

A Publication of National Industries for the Blind

O P P O R T U N I T Y

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AbilityOne® Janitorial and Sanitation Products

Meet Shaun Sheeder, production associate at Blind Industries and Services of Maryland in Baltimore.

LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

TIME TO SHINE

Janitorial and sanitation products are NIB's oldest product line – a line whose evolution typifies how NIB and its associated agencies have adapted and innovated to meet customer needs.

In 1939, the first full year of the AbilityOne® Program, people who are blind working at NIB associated agencies produced hundreds of thousands of mops and brooms for the federal government. These early products helped demonstrate the capabilities of people who are blind and the benefits of the newly enacted Wagner-O'Day Act. To this day, SKILCRAFT® mops and brooms remain popular choices among federal customers.

The evolution of our "JanSan" product line is truly remarkable. As new synthetic materials became available and chemical blending methods were perfected, the number and variety of JanSan products produced by NIB associated agencies grew. Today's line includes hundreds of different products, from scouring pads to aerosol cleaners.

We've come a long way. In 1939, customers had the option of a mop made from cotton or a broom made from corn husks. Today, customers

can select mops and brooms made from rayon, polyester and synthetic blends; they can find sponges with antimicrobial properties; or they can choose environmentally friendly detergents and soaps.

In this issue of *Opportunity*, we explore NIB's JanSan product line and highlight some of the employees who are blind working to deliver these products to government and commercial customers.

You'll also find a recap of our successful Public Policy Forum held in May. A record number of NIB and associated agency representatives engaged members of Congress and their staffs on critical issues facing NIB and the AbilityOne Program at this important annual event.



Kevin A. Lynch
President and
Chief Executive Officer



OPPORTUNITY

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2014 NIB/NAEPB PUBLIC POLICY FORUM

Agency leaders engage elected representatives on issues impacting employment of people who are blind.

DIFFERENCE MAKER

Susan Pollack is making a difference for people who are blind through the AbilityOne® Program.

Federal agency involvement with the AbilityOne Program is rooted in more than just a requirement. It is a product of dedication and commitment. That is what drives Susan Pollack, senior procurement analyst, Defense Procurement and Acquisition Policy, to continually support NIB and the AbilityOne Program.

Pollack entered the civil service almost 30 years ago as an intern with the Navy Contracting Intern Program at Space and Naval Warfare Systems Command. Her involvement with the AbilityOne Program began more than eight years ago, when she started her current assignment as a procurement analyst with the Office of the Secretary of Defense (OSD).

Pollack's personal connection to the mission of the AbilityOne Program comes from a desire to help her brother, who struggles with multiple sclerosis.

"Working with the AbilityOne Program is an aspect of my job I am very proud of, and I salute the thousands of AbilityOne employees who are blind or have significant disabilities who contribute greatly to the defense mission," says Pollack. "Not only are these employees an inspiration, they are a source of motivation to continue doing more each day to increase meaningful job opportunities for the Program."

Pollack also credits OSD leadership for making it possible for her to wholeheartedly support the AbilityOne Program. In recent years, U.S. Department of Defense (DOD) contract awards have led to expanded employment opportunities for people who are blind at NIB associated agencies. Despite the current federal budget environment, DOD remains NIB's largest customer.



▲ Susan Pollack

"Working with the AbilityOne Program is an aspect of my job I am very proud of, and I salute the thousands of AbilityOne employees who are blind or have significant disabilities who contribute greatly to the defense mission."

Susan Pollack

Fostering a Successful Partnership

Pollack has played a key role in the success of NIB and the AbilityOne Program over the years.

- In 2008 and 2012, Pollack was instrumental in creating, coordinating and staffing an OSD memorandum for DOD senior contracting officials challenging them to increase new market and contract opportunities with AbilityOne-participating nonprofit agencies. The result was a 35 percent increase in sales.
- Pollack has supported NIB's Contract Management Support services from inception to current execution by providing policy guidance and program oversight, as well as DOD-wide data collection. She also works at the operational level to execute appropriated funding, establish and monitor task order execution, and resolve operational issues.
- In 2013, Pollack drafted a memorandum issued by OSD in support of the AbilityOne Base Supply Center (BSC) program, a key channel for products produced by NIB associated agencies.

Celebrating Her Commitment

Pollack offers that "It is a sense of great pride to have a job where I can work with the AbilityOne Program, and to work with so many unsung heroes in the defense contracting community." Her ongoing support does not go without notice. In 2011, Pollack, who also serves as an AbilityOne liaison for the DOD, received the Most Valuable Liaison Award from the U.S. AbilityOne Commission® in recognition of her efforts in coordinating the Pentagon's AbilityOne National Disability Employment Awareness Month (NDEAM) event for six years. □

GIBSON DUTERROIL TO RECEIVE 2014 IRWIN AWARD

The NIB Board of Directors named Gibson M. DuTerroil the 2014 R.B. Irwin Award winner. The R.B. Irwin Award is the highest honor given to professionals in the NIB family who have devoted their careers to creating and improving employment for people who are blind, or to volunteers who have demonstrated exceptional and longstanding service and commitment to NIB's mission.

DuTerroil spent most of his professional career as president and CEO of The Lighthouse of Houston. His involvement in the blindness community spans more than 35 years, including four terms on the NIB Board and service as a past president of The General Council of Industries for the Blind, now known as the National Association for the Employment of People Who Are Blind (NAEPB).

DuTerroil also volunteered in his local community as president of Lighthouse Industries for the Blind of Texas, and as chairman of Texas Industries for the Blind and Handicapped, Inc., which administers the distribution of products made by people who are



Gibson DuTerroil

blind or otherwise severely disabled to agencies in the state of Texas.

The award is named in memory of Dr. Robert B. Irwin, executive director of the American Foundation for the Blind (AFB) in the 1930s, who worked with AFB's Chairman, M. C. Migel, and Peter Salmon of the Industrial Home for the Blind in New York, toward passage of the Wagner-O'Day Act and the formation of NIB. □

ABILITYONE EMPLOYEES SHOW STRONG SATISFACTION, ENGAGEMENT WITH THEIR AGENCIES

In late 2013, NIB and the NAEPB commissioned a survey to measure the satisfaction and engagement of AbilityOne® Program employees at NIB associated nonprofit agencies.

More than 1,400 employees from 38 associated agencies participated in the survey. Despite the challenging business environment in 2013, survey results were equal to or slightly higher than results from a similar survey conducted in 2010. Results were significantly higher than industry benchmarks for U.S.-based companies.

The survey revealed that overall satisfaction is 88 percent favorable among agency employees. Although higher than the U.S. benchmark, training and development represents an area for improvement with a 73 percent favorable rating.

NIB and its associated agencies will use the survey results to identify strengths and best practices, as well as opportunities for improvement. The survey also provides important metrics for the AbilityOne Quality Work Environment initiative. □

COMING THIS FALL: 2014 NIB/NAEPB NATIONAL CONFERENCE AND EXPO

Registration is open for the 2014 NIB/NAEPB National Conference and Expo, attended by NIB and associated agency leaders and staff, customers, vendors and partners. This year's theme, "Together, we...", emphasizes the need for cooperation among NIB, its associated agencies, customers and partners to achieve success now and in the future.

The event will feature a full-day expo, presentations by government customers and industry leaders, and a banquet honoring NIB associated agency employees of the year. Visit the events page on NIB.org for more details and registration information. □



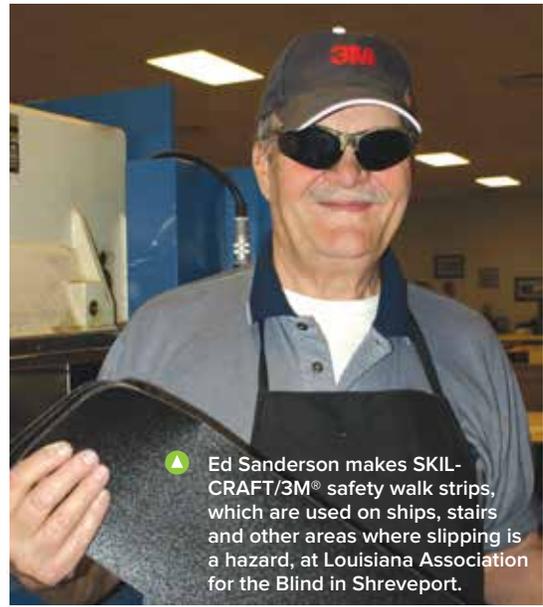
2014 NIB/NAEPB
National Conference and Expo

October 6-9, 2014
Hyatt Regency Crystal City
Arlington, Virginia

FEATURE STORY



▲ McAllen Lyons applies a headband to a mophead at Mississippi Industries for the Blind in Jackson.



▲ Ed Sanderson makes SKILCRAFT/3M® safety walk strips, which are used on ships, stairs and other areas where slipping is a hazard, at Louisiana Association for the Blind in Shreveport.

SKILCRAFT/3M cellulose ▼ scrubber sponges.

CLEANING UP



From brooms and mops to plastic bags and vehicle wash cleaners, SKILCRAFT® janitorial and sanitation (JanSan) products provide diverse cleaning solutions for government, military and commercial customers.

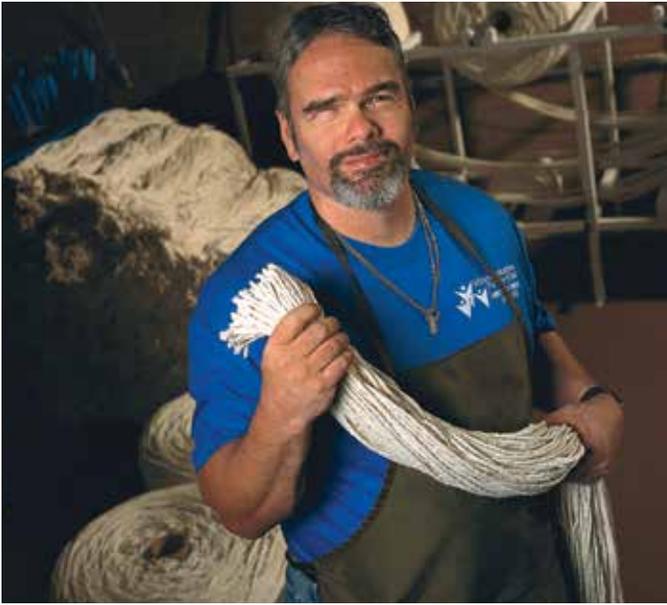
The old fashioned cut-end cotton wet mop with a wooden handle was one of the first items made in NIB associated agencies. One might expect American mop manufacturing to have been ceded to overseas manufacturers years ago, but mops are still produced in the United States today. NIB associated agencies have come a long way from making cotton mops and corn brooms, the first two items added to the federal procurement list in 1939. Within a year, these agencies produced and sold more than 348,000 cotton mops and 85,000 corn brooms to the federal government.

Mops are not made of just cotton anymore. Antimicrobial yarns aid in preventing the growth of bacteria, mold and mildew, and synthetic fiber looped-end yarns attract dust. New technology has led to twist-and-wring mops and sponge squeeze mechanisms. Many consider use of newer products “green” cleaning, because less water and fewer

chemicals are required due to the high performance and deeper cleaning of the oil- and water-attracting microfibers.

NIB associated agencies still offer the tried-and-true white cut-end mop head and wooden mop handle, and have expanded the product line to give buyers more than 150 options. In addition to cotton, customers can choose from rayon, polyester and synthetic blends, with or without antimicrobial properties, in a variety of colors. Handles are made of plastic, aluminum, fiberglass, steel or wood. In addition there are whisk, upright and street brooms; wire brushes; all-purpose brushes and brushes for floor-sweeping, aircraft-cleaning, scrubbing, dusting and sanitary uses; squeegees; dustpans; and more.

“The continual introductions of new SKILCRAFT JanSan products and updates of older ones have provided many



◀ Lester Simpkins, Arizona Industries for the Blind, Phoenix.



▲ SKILCRAFT/3M floor cleaning pads are used to scrub, strip, buff and repair floor surfaces.

more choices for federal customers,” said Tom Barnes, director, Product Management and Technical Services Division, U.S. General Services Administration Southwest Supply Operations Center in Fort Worth, Texas. “It demonstrates their commitment to providing superior service to our customers and best value to the American taxpayer.”

Cleaning Green with Microfiber

The newest in the mop line at Alphapointe’s Brooklyn, New York, facility (formerly New York City Industries for the Blind) are microfiber flat mops that reduce chemical and water usage by as much as 80 percent. Employees make a co-branded SKILCRAFT/3M® Easy Scrub Flat Mop line, available with either a push-button dispenser in the mop handle to hold cleaning solution, or an Express tool that allows users to change out cleaning solutions and offers an adjustable handle. The SKILCRAFT flat mop line includes a mop with rolled-edge construction, which provides excellent pick-up properties along baseboards, and an adjustable mop handle that extends from 38 to 59.5 inches, making it great for both walls and floors. Both flat mop lines are designed to withstand multiple launderings and were rigorously tested to meet requirements for U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) standardized products for Environmental Management Services.

In addition, Alphapointe offers the SKILCRAFT/3M Easy Trap Duster System for use on ceilings, walls and floors. Designed with 3M proprietary fibers, the cloth traps and holds up to six times more dust and dirt than traditional mops and other disposable dust systems. A convenient pop-up dispenser attaches to housekeeping carts, and the perforated rolls are available in five and eight-inch widths. All products are available to the VA and other federal and state customers.

“Our janitorial and sanitation products make up 80 percent of the jobs for people who are blind or visually impaired in our Brooklyn facility,” said Brenda Mee, director of business development at Alphapointe. A recent merger with Alphapointe of Kansas City, Missouri, which specializes in injection-molded plastic bottles, led to the introduction of three sizes of 100 percent recyclable trigger sprayer cleaning bottles, complimenting the broad line of JanSan products offered by Alphapointe.

Rounding out the SKILCRAFT JanSan product line are a wide variety of scouring pads, sponges, scrubbers, floor mats and pads, safety treads, liquid and aerosol cleaners, soaps, detergents, absorbents and plastic bags, as well as cups, plates, towels, tissues and various paper products. Hundreds of items make up this extensive product line; while some have been around for decades, many have been updated to meet the government’s green requirements, and new product lines have been introduced to meet customer requirements.

Biobased Products

NIB associated agencies have updated their product lines to meet or exceed the federal government’s more stringent environmental guidelines. JanSan products were redesigned to meet various government guidelines, such as the Environmental Protection Agency’s Comprehensive Procurement Guidelines on recycled content or biobased content identified by the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s (USDA) BioPreferred Program.

The Lighthouse of Houston in Texas has been in the chemical filling business since 1973, producing quality detergents, glass cleaners, disinfectants and floor care products for sale to the

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CLEANING UP

Continued from page 7



▶ SKILCRAFT BioRenewables® Glass Cleaner made at The Lighthouse of Houston.

◀ Odus Ballard, cleaning product production, VisionCorps, Lancaster, Pennsylvania.



▲ SKILCRAFT/ ZEP Enviroedge Wheel Cleaner, produced at VisionCorps, Lancaster, Pennsylvania.



▲ Giant tissue rolls ready for conversion at Outlook Nebraska, Inc. in Omaha.

federal government and the state of Texas. Several years ago, the Lighthouse reformulated its chemical line to meet the Federal Biobased Products Preferred Procurement Program, which requires all federal agencies to purchase designated biobased products that meet performance standards and are reasonably available and priced. With this “green” purchasing program, the federal government hopes to enhance the nation’s energy security by substituting biobased products for fossil energy-based products and create new markets for agricultural products. Because biobased products are not petroleum-based, their use reduces consumption of resources that harm the environment in terms of biodegradability, toxicity and pollution. Plus, many biobased products are environmentally friendly and can result in safer, healthier workplaces.

The first two reformulated products were the Lighthouse’s glass cleaner and general purpose detergent. “Once we came up with and tested an acceptable biobased formula that met performance standards, we were able to change the labeling on our products to reflect that they are biobased products as defined by the Department of Agriculture,” said Gibson DuTerroil, president and CEO of the Lighthouse of Houston. “Today the products are being sold to the General Services Administration, thanks to the efforts of NIB’s staff who were instrumental in reintroducing our new line of biobased products.”

“We are very pleased to work with NIB and The Lighthouse of Houston as we work together to changeover their chemical cleaners to biobased products,” said Ron Buckhalt, manager, USDA BioPreferred Program. “By meeting USDA’s biobased guidelines, we are providing customers with environmentally preferable solutions for their cleaning needs.”

According to DuTerroil, the Lighthouse’s pine oil disinfectant was already a biobased product because pine oil is a natural product, so the changeover was simpler, requiring only new labeling and packaging. The Lighthouse is developing

new formulations for three of its floor care products, and predicts its entire line of chemical products will be biobased within a few years. “Because biobased products are made from plant, animal, marine or forestry materials, they will not harm the environment if spilled on the ground,” explained DuTerroil. “The U.S. Department of Agriculture is issuing standards for all those products and using biobased content for their standard. It is the way of the future and a lot of NIB associated agencies are moving in that direction to be successful in the government marketplace.”

Safer Ingredients

Last year, VisionCorps in Lancaster, Pennsylvania, introduced a co-branded line of Zep® cleaners, a complete vehicle wash system that includes concentrated cleaners, protectants and detergents formulated with environmentally responsible ingredients that are biodegradable. “The partnership came about when NIB connected Zep with VisionCorps to make Zep’s EnviroEdge® products,” said VisionCorps President and CEO Dennis Steiner. “ZEP is a nationally recognized brand and we are pleased to partner with this organization.”

Zep’s commitment to reducing environmental impact is evident in both the production and use of these car wash products. Low impact manufacturing uses less energy and less water. More concentrated products reduce package sizes and materials used, as well as freight and distribution costs. And environmentally responsible ingredients support water reclamation systems. In addition, the products contain no chlorine bleach, no phosphates and no ethylenediaminetetraacetic acid (EDTA), which is considered an organic pollutant. Biodegradable surfactants have replaced alkyl phenol ethoxylate (APE) surfactants, and the products have low volatile organic compounds (VOCs), which may pose health risks.

Zep offers a full range of environmentally responsible, full performance vehicle wash products sold under trade



▲ James Harvey, tissue wrapper finisher, Outlook Nebraska, Inc., Omaha.



▲ Envision employee James Bradford packs trash can liners.

names such as Best Dressed™, Gelling Bug Remover™, Blast Away™, ZEP-O-SHINE™, Blue Marvel® and others for cleaning cars, trucks, tires, wheel covers and wells, interior and exterior vinyl, leather, and rubber surfaces. VisionCorps employees fill, label and package the various cleaning products, which are then sold to the General Services Administration for distribution to federal agencies.

“Although the partnership is less than a year old, four VisionCorps employees are involved in the Zep Program,” said Shelley Sanders, vice president of operations. “We hope for there to be additional job growth in the future.”

On a Roll

Although Outlook Nebraska, Inc. (ONI) in Omaha has been producing bath tissue and towel products for the federal government for many years, the organization just hired three new sales representatives to enhance its presence in the government marketplace and make inroads into commercial markets. “This growth strategy fits well with our organization, as there are very minimal new equipment overhead cost structures or surprises,” said Eric Stueckrath, president and CEO of ONI, which is focusing on landing accounts with companies interested in making more socially responsible purchases. “Our new brand name, Anthem, aligns with our desire for these organizations to ‘take the pledge’ to reach their social responsibility goals.”

To provide more choices for its customers, ONI recently purchased equipment and is developing manufacturing systems for a new line of “coreless” paper products that will be produced without a cardboard center roll.

Currently, ONI employs 60 people in its facility producing approximately \$16 million in bath tissue and paper towels

annually. “Ninety percent of the employees on this product line are blind or visually impaired,” said Stueckrath, “and we hope that our entry into the commercial market, plus our new coreless paper products, will help ONI to grow more employment opportunities for people who are blind.”

Extensive Capabilities

Throughout the country, NIB associated agencies depend on JanSan products to provide employment to people who are blind. Envision Industries manufactures dozens of different types and sizes of trash can liners. Lighthouse Louisiana in New Orleans offers customers various types and sizes of hot and cold cups with custom printing and matching lids. Virginia Industries for the Blind makes dust pans, wet mop buckets, liquid cleaners, disposable gloves and more.

At LC Industries in Durham, North Carolina, employees produce more than 3 million mops per year. The agency’s paper conversion division manufactures disposable paper products, including facial tissue, paper plates, napkins and hand towels. IB Milwaukee in Wisconsin, and Industries of the Blind in Greensboro, North Carolina, are major producers of mops, brooms and other janitorial products.

While there is no magic formula for success, NIB associated agencies recognize that new products and services are the lifeblood of job creation for people who are blind, making it imperative to maintain an abundant pipeline of project concepts that range from product line extensions to breakthroughs. These new positions have a ripple effect on job creation with large corporations and small businesses that supply raw materials and equipment, as well as freight companies that ship products made in the U.S. by a workforce dedicated to providing customers with the very best in quality, service and delivery. □



▲ Jerry Fleming performs the closing operation on a mattress.



▲ Michael Chew, executive director, Mississippi Industries for the Blind.

MADE IN MISSISSIPPI

Manufactured goods, a vital part of Mississippi's economy, have always been the heart of operations at Mississippi Industries for the Blind.

From the constant hum of sewing machines, to the rhythmic sound of clicker presses and occasional warning beeps from forklift trucks, to the huge stacks of products waiting to be shipped, operations at Mississippi Industries for the Blind (MIB) are much like other manufacturing facilities around the state. But one factor sets MIB apart — the diverse range of products made by its employees, which takes many people by surprise. Mattresses, sponges, Army equipment belts, floor care products, military barracks bags, fire shovels, booster cables, key blanks and tow bars are just a few of MIB's products.

Mississippi's drive to reinvent itself is quickly picking up speed, with the state being among the top ten leading a manufacturing resurgence in the United States, and MIB is part of the effort to grow the state's economy and jobs.

Building a Better Business

Driving MIB's growth is Executive Director Michael Chew. With 20 years of experience in developing commercial business opportunities, supervising production, and overseeing quality assurance and sales service, along with a degree in chemical engineering from Mississippi State University, Chew was the perfect choice for the organization. Chew, who lost his vision in the late 1990s, came to MIB as director of operations in 2001 and was appointed by the MIB Board of Directors to the top position of executive director in 2007. In short order, Chew reduced production costs by more than \$100,000 a year, made needed repairs to the facility, upgraded manufacturing equipment and ensured MIB could meet dramatic surges in military orders for mission-critical products during the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. Chew also oversaw the successful start up of several new projects and established mission, vision and values statements for the organization.

Under Chew's leadership, MIB realized double-digit sales growth for three consecutive years and achieved ISO 9000 certification in 2010, which helped improve consistency and quality in its manufacturing processes.

The main plant in Jackson is 123,000 square feet, with 85 employees working mainly on sewn products, mattresses, floor care products and sponges; a satellite facility in Meridian provides jobs for another dozen people in metal working operations. The Jackson facility also hosts MIB's service projects — document imaging and contact center operations. MIB's newest contract is providing help desk functions for the Mississippi Department of Finance and Administration.

First Impressions

Today, visitors walking through MIB's front door first encounter the low vision store and call center. "We believe having our store in a prominent place provides visitors with a sense of the adaptive aids and assistive technology that are available to people who are blind," said Chew.

The updated manufacturing and warehouse areas are well organized, with raw materials staged close to operations to maximize efficiency. "When orders are high, we may have 35-40 sewing machines running at a time," said Chew. "The camouflage green barracks bag is one of our simpler sewn items. The most difficult is bandoleers, which are pocketed

belts for holding ammunition, because precise sewing and tight tolerances call for proficiency to handle the 40 different operations to make one bag."

MIB is a long-time manufacturer of mattresses. The mattress closing operation is one of the most highly skilled and critical procedures in the process. Done with a movable sewing head mounted on a track, the operator manually feeds heavy-duty binding tape into the sewing machine as it moves around the mattress, joining the top, bottom and side panels.

Future Focused

As orders from the federal government fluctuate, MIB is looking to commercial markets to sustain and grow employment opportunities. "We will maintain our focus on what we do well for the federal government, but at the same time, we are exploring opportunities to apply our sewing expertise to other textile products for commercial use," explained Chew. MIB is also trying to acquire commercial customers for its scrubbers and sponges. "It's all about using our current skills to secure commercial business opportunities to create more jobs for the people we serve," Chew explained. □



▲ Robert Jackson rolls shoring straps, which are sold to the U.S. Postal Service.



▲ David Gainwell inserts grommets on barracks bags purchased by the Defense Logistics Agency.



▲ Deloris Watkins, barracks bag machine operator.

BRIGHT FUTURES

Introducing NIB's 2014 National Employee of the Year Award Winners!



A Megan Dodd, marketing associate, Lighthouse Graphics, East Texas Lighthouse for the Blind in Tyler.

DETERMINED TO SUCCEED

Demonstrating perseverance and exceptional drive, Megan Dodd of the East Texas Lighthouse for the Blind in Tyler is the 2014 Milton J. Samuelson Career Achievement Award winner.

Megan Dodd has always been a high achiever. In high school, she was a member of the honor society and participated in the marching band, track, tennis and volleyball. She graduated a year early with a 3.9 grade point average and a scholarship

to Texas Tech University. But at the end of her second semester, Dodd noticed obstructions to her vision were causing difficulty reading, driving and following class lectures. By the summer break, she was diagnosed with macular dystrophy. Accepted into the

University's Honors College, she gave up extracurricular activities to keep up with the demanding curriculum, but rapidly declining vision forced Dodd to transfer to the University of Texas at Tyler to be closer to her supportive family and friends. While there, she worked full-time as a waitress and maintained a 3.8 grade point average, ultimately graduating with honors.

Dodd joined the East Texas Lighthouse for the Blind in 2012 as a marketing associate for the rehabilitation department and was soon promoted to marketing associate for the Lighthouse's low vision store. Dodd created a retail catalog to showcase products and grew sales through marketing events and building relationships with prospective customers. A year later, Dodd landed a position as marketing associate for Lighthouse Graphics. In her new role, Dodd is involved in sales support, product development and marketing. She has created a new website and marketing collateral, and developed a database order entry system. Dodd plans to pursue a graduate degree in Information and Risk Management, which she hopes will enhance her ability to contribute meaningfully to the mission of the Lighthouse.

The Milton J. Samuelson Career Achievement Award is given to individuals who demonstrate career advancement at an NIB associated agency or in the private sector. Samuelson championed upward mobility and placement programs with people who are blind. 

SAFETY AND SUPERIOR SERVICE

Combining job excellence with outstanding community service, James “JJ” Scott of the South Texas Lighthouse for the Blind in Corpus Christi is the 2014 Peter J. Salmon Award winner.

JJ Scott is the lead sales associate in the Hazardous Material Department (HAZMAT) at the Naval Air Station (NAS) Meridian, Mississippi, operated by the South Texas Lighthouse for the Blind in Corpus Christi. Recognized by his peers and customers, Scott has become the resident hazardous material expert at NAS Meridian. Expertise in managing the Navy’s Enterprise Resource Planning software led to Scott’s selection as the installation’s hazardous material coordinator.

Instrumental in the successful implementation of the new Navy Third Party Logistics Hazardous

Material Operations Support program, Scott’s extensive knowledge of the Consolidated Hazardous Material Reutilization and Inventory Management Program has resulted in significant cost savings for Navy customers. And his dedication and hard work in providing quality services to the Navy have been recognized many times by senior base leadership.

Legally blind since birth as a result of albinism and optic nerve hypoplasia, Scott is also a talented artist who sculpts and creates portraits and digital artwork. Scott is active in his community, serving as treasurer for the Meridian

Chapter of the National Federation for the Blind. The mayor of Meridian has asked Scott to develop the city’s Public Transportation Department website and he also volunteers his time as a remote camera operator during church services, events and programs.

The Peter J. Salmon Employee of the Year Award recognizes employees in NIB associated agencies who have excelled in their positions. Dr. Salmon was instrumental in the passage of the Wagner-O’Day Act of 1938 and the formation of NIB. 



 James “JJ” Scott, HAZMAT Sales Associate, Naval Air Station Meridian, operated by the South Texas Lighthouse for the Blind in Corpus Christi.

CONFERENCES



▲ 2014-2015 Advocates for Leadership and Employment. Pictured left to right: Steve Ogletree, Cincinnati Association for the Blind and Visually Impaired, Ohio; Cody Steinfeld, Alphapointe, Kansas City, Missouri; Pamela Wright, NewView Oklahoma, Oklahoma City; Stephanie Davis, Winston-Salem Industries for the Blind in North Carolina; Deborah Ambro-Crandell, Virginia Industries for the Blind in Richmond; Shawn Dobbs, Inland Northwest Lighthouse, Spokane, Washington; Mike Guajardo, San Antonio Lighthouse for the Blind in Texas.

2014 NIB/NAEPB PUBLIC POLICY FORUM: CRITICAL ISSUES AT THE FOREFRONT

NIB and associated agency representatives turn up the volume about employment challenges faced by people who are blind.

A record number of representatives from NIB and its associated nonprofit agencies gathered in Arlington, Virginia, and Washington, D.C., for the 2014 NIB/NAEPB Public Policy Forum, held May 20-21. The theme of this year's forum, "Safeguarding Employment Opportunities for People Who Are Blind," captured the need to engage elected officials and their staffs about critical issues affecting

the AbilityOne® Program and the employment of people who are blind.

Nearly 100 employees across 37 different associated agencies participated in the Forum. NIB also welcomed its second class of Advocates for Leadership and Employment. Seven advocates from NIB associated agencies attended the event to engage

their elected officials on national issues affecting employment in the blindness community.

Making Our Voices Heard

The Forum kicked off with remarks from NIB President and CEO Kevin Lynch and NAEPB President Dennis Steiner, who spoke about the immediate need for congressional action on key issues affecting the



EMPHASIS ON SOCIAL MEDIA

This year's Forum featured an increased emphasis on social media engagement by NIB and associated agencies. Using the hashtag #NIBPolicyForum, on-site attendees and agency representatives from across the country sparked a spirited discussion on Facebook and Twitter. By the end of the forum's second day, 33 Facebook posts and 190 tweets related to the Forum generated more than 190,000 impressions. Several members of Congress tweeted or re-tweeted posts of agency visits, including Senator Roger Wicker (R-MS) and Representatives Roger Williams (R-TX25), Pete Sessions (R-TX32), Cathy McMorris Rodgers (R-WA5), Fred Upton (R-MI6) and Charles Rangel (D-NY13). □



CathyMcMorrisRodgers @cathymcmonis · 19h
@Lighthouse_Inc works to enable independence & self-sufficiency to those in our community who are blind. Inspiring. pic.twitter.com/2dQsrgp8d4



Pete Sessions @PeteSessions · May 21
Enjoyed talking wireps from @NetIndBlind & @TX32 constituent Nancy Perkins, President of @DallasLighthouse! pic.twitter.com/KPaN14vH9D



Rep. Roger Williams @RepRWilliams



Thanks for coming by! MT @FWLighthouse:
Special thanks to @RepRWilliams for taking
time to meet in person! #AbilityOne
#NIBPolicyForum



▲ Pictured left to right: NIB President and CEO Kevin Lynch; Mara Liasson, political analyst for FOX News and National Public Radio correspondent; and Dennis Steiner, president, National Association for the Employment of People Who Are Blind.

AbilityOne Program. The changing nature of the government procurement system, potential reductions in military commissaries and widespread non-compliance were brought to the forefront at this year's event with a heightened sense of urgency.

Mara Liasson, political analyst for FOX News and National Public Radio correspondent, energized attendees with her commentary on the pulse of Washington, D.C. Liasson noted that polarizing issues are contributing to political gridlock in Congress. She lauded the contributions that NIB and its associated agencies have made to the nation and the blindness community. "I've talked to a lot of people, but I don't think I've ever talked



▲ Representative Luke Messer receives an AbilityOne Champion plaque. Pictured left to right: Anthony Scott, communications specialist, Bosma Enterprises, Indianapolis, Indiana; Kevin Mandrell, chairman of the board, Bosma Enterprises; Representative Messer; Lise Pace, senior marketing manager, Bosma Enterprises; Kevin Lynch, president and CEO, NIB; Anthony Stephens, public policy and advocacy manager, NIB.

to a group that has done as much good for as long as you have," she said.

Learning the Ropes

Forum speakers and panelists led sessions designed to prepare attendees for their meetings with elected officials. NIB and associated agency employees, along with government relations experts and advisors, led discussions on a variety of topics, including how to hold successful meetings on the Hill, bridge advocacy with communications and craft clear messages.

Storming the Hill

On the second day of the Forum, advocates and other attendees took to Capitol Hill to meet with their elected officials and staffs. NIB associated

agency representatives asked members of Congress to protect the commissary benefit for members of the military and their families, and to help NIB increase compliance with the AbilityOne Program across the federal government. Agency representatives conducted more than 150 meetings on Capitol Hill with elected officials and their staffs.

Two members of Congress were honored as 2014 AbilityOne Champions for their support of the AbilityOne Program through congressional action: U.S. Representative Luke Messer (R-IN6) and U.S. Representative Patrick Meehan (R-PA7). They join more than 148 members of Congress designated as AbilityOne Champions. ▣



▲ Rehabilitation Services Administration Commissioner Janet LaBreck discusses disability employment issues.

COMING IN AUGUST: 2014 NIB/NAEPB GRASSROOTS FORUM

The third annual NIB/NAEPB Grassroots Forum will take place in August in communities across the nation. The virtual event is a follow-on to the NIB/NAEPB Public Policy Forum, and helps keep up the momentum in raising awareness among elected officials about critical issues affecting the AbilityOne® Program and employment of people who are blind. During the Grassroots Forum, associated agencies invite members of Congress and their staffs to tour their facilities and learn more about the capabilities of people who are blind. NIB associated agencies held 25 events during last year's Grassroots Forum. ▣

Join the Conversation on Social Media #NIBGrassroots



NEW PRODUCTS

READY TO LAUNCH

Learn about new products produced by NIB associated agencies now available to federal government customers through the AbilityOne® Program.

NIB and its associated agencies are launching several new products in fiscal year 2014. Highlights include a variety of SKILCRAFT® office products and cleaning supplies produced by people who are blind employed at NIB associated agencies.

- 1. SKILCRAFT Frame View Binders:** South Texas Lighthouse for the Blind in Corpus Christi produces these binders, which feature an elegant border on the front to frame a title page; Slant-D style rings to hold more paper; and a business card holder slot in an inside front pocket. Made with 45 percent post-consumer materials, the binders come in three sizes, from ½ to 1½ inches.
- 2. SKILCRAFT Wallboards:** Produced by the Lighthouse for the Blind, Inc., Seattle, Washington, these planners, wallboards and work/plan kits are available in a variety of sizes and feature stain- and scratch-resistant writing surfaces. Some models include detachable marker trays.
- 3. SKILCRAFT Wall Calendars and Planners:** Go green with these office essentials made of post-consumer recycled materials by The Chicago Lighthouse for People Who Are Blind or Visually Impaired in Illinois. Products are available in a variety of sizes and styles, including daily, weekly or monthly wire-bound planners; 12-month wall planners; and double-sided, erasable planning calendars.
- 4. SKILCRAFT SelfSet Wall Clocks:** Accurate to within two minutes per year, SKILCRAFT SelfSet Wall Clocks produced by The Chicago Lighthouse automatically adjust to Daylight Savings Time and are ideal for use in areas where radio signals may not be available. Offered in mahogany or high-impact plastic frames made with 30 percent post-consumer waste materials. Custom logos are also available.
- 5. SKILCRAFT Quartz Movement Wall Clocks:** Produced by The Chicago Lighthouse, SKILCRAFT Quartz Movement Wall Clocks are accurate to within two minutes per year. Offered in mahogany or high-impact plastic frames, custom logos are available for these clocks manufactured with 30 percent post-consumer content.
- 6. SKILCRAFT Self-Stick Repositionable Flags:** Produced by the Association for the Blind and Visually Impaired (ABVI)-Goodwill Industries of Greater Rochester Inc. in New York, these repositionable and reusable flags come in a variety of attention-getting colors, including a new "Sign Here" design. Flags are made using quality 3M® materials.
- 7. SKILCRAFT Global Harmonized System Compliance Centers and Safety Data Sheet Organizing Binders:** Produced by ABVI-Goodwill, these easily identifiable yellow binders support compliance with the Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labeling of Chemicals (GHS) requirements in HazCom 2012. Organizers and Information Centers keep critical safety information readily available, and kit models include a sturdy wall-mount wire rack to store binders for easy access.



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8. SKILCRAFT Mesh Laundry Nets: Bestwork Industries for the Blind in Cherry Hill, New Jersey, produces these durable polyester mesh bags designed for washer and dryer use. The bags, which feature a locking drawstring, measure 24 by 36 inches.

9. SKILCRAFT Lightweight Microfiber Cleaning Cloth: Produced by Bestwork Industries for the Blind in Cherry Hill, New Jersey, these lightweight microfiber cleaning cloths remove 99 percent of bacteria from surfaces. Designed to work with quat (disinfectant) and chlorine, the lint-free, streak-free cloths are non-abrasive and can be used on delicate surfaces.

10. SKILCRAFT Double Yield Toner Cartridges: Produced by Alabama Industries for the Blind in Talladega, these double-yield cartridges printed more pages, with better print quality, than genuine HP® brand print toners in independent tests conducted by the Rochester Institute of Technology. Fully compatible with HP and Lexmark laser printers, the cartridges carry a 100 percent lifetime guarantee and include a pre-paid mailer for returning empty cartridges.

11. SKILCRAFT All-Purpose Mesh Scrubbers: These versatile, all-purpose nylon scrubbers produced by Alphapointe (formerly New York City Industries for the Blind) in Brooklyn provide scrubbing power without scratching and are safe to use on coated and non-stick surfaces.

12. SKILCRAFT Dual-Sided ID Holder: West Texas Lighthouse for the Blind in San Angelo produces these dual-sided holders that keep ID cards visible at all times. Great for common access cards, Smart Cards, credit cards and other forms of identification, the holders can be used in a vertical or horizontal position. Black cord lanyards with a swivel hook attachment, safety breakaway and detachable buckle also are available.

13. SKILCRAFT Waterproof Multiple ID Holder: Hold up to seven IDs, cash or other items in these clear, waterproof cases made by the West Texas Lighthouse for the Blind in San Angelo. Holders include a premium black cord lanyard with swivel hook attachment, detachable buckle, adjustable slider and safety breakaway.

14. SKILCRAFT Professional Grade Paint Kits: Produced by Industries for the Blind in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, SKILCRAFT Professional Grade Paint Kits include angle brushes, roller covers, paint trays and other essentials. Choose between the 14-piece kit for large jobs, the six-piece kit for medium jobs or the four-piece kit for small jobs.

15. SKILCRAFT Thermal Printable CD-R Discs – 50-Pack Spindle: White thermal printable CD-Rs produced by North Central Sight Services, Inc. in Williamsport, Pennsylvania, can store 700MB or 80 minutes of audio. For use with CD thermal printers made by Rimage, Epson or Primera, the white matte surfaces produce excellent print quality in a write-once format.

16. SKILCRAFT Vinyl Electrical Insulation Tape: Splice and insulate wires with SKILCRAFT flame retardant electrical insulation vinyl tape produced by the Cincinnati Association for the Blind and Visually Impaired in Ohio. The polyvinyl chloride (PVC) backing on this rubber-based adhesive helps resist UV rays, abrasion, moisture, copper corrosion, alkalis and acids, and easily conforms to irregular surfaces.

17. SKILCRAFT Vinyl Electrical Tape: Produced by the Cincinnati Association for the Blind and Visually Impaired, SKILCRAFT Vinyl Electrical Tape has mechanical and electrical properties that make it a superior choice for color-coding and phase identification. This flame-retardant tape has excellent resistance to abrasion, moisture, alkalis, acid, copper corrosion, fading and varying weather conditions. □

These and thousands of other products are available for purchase at AbilityOne.com, GSAAAdvantage.com, your local Base Supply Center, or through AbilityOne authorized distributors. For more information about how to purchase SKILCRAFT and other products produced by people who are blind, visit <http://www.nib.org/products/purchase-products>.

QUOTED & NOTED



▲ Pictured left to right: Brian Bosma, Bosma Enterprises board member; Lou Moneymaker, president and CEO, Bosma Enterprises; Laura Reimers, vice president, communications, NIB; Representative Susan Brooks; John Kelly, assistant vice president, SourceAmerica; Kevin Mandrell, Bosma board chairperson.

BOSMA HONORS U.S. CONGRESSWOMAN

At its “Dining in the Dark” fundraising event, Bosma Enterprises in Indianapolis, Indiana, recognized U.S. Representative Susan Brooks (R-IN5) for her enduring support of the AbilityOne® Program. Representative Brooks continues to be a strong supporter of the AbilityOne Program’s mission of creating employment opportunities for

people who are blind or have severe disabilities. Representatives from Bosma, NIB and SourceAmerica presented Representative Brooks with an honorary plaque. Support from elected officials helps Bosma and other NIB associated agencies in local communities provide employment opportunities for people who are blind. □

SYLVIE JOSEPH JOINS NIB AS BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT LEAD

Sylvie Joseph joined NIB as vice president, business development and account management. In this newly created position, Joseph will work closely with all NIB departments and associated agencies to collectively find, develop and deliver employment growth opportunities for producing products and delivering services in the federal and commercial marketplaces.

Joseph has more than 15 years of experience in managing sales organizations. She has served as assistant vice president of New Business Development for the University of Maryland University College, and as the national director, account management, for the American Council on Education. Joseph was also a government sales manager at Oracle, where she developed an e-commerce sales strategy for opportunities in government markets. She holds a Master of Science degree in organizational management from Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University. □



▲ Sylvie Joseph, NIB vice president, business development and account management.

2014 NDEAM THEME ANNOUNCED

The U.S. Department of Labor announced the official theme of 2014 National Disability Employment Awareness Month (NDEAM): “Expect. Employ. Empower.” NDEAM is a nationwide campaign observed each October to raise awareness about disability employment issues and honor the many diverse contributions of America’s workers with disabilities. □

NIB RECEIVES GRANT FROM GLOBAL CHARITABLE FOUNDATION

NIB was awarded a \$10,000 grant from the QBE Foundation to support NIB’s Business Leaders Program. QBE’s mission includes “supporting charities that help people overcome disadvantage, strengthen their abilities, and live more independently, successfully and productively.” The grant is affirmation from a world-class corporation that NIB is doing the right thing in enhancing business-related employment opportunities and independence of people who are blind. □

NAVY CUSTOMER RECOGNIZES NEWVIEW TEAM

The NewView Oklahoma team's performance in providing mail room services received rave reviews from the Naval Supply System Command's Fleet Logistics Center, Norfolk Detachment, Naval District Washington Postal Division. Ernest Terry, director of postal operations, recognized NewView employees in an official memo, noting the team's "superb performance" and "working standards [that] are critical where no mistakes are allowed." NewView employees provide mail room services, working with employees from Service Source, a SourceAmerica™ associated nonprofit agency. □

READER'S DIGEST HIGHLIGHTS SKILCRAFT PENS

SKILCRAFT® U.S. Government Pens were featured in an article in the June issue of Reader's Digest magazine. The article provides a bit of history on the SKILCRAFT brand and notes the high quality and exacting standards SKILCRAFT pens must meet, including being able to write continuously for at least 5,000 feet and in temperatures ranging from 40 degrees below zero to 160 degrees above. Reader comments on the article agreed SKILCRAFT pens are a great product. Approximately 5 million people receive the U.S. edition of Reader's Digest each month, including 400,000 who subscribe to the large print edition. □

INLAND NORTHWEST LIGHTHOUSE CELEBRATES BUILDING EXPANSION

Employees and their families, customers, vendors and members of the community joined together at an "Expansion Fiesta" to mark the building expansion at the Inland Northwest Lighthouse in Spokane, Washington. A subsidiary of The Lighthouse, Inc., the Inland Northwest Lighthouse provides employment opportunities for

people who are blind, deaf and blind, or who are blind with other disabilities. The expansion will allow Inland Northwest Lighthouse to employ more people to produce its variety of wallboards, binders, hanging file folders, and other products through the AbilityOne® Program. □



▲ Kirk Adams, president and CEO of The Lighthouse for the Blind, Inc., cuts the building expansion ribbon during the Expansion Fiesta in Spokane, Washington.



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