

Quest's News

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QuestWorks: Filling the Employment Gap



How does employment fare among people with developmental disabilities? In 2007, the Annual Disability Status Report* found that their average employment rate in the U.S. was less than 38 percent, compared with nearly 80 percent for the non-disabled population.

The same study, part of an ongoing collaborative series between Cornell University and the American Association of People with Disabilities, also reported that the difference in poverty is more than 16 percent, with 25.3 percent of disabled working-age Americans living in poverty versus 9.2 percent of those without disabilities.

In Central Florida, QuestWorks helps minimize this labor gap, offering people with disabilities real-world employment opportunities to give them the financial and personal independence they desire. When employers use QuestWorks, they help improve societal conditions for disabled individuals, who then increase their self-esteem and develop social and workplace skills.

But using QuestWorks is good for business, too.

In addition to providing quality services at considerably reduced costs, people with disabilities have also proven to be reliable, long-term workers. Studies have noted that the retention rate for people with disabilities is around 85 percent – notably higher than their non-disabled peers.

At QuestWorks, significant time is dedicated to screening applicant's strengths and interests so that employees are more likely to stay satisfied with their jobs. The results are high rates of retention and productivity, lowering costs associated with staff turnover. It also means that outsourced production jobs are completed to employers' high standards – a big benefit for business.

"Outsourcing these types of projects provides us with a cost-effective way to get the job done right and on time," said Vickie Hungate, formerly of Orlando Utilities Commission (OUC), in a statement.

OUC has used QuestWorks for more than 10 years for their fulfillment, sorting and assembly jobs. "During this time, we have been very satisfied with the quality of work and level of customer service we have received from this business relationship," Hungate said.

In addition to such off-site labor outsourcing work, QuestWorks offers on-site custodial and grounds keeping contract work and internal staffing solutions. To discover how QuestWorks can benefit your business and your community, visit www.questworks.org.

*Houtenville, Andrew J. 2008. "Disability Statistics in the United States." Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Rehabilitation Research and Training Center, www.disabilitystatistics.org. Posted May 15, 2003.

From the president

Looking towards the future, Quest seeks to one day reach our vision: to be the number one provider of services that empower people with disabilities to shape their future. Taking the steps to be proactive, our team has come together for the past several months to create, form and mold a three-year plan to get us closer to our ultimate goal.

As an organization that strives for longevity and aims for success, producing a cohesive and thorough strategy is critical to Quest's growth and survival. To devise a comprehensive plan, we solicited feedback from a broad range of our audiences, which included many of you. From your involvement, we identified areas of both strength and improvement. Your input drove the design of our plan, as we assessed the best ways to manage change and the right steps needed to deliver a greater impact to those we serve. This process led us to a strategic plan we are proud of – which was approved by our board of directors.

While giving us a competitive advantage, the proposed plan will keep us focused on the successful long-term operation and management of Quest. Through its implementation, we hope to fulfill our dream of providing our quality services and opportunities to *everyone* who critically needs them soon.

Katie

Special Thanks

The Quest team would like to extend our gratitude to the **Orlando Science Center** (OSC) for inviting the people we serve as their guests for an unforgettable day of entertainment, education and discovery! They provided us with 40 admission passes to explore the 10 interactive and highly themed exhibit halls offered at the OSC.

The OSC is a private, nonprofit science institution dedicated to interpreting science and technology for the general public. For more information or to purchase exhibition tickets, visit www.osc.org.

Board Member Spotlight



Ruth Bresnick

*Coordinator, Financial Modeling
Orlando Utilities Commission*

For two consecutive terms, Ruth has shown a great level of dedication to Quest by serving as treasurer on the Board of Directors. Always enthusiastic, she constantly has Quest's best interest in mind. She demonstrates her firm devotion through her active leadership and consistent participation in fundraising events.

As a financial modeling coordinator at Orlando Utilities Commission (OUC), Ruth brings among her impressive talents an extensive level of expertise in the world of finance – a skill that has benefitted Quest enormously through her position on the Finance Committee for the past four years. We greatly appreciate the wealth of knowledge, experience and resources that Ruth continues to bring to Quest.

Bringing Inspiration to Quest

In support of Quest's work, members from **CrossLites**, a graduate-student run nonprofit from the Crummer Graduate School of Business at Rollins College, presented Quest with a check in February. CrossLites is an organization that seeks to provide resources, encouragement and inspiration to communities around the world by spreading the legacy of Dr. Charles Parker, a veterinarian who dedicated his life to helping others and improving society based on his love of people.

Board member **Jeanmarie Loria** serves as an intern at CrossLites and connected the team to Quest. We'd like to thank CrossLites for their tremendous generosity in helping us provide more people with our services and look forward to a continued partnership in the future. It is organizations like this that assist us in providing the resources needed to carry out our mission. To learn more about the inspiring work of CrossLites, please visit www.crosslites.com.



WineQuest Coming Soon!

Now in its 12th year, WineQuest returns in June 2008 with several delectable days of wine tastings, dinners, auctions and interactive seminars. Explore the legendary area venues, unparalleled field expertise and exquisite wines that have established WineQuest as Central Florida's premier wine event series. Sample, sip and savor to discover the tastes that are right for you. For additional information, visit www.winequest.org or call **407.218.4300**.



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