently awarded Pioneer Adult Rehabilitation Services (PARC) with a three-year accreditation, the maximum level awarded. PARC is a public nonprofit administered by the Davis School District with the mission to foster independence for people with disabilities through employment and training and serves over 600 people with disabilities in northern Utah. PARC's Community Employment Services and Organizational Services were the focus of the CARF audit and accreditation. The CARF surveyors evaluated 124 standards established for those programs and another 555 standards relating to leadership excellence and individualized services and supports applied across a broad range of the agency's activities, including strategic planning, legal/financial planning, health and safety, risk management, accessibility and managing information.

PARC was established in 1973 with the belief that every citizen should have the opportunity to work. In Utah, only 45 percent of citizens that report a disability have any kind of employment compared to 80 percent of the population that do not have a disability and are working age.* Because of this disparity, organizations like PARC work to even those odds.

*Erickson, W. Lee, C., & von Schrader, S. (2010). 2008 Disability Status Report: the United States. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Rehabilitation Research and Training Center on Disability Demographics and Statistics. (www.disabilitystatistics.org)

The Commission of Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities (CARF) Founded in 1966 as the Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities, CARF International is an independent nonprofit accreditor of health and human services in the following areas: Aging Services,

Behavioral Health, Opioid Treatment Programs, Business and Services Management Networks, Child and Youth Services, Employment and Community Services, Vision Rehabilitation, Medical Rehabilitation, DMEPOS (Durable Medical Equipment, Prosthetics, Orthotics, and Supplies).

The CARF family of organizations currently accredits more than 47,000 programs and services at more than 20,000 locations on five continents. More than 8.7 million persons of all ages are served annually by more than 6,000 CARF accredited providers.

CARF accreditation extends to 17 countries in North and South America, Europe, Asia and Africa. (www.carf.org)

PARC (Pioneer Adult Rehabilitation Center)

A nonprofit established in 1973, administered by the Davis School District. PARC (www.parc-ut.org)

serves over 600 people with disabilities in Davis, Weber, Salt Lake, and Tooele counties. PARC's mission is: Fostering independence for people with disabilities through employment and training. Programs are supported by a combination of state and federal dollars through a fee for service and PARC's own government and commercial contracts. PARC participants are served based on their personal needs and employment decisions. Individual strategies vary from initial supports to identify and locate employment to continued coaching to maintain employment and eliminate employment barriers.

75,000,000 Totes and Counting

Wow...75,000,000 totes produced for the United States Postal Service (USPS)! Minnesota Diversified Industries (MDI) employees celebrated the production of the 75 millionth tote mid-April. There are few celebrations that include the number 75 million. MDI is the sole provider of the USPS Postal Tote.

Whether it was folding, welding or inspecting, each employee had an opportunity to contribute to this significant milestone. It was a remarkable experience because



everyone on the assembly line had a chance to participate in the creation of the 75 millionth tote.

In the Hibbing facility postal totes are produced at the rate of 6,000 to 7,000 a day. With 80 percent of direct employees having a disability, this workforce is a great example of how people with disabilities have great "abilities." These employees meet rigorous delivery schedules while continuously producing a

high quality product efficiently and effectively. This workforce also cuts and welds all of the wire frames for products produced in both Hibbing and Grand Rapids facilities.

Since the production of the USPS totes began, the production line has grown to include items like plastic trays, boxes, pallet covers, tree wrap, water jetbricks and a multitude of custom products.

Since 1964, Minnesota Diversified Industries (MDI) **has been serving people with disabilities by offering progressive development and employment opportunities in competitive business enterprises.** Real jobs create a sense of pride, value and independence in the lives of employees with significant disabilities. ★



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NISH Training Calendar

OCTOBER

4, 5	Assisting Supervisors with Creating a Quality Work Environment for People with Disabilities	Las Vegas, NV
4, 5	Contact Center Services Business Plan Preparation	Denver, CO
5, 6	Contact Center Services Business Development	Denver, CO
4, 5	Fleet Institute (Basic Course)	Joint Base Lewis-McChord, WA
4, 5	Operating and Managing a Successful Custodial Business: Health, Safety and Appearance—Your Pathway to Green Cleaning	Boston, MA
4, 5	Overview of Federal Government Contract Pricing	Atlanta, GA
12, 13	AbilityOne Business Development Seminar: Tools for Growing Your Business	Norfolk, VA
12, 13	Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR) Based Quality Management	Seattle, WA
12, 13	Introduction to Marketing	Chicago, IL
12, 13	Proposal Development Strategies & Techniques	San Francisco, CA
18, 19, 20	4 Roles of Leadership	Vienna, VA
18, 19, 20	Document Destruction Operations	Fort Worth, TX
19, 20	Recruitment and Retention Strategies	San Francisco, CA
19, 20	Time Studies: Determining Commensurate Wages for Employees Paid Piece Rates and Employees Paid Hourly	Portland, OR
25, 26, 27	Needs-Based Selling and Delivering Superior Customer Service	Savannah, GA

NISH offers a wide range of training opportunities through the NISH Academy for Leadership, Performance & Development. For more information, to request a 2011 training calendar or to register for courses, please contact the NISH Training Team at 571/226-4660 or visit the NISH Web site at www.nish.org.

NISH Mission

NISH creates employment opportunities for people with significant disabilities.