



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 2019-20

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. All safety protocols surrounding COVID 19 are in place. 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 consume
- 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 25 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 100 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 one week 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 Pre-Vocational Work Activities Center (WAC) provides therapeutic and developmental work tasks for the multi-challenged consumer while developing good working habits. WAC consumers develop general, nonjob 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



Our Adult Training Facility (ATF) continues to grow and now has 28 consumers. Over the summer, the ATF enjoyed many fun activities, including visits to our local parks, where they go on walks and have picnic lunches. Our ATF also assists in the shopping trips needed for our events/parties.

Members of the ATF also participate in fundraising activities such as bake sales of chocolate covered pretzels and spaghetti lunches. Fundraising also enables the ATF to go on trips and participate in activities in the community.

Some of the activities that we offer in the ATF are exercise and music therapy, daily life skills, science experiments, literacy and math activities, and arts and crafts.

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

This past year, The Westmoreland County Blind Association has offered custom embroidered apparel and accessories. All items are completed on the premises to offer brand exposure for your company/organization's name and logo at a very reasonable cost. Due to a reduction in sales in our embroidery department, WCBA has elected to close this department as of March 2020 until further notice. We would like to thank all of our loyal customers for choosing our agency for their embroidery needs over the years.



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



Our Eastman Raptor 75X computerized textile cutting machine has been an essential part of our day-to-day operations in the manufacturing department. The Eastman Raptor can cut our material to the exact government specifications required for our Department of Defense contracts. We utilized the Raptors capabilities to generate various cutting jobs from other agencies including cutting 2,000 hospital gowns for Excelsa Health in regards to the Covid pandemic. The manufacturing department also cut and manufactured over 14,000 washable mask in regards to the Covid pandemic.

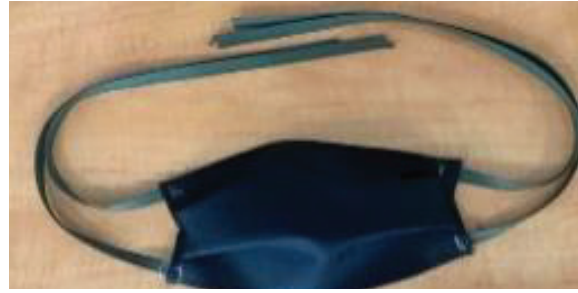
Through our commitment to employee cross training, WCBA in collaboration with NIB dedicates several days per month for training individuals on various job duties that enhances both our efficiency and productivity. In addition, our purchases of the latest in 'Assistive Technology' based sewing equipment that has been specially modified with features that aid the blind / sight-impaired, we project a future workforce that possesses the necessary tools and expertise that broadens our ability for accepting a more diverse array of projects. WCBA continues actively seeking additional textile cutting/sewing opportunities to grow and strengthen our operations base.

The department's portfolio for 2020 continued to find support with our participation in the Ability One Program with the following government contracts that include:

- 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 or other mission critical gear onto the 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.

Mask Manufacturing



When it comes to protecting and helping our community, The Blind Association is always willing to do our part. When Covid-19 was announced to the world, WCBA was ready to help in any way possible. The Textile Department got started right away. Starting in April, the phones continuously rang with orders. By the end of the first week, there were 10,000+ requests for masks. WCBA had an article written about the mask making process that made the TribLive website.

On our website and Facebook page, Westmoreland County Blind Association, you can find eight different videos on how the masks are made. In the videos, it shows the process of cutting the fabric, sewing the masks, cutting loose threads, and sanitizing and packing the finished products.

WCBA Annual Work Picnic

In previous years, the annual picnic was held at Hempfield Park. This year we brought the party to us! On August 14th we had corn hole, bowling, prizes, music, Kona Ice and other fun activities planned for our consumers.

A delicious lunch was provided by Post Avenue Catering.



Preschool Vision Screening and Eye Safety Education (PSE)

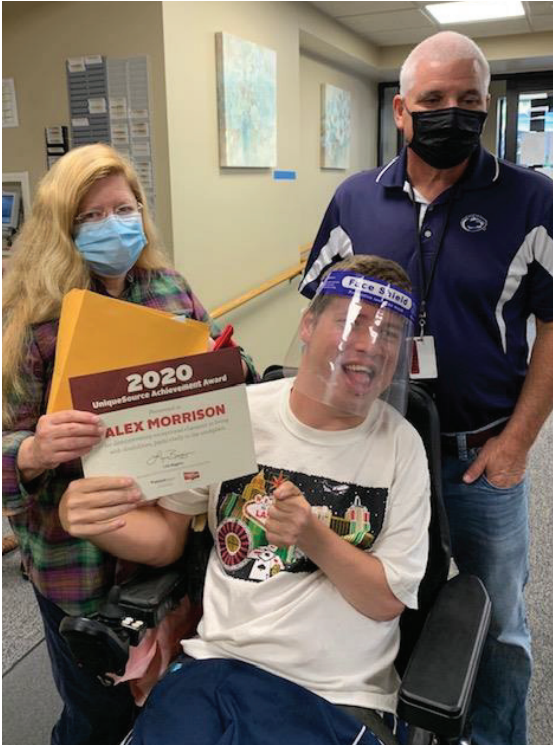


A. To provide vision screenings to children designed to detect potential vision issues and to help them obtain care subsequent to the screening.

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 1,623 hours of service to consumers of Westmoreland and Indiana County. These hours of service included over 1,022 vision screenings and 581 children attending educational sessions.

Employee Recognition



Alex Morrison of Mt Pleasant, Pennsylvania received the UniqueSource Achievement Award in August 2020. This was part of their statewide recognition of individuals with disabilities who “demonstrate exceptional character,” especially in the workplace. The following questions were from Alex’s entry.

What Characteristics does Alex have that makes him stand out from his peers? Alex is a kind and caring individual. He does not like missing work for any reason. He has a contagious smile that never seems to fade. He has a great memory and really enjoys getting to know people. Alex shows compassion for his peers and often becomes concerned if they are upset or missed

work. When Alex was younger and received his wheelchair, he helped raise money so that one of his friends was able to obtain a similar chair. He takes time to talk to staff and peers each day, often asking what they did the previous night or how their family members are doing. He has a wonderful sense of humor and is always ready to make you laugh.

What is the best part/ most favorite part about your job? *“Shredding, joking with my friends, and talking to people”.*

What would your co-workers or friends be surprised to learn about you? *“That I have been behaving! I like watching baseball and football. I like looking at houses and searching the internet”.*

My job has taught me.... *“That I am popular”.*

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

Fundraising



- On March 6, 2020, WCBA hosted our 6th Annual “Adult Prom” Gala event. With over 190 in attendance, prom goers enjoyed a fun filled evening that consisted of a delicious dinner, dancing, cigar lounge, and prize raffles. This year’s event was held at Rizzo’s Malabar Inn in Crabtree, PA

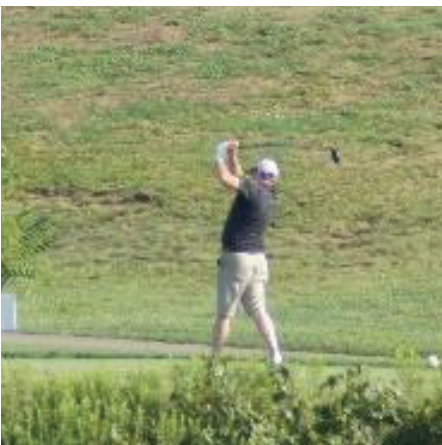
- The 18th Annual WCBA Golf Classic took place on August 7, 2020 at The Madison Club located in Madison, PA. We had over 85 golfers attend this year’s event!



*****Upcoming events include:**

Our 7th annual Gala event in March 2021 at Rizzo’s Malabar Inn in Crabtree, PA.

Also, our 19th annual Golf Outing will be scheduled in August 2021 at The Madison Club in Madison, PA.



WCBA

A Year In Review

2019-2020

Take a look at what transpired at the Westmoreland County Blind Association (WCBA) in 2019-2020. We put together a review of each department and what was accomplished.

Training and Support Services, Preschool Vision Screenings, **&**

Low Vision Services (these services are provided in Westmoreland and Indiana Counties)

Item	Indiana	Westmoreland
Number of TSS Consumers Served	65	42
Number of Transportation Units Provided	223.50	404.75
Number of Life Skills Units Provided	1.50	41.5
Number of Support Service Units Provided	438.75	565.50
Other TSS Units Provided (ancillary)	2.00	0
Number of Preschool Locations Attended	5	8
Number of Vision Screenings Completed	672	168
Number of Preschool Educational Units Provided	7	7
Number of Low Vision Evaluations Provided	0	83
Number of Low Vision Devices Dispensed	0	34

Textile Manufacturing Department

Item	Total
Extreme Cold Weather Shirts	50,008
Joint Service List Bag (JSList Bag)	0
Flyer's Kit Bag	2,040
Navy Neckerchief	11,748
Sight Impaired Employees	15
Sight Impaired Hours Worked	22,930

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	219,124
Number of ATF Units Provided	45,582
Number of Companion Units Provided	8,893
Number of PAS Units Provided	0
Number of Community Hab. Units Provided	3,726
Number of Transportation Trips Provided	7,603
Number of Unduplicated Consumers Pre-Voc	84
Number of Unduplicated Consumers ATF	18

*Units are equal to 15 minutes increments.

Fund Raising

Item	Total
Mail Solicitation Contributions	20,984
Funds Raised Through Events	30,955
Number of Contributors Through Mail Solicitation	352
Lions Club Contributions	6,950
Misc Other Contributions (Memorials & Misc Community Support	22,409

Document Destruction, Record Management & Embroidery

Shredding Weight	1,744,103
Recycling Weight	1,480,631
Number of Monthly Customers	399
Number of Walk-in Customers	1,344
Number of Purge Customers	168
Number of 64 gallon Containers	448
Number of 96 gallon Containers	390
Number of Executive Consoles	278
Walk-in Weight	119,871
Amount of Donations from Walk-in Customers	3,215.04
Number of Record Management Boxes Stored	7,387
Hard Drives Destroyed	441
Number of Embroidery Items Sold	3,114

Financial (Sales & Funding)

Item	Total
Grants Received	74,409
PAB Revenues	77,953
Photo ID Revenues	129,563
ODP Funding – Pre-Vocational	1,904,433
OLTL Funding – Pre-Vocational	209,659
Transportation Revenues	152,372
Misc. Funding	42,037
Manufacturing Sales	1,967,838
Embroidery Sales	34,329
Low Vision Sales	16,950
Misc. Sales	13,541
Shredding Revenues	288,042
Document Storage	23,079
Recycling Revenues	80,085
TOTAL	5,014,290



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Blind Association**

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