

WOCBA

VISION BEYOND THE ORDINARY

Westmoreland County Blind Association



Mission Statement

The mission of this corporation is to improve the quality of life of the blind and visually impaired and to assist in the prevention of blindness in Westmoreland County.

ANNUAL REPORT FISCAL 2017-18

Organization in Review:

Since 1948, the mission of the Westmoreland County Blind Association has been to improve the quality of life of the blind and visually impaired and to assist in the prevention of blindness. In order to fulfill our mission, the WCBA offers a variety of services that enhance the productivity and independence of blind and visually impaired individuals, and seeks to educate the community about eye disease & damage prevention and detection.

For many, finding meaningful employment in today's economic climate is difficult. Consider the diminished employment opportunities for those who have lost their vision.

Employment not only fulfills the need for a source of income, but also the need to be independent and productive. At WCBA, 75% of our workforce is visually impaired or multi-challenged. Employment areas include Administration and Management, Manufacturing, Embroidery, and Document Destruction.

Training and Support Services (TSS)



The Training and Support Services Department of the Westmoreland County Blind Association meets the needs of the blind and visually impaired throughout the Westmoreland and Indiana County area. The implementation of the program allows the blind to become more independent. The wide array of services offered to the blind are at no cost to the consumer. The description of services is as follows:

SUPPORT SERVICES IN THE HOME:

- reading & reviewing mail
- filling out paper work & applications
- picking up groceries for the consumer
- assisting in shopping for and with the consumer

LIFE SKILLS EDUCATION: (Established to promote independence for the consumer through)

- educational sessions from staff & outside resources
- demonstrating usage of visual aides & appliances
- teaching consumers how to better acquaint themselves to daily activities

TRANSPORTATION:

- medical appointments
- banks
- grocery stores
- pharmacies
- agencies such as AAA, Social Security office, etc.
- peer support
- emergency first aid

ADVOCACY:

- seek resources that can benefit the consumer regarding their blindness or visual impairment
- ensure that consumer's rights are not being violated
- self-esteem building

Low Vision Program



Over the past 24 years, the Westmoreland County Blind Association has been involved with Dr. Chris Cakanac in providing low vision services. The program was the first low vision clinic to be established in Westmoreland County. The number of patients seen has grown from 50 to over 200 on an annual basis.

The Westmoreland County Blind Association is responsible for providing the visual aids for the clinic. There is a wide range of visual aids available to the patients and the recommended items cannot always be satisfactory to the consumer. The problem occurs with the patient's inability to determine whether or not the visual aids can be helpful without actually using them in their daily lives. Due to these difficulties the Westmoreland County Blind Association developed a loaner program with its visual aids so that, the patients can take the items home for two weeks and make their own determination on how useful the items are. This system has been very assistive to the patient.

This program has provided options for visually impaired consumers that were not available in the past. The addition of these items as well as obtaining the newest developments in technology is crucial to the effectiveness of this program.

Pre-Vocational Services



The WCBA Work Activities Center (WAC) provides therapeutic and developmental work tasks for the multi-challenged consumer while developing good working habits. WAC consumers develop general, non-job specific skills. They learn to focus on following instructions and task completion. They develop fellowships with other consumers and learn the importance of teamwork. Our consumers also learn workplace safety, punctuality, and peer interaction.

Individuals in the Work Activities Center perform jobs such as document destruction, box making, and labeling while learning to function in a true workplace atmosphere. The skills learned offer the individual a path toward independence and self-reliance through paid work. WCBA document destruction, packaging and hard drive destruction services performed by the Work Activities Center consumers are available to the public. All proceeds from these services are used to fund programs that benefit the blind, the visually impaired, and those with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

Adult Training Facility



The Westmoreland County Blind Association Adult Training Facility (ATF) is comprised of twenty-five (25) multiple intellectually and physically challenged adults who participate in functional activities in an effort to meet personal needs and goals. In 2017, the ATF participated in a few fun and educational visits to Idlewild Park, Pittsburgh Zoo, nature walks at Twin Lakes, Mammoth Park, bowling and lunch outings to enhance their daily living skills and abilities.

On a regular basis, they participate in fundraising activities such as Bake Sales of pepperoni rolls, cookies, sweet breads and special lunches. They have also made multiple Craft items such as candles and topiaries. This Christmas, they chose to use their fundraising profits to purchase toys and gifts for needy children which were chosen and presented to Westmoreland County Children's Bureau. They also created Easter Baskets for the Bureau in the spring.

The ATF has accomplished so much this year and look forward to another year of fun and educational activities and adventures.

Personal Community Services

These services allow individuals the opportunity to engage in supervised leisure and social events in the community. Individuals that have PFDS waiver funding can receive Companion and In-Home Community Habilitation Services. For those that have OBRA funding, Personal Assistance Services are available.

Embroidery



The Westmoreland County Blind Association offers custom-embroidered apparel and accessories. All items are done on the premises to offer brand exposure for your company/organization's name and logo at a very reasonable cost. Individuals are welcome to shop for something unique to honor a special occasion or event. At Embroidery by WCBA, our emphasis is on quality and service.

Volunteers

The Westmoreland County Blind Association would like to thank its valued volunteers for donating their time to help the Association.

- help with tax preparation for our employees
- answering telephone calls and greeting customers in front lobby
- Prevention of Blindness screenings

Textiles Manufacturing Department



Fiscal Year 2017/2018 presented WCBA's manufacturing department with operational challenges in their efforts to fulfill desired employment target levels and produce contracted product quantities while continuing to sustain our long standing recognized level of quality that meets or exceeds military specifications as set forth by the U. S. Department of Defense.

A Congressional order issued to the Defense Department imposed a 'sequestration mandate' which remained in effect, resulting in wide spread cutbacks in all textile based military supply procurements. The mandate was in response, to a reduction in active duty military personnel to pre WWII levels. WCBA continued to adapt and restructure operations to promote a leaner and highly reactive workforce. This afforded us the ability to integrate our multi cross-trained personnel across all production operations, therefore improving response time and accommodate market volatility and ultimately the individual war-fighter.

Through our continued focus in investment of employee cross training, manufacturing has achieved the flexibility to utilize our workforce in a highly efficient and value added manner. In a parallel effort, we continued to act proactively with the continuation of our goal to replace older floor equipment by purchasing the latest in technological based equipment, specifically modified with 'Assistive Technology' features that aid our blind/sight-impaired employees in expanding their available job opportunities. In doing so, we fostered personal growth and achievement of each of the individual's skill set and level of accomplishment.

The department's portfolio continued to find support with our participation in the production of the following government contracts that includes:

- U.S. Army Generation III (ECWCS) Extreme Cold Weather Clothing System, Layer #2 for use in operations conducted in extreme cold weather conditions.
- Flyer's Kit Bag (FKB) used by Armed Forces aviators to carry maps, charts, helmet and other mission critical gear onto their aircraft .
- U.S. Navy Neckerchief, part of the enlisted man's dress uniform.

Department of Defense contract awards are through our association with the National Industries of the Blind (NIB), and are subject to the Javits-Wagner-O'Day Act (JWOD) of 1971, a federal law that mandates a compliance ratio requirement of one sighted to every three blind/sight-impaired employees.

Preschool Vision Screenings and Eye Safety Education (PSE)



A. To provide vision screenings to children designed to detect potential vision issues and to help them obtain care subsequent to the screening.

B. To provide educational programs which stress the need for early detection, eye safety, and information about specific eye disease and disorders.

The Training and Supportive Services and Preschool Vision Screenings and Eye Safety Education at the Westmoreland County Blind Association provided more than 2,600 hours of service to approximately 2,800 unduplicated consumers of Westmoreland and Indiana County. These hours of service included over 1,100 vision screenings and 1,000 children attending educational sessions.

Employee Recognition



Bret Gulisek of Greensburg, Pennsylvania was one of 29 individuals honored with a UniqueSource Achievement Award on June 18, 2018. The night to “Embrace the Abilities” in Hershey, Pa. recognized individuals with disabilities who “demonstrate exceptional character,” especially in the workplace. After the awards ceremony, Master Sergeant Cedric King gave a keynote address to those in attendance. King, who entered the United States Army in 1995, received the Bronze Star, Purple Heart and Meritorious Service Medal for his service.

Bret received the award for his hard work, dedication and kindness toward his peers and staff at the Westmoreland County Blind Association, where he has worked for the past 21 years. As a Document Destruction Specialist, Bret shreds documents and prepares papers for the shredding process. One of Bret’s favorite things about his job at WCBA is working with his friends and meeting new people. Bret also enjoys shredding and pulling paper.

UniqueSource is a 501©(3) nonprofit that supplies products and services with a mission to “create employment opportunities for persons with disabilities.” UniqueSource partners with Pennsylvania nonprofits that employ individuals with disabilities to “market and deliver their products and services to customers in both private and public sectors.”

Employee Activities



Harrisburg Trip
Day on the Hill
October 2017

WCBA Christmas Party
with Santa
December 2017



WCBA Employee Picnic
August 2017

Fundraising



- On March 2, 2018, WCBA hosted our 4th Annual “Visions of Springtime” event with Light Dinner and Dancing at Greensburg Country Club in Jeannette, PA.
- The 16th Annual WCBA Golf Classic took place on June 8, 2018 at Greensburg Country Club in Jeannette, PA.

*****Upcoming events include our 5th annual “Visions of Springtime” event in March 2019 at the Greensburg Country Club, Jeannette, PA. Also, our 17th annual Golf Outing will be held in June 2019 at the Greensburg Country Club.**

WCBA

A Year in Review

2017-2018

Take a look at what transpired at the Westmoreland County Blind Association (WCBA) in 2017-2018. We put together a review of each department and what was accomplished.

Specialized Services, Prevention of Blindness (P.O.B.) & LowVision Services (these services are provided in Westmoreland and Indiana Counties)

Item	Indiana	Westmld
Number of s SS consumers served	32	64
Number of Transportation Units Provided	203	571.75
Number of Life Skills Units Provided	10	40.25
Number of Support Service Units Provided	394.75	572.75
Other SS Units Provided (ancillary)	46.75	250
Number of P.O.B. locations attended	33	7
Number of P.O.B. vision screenings completed	776	391
Number of P.O.B. Educational units provided	891	206
Number of Low Vision Evaluations provided	0	140
Number of Low Vision devices dispensed	0	87

Textile Manufacturing Department

Item	Total
Extreme Cold Weather Shirts	46,386
Joint Service List Bag (JSList Bag)	6,000
Flyer's Kit Bag	16,135
Navy Neckerchief	10,929
Sight Impaired Employees	16
Sight Impaired Hours Worked	25685

Pre-vocational (consists of consumers that attend our Work Activity Center)

Adult Training Facility (consumers that participate in our ATF)

Companion/Personal Assistance Services (PAS) &

Community Habilitation (consists of consumers that are taken out in the community with a WCBA staff member)

Transportation Services (transportation for consumers to and from programs)

Item	Total
Number of Pre-Vocational units provided	268,305
Number of ATF units provided	57,874
Number of Companion units provided	14,066
Number of PAS units provided	964
Number of Community Hab. units provided	1,821
Number of Transportation trips provided	10,180
Number of unduplicated Consumers Pre-Voc	86
Number of unduplicated Consumers ATF	25

*Units are equal to 15 minutes' increments.

Fund Raising

Item	Total
Mail Solicitation contributions	\$25,589.40
Funds raised through Events	\$19,042
Number of contributors through mail solicitation	500
Lions Club contributions	\$12,300
Grants Received	\$170,564

Document Destruction, Record Management & Embroidery

Shredding weight	1,921,310
Recycling weight	1,868,943
Number of monthly customers	350
Number of walk-in customers	1,280
Number of purge customers	272
Number of 64 gallon containers	448
Number of 96 gallon containers	332
Number of executive consoles	273
Walk-in Weight	134,309
Amount of donations from walk-in customers	\$2,878.01
Number of Record Management boxes stored	7,312
Hard Drives Destroyed	573

Financial (Sales & Funding)

Item	Total
Grants Received	\$170,564
PAB Revenues	\$59,952
Photo ID Revenues	\$114,272
ODP Funding – Pre-Vocational	\$1,138,569
OLTL) Funding – Pre-Vocational	\$349,057
Transportation Revenues	\$146,281
Misc. Funding	\$582,455
Manufacturing Sales	\$2,386,829
Embroidery Sales	\$73,270
Low Vision Sales	\$20,826
Misc. Sales	\$1,300
Shredding Revenues	\$268,843
Document Storage	\$21,188
Recycling Revenues	\$154,699
TOTAL	\$5,488,105



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**Westmoreland County
Blind Association**

**911 South Main Street
Greensburg, PA 15601**

Phone: 724-837-1250

Fax: 724-837-3135

Website: www.wcbainpa.org

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