

Industrial Opportunities, Inc. 2015 - 2024

With 2024 being Industrial Opportunities, Inc.'s 50th year of serving Cherokee, Clay & Graham counties, the Quest newsletters this year will focus on the history of IOI. Each newsletter will cover a decade. Industrial Opportunities, Inc. would like to thank you for your continued support in serving our community.

2015 - During the NCARF annual conference and awards luncheon, Mr. & Mrs. Tom and Susan O'Brien were named the recipients of the inaugural Christopher Thomas O'Brien Award. It is a community inclusion award and is presented to someone who goes above and beyond to ensure that an individual or individuals with special needs are included in the community to the fullest extent to their ability. Also, The Marketing Association of Rehabilitation Centers (MARC) held their annual awards luncheon and art exhibition. Tom O'Brien received the 2015 Chairman's Award on behalf of his son, Christopher Thomas O'Brien. The plaque read, "In Memory of a Leader of Leaders Who Served Well to Improve the Lives of Others."



Mr. D. Joseph O'Connor

2016 - A combined effort of United Way, Cherokee County, IOI, and IOI employees, tourniquets were provided for our local three county EMS personnel. These tourniquets were produced at IOI purchased from customer Tactical Medical Solutions. IOI was one of six State CRP's to pilot Pre-ETS Program (Pre-Employment Transition Services) for all the three counties high school students. ("Best Practice")

2017 - MARC members from across North Carolina, self-advocates and their family members gathered at the Capitol to educate the members of Congress. During their "Day on the Hill", the North Carolina advocates met with seven Members of Congress

and legislative staff to tell their stories and express their concerns about current laws and regulations that limit or restrict government supports for services and employment options. Family members and self-advocates expressed strongly the need for legislation that ensured personal choice from an array of options and opportunities. IOI also ramped up Helmet Cover production for a December Deployment in record time.

2018 - 40th Anniversary that forever changed the course of IOI when Mr. D. Joseph O'Connor donated the Red Star Company. Over the years, many people have benefited from his gift. IOI began manufacturing a Sonar Shield for Lockheed Martin used by the US Navy. When assembled, this product

extended 1 mile in length.

2019 - Governor Roy Cooper made a special visit to IOI to recognize their 45th Anniversary and to take a tour. It was a really good opportunity to make a strong emphasis that individuals that have significant disabilities still want the choice to work and the importance of the Special Wage Certificate that allows wages paid based on an individual's skills and productivity.

2020 - IOI responds to COVID-19 Virus by designing and manufacturing 300,000 Masks for our community and supporters.

2021 - After postponing the annual awards ceremony in 2020 due



Andrews Plant - 2024

to safety restrictions due to the onset of the COVID - 19 Pandemic, IOI and Tri-County Community College (TCCC) collaborated to celebrate our mutual students' successes from the 2019-2020 and 2020-2021 academic years. Four Clay County students that were participating in the Pre-Employment Transition Services (PreETS), took part in an internship at IOI. This was the first internship that the PreETS program had ever done and the students had to complete at least sixty hours for the internship to be completed. It allowed the students to get real work experience but still have the support of a PreETS instructor should they need it.

2022 - IOI receives notice that our National CARF Accreditation had been issued based on the recent survey. This is the highest accreditation a Community Rehabilitation Program can attain. The survey results noted at IOI employs skilled, compassionate, and hardworking staff members that are responsive to the needs of the persons served. There is a noticeable commitment to improving the quality of life of the persons served and assisting them in employment and becoming active

participants in their communities. IOI is commended for being one of the first organizations in Western North Carolina to provide Pre-Employment Transition Services to the local area high schools. During the 2022 Annual MARC awards luncheon, Senator Kevin Corbin was presented the MARC Chairman's Award. This award is presented for outstanding contributions and commitment to services and outcomes which improve the quality of life and health of persons with disabilities in North Carolina.

2023 - IOI increases manufacturing capacity to deliver Helmet Liners for the Communications Headsets utilized by Tank and Military Vehicle Operations in response to the Ukraine War.

2024 - IOI begins a Year -Long Celebration in recognition of its 50th Year Anniversary with events and gifts as well as luncheons, recognizing the amazing IOI workforce. IOI also reached a milestone of exceeding \$134 Million; \$134,107,297 in wages and benefits haven been added to the local economy since IOI purchased the LEE Plant on September 23, 2002.





Quest Fellowship

- In memory of D. Joseph O'Connor by Jill Kelly
- In memory of Joseph & Rose El-Khoury by Claude & Marsha El-Khoury Shiver
- In memory of Paul Golem by Jim & Kathy Golem
- In memory of Noah Woods by First United Methodist Church
- In memory Joe & Rose El-Khoury by Theresa Martin
- In memory of Thomas Robert Hay Jr. by Hampton DeJarnette & Leslie England

Supporters

- Mountain Credit Union
- United Community Bank
- Nantahala Bank & Trust
- Myers Farm
- Phil Mattox
- First Citizens Bank
- Jack Smoot
- Joel Storrow
- Mariam El-Khoury
- Bill Block
- Brian Mitchell & Nancy Troxler
- Dr. Karen Borchers
- George Heilner
- Judith Annis

Clients Serving IOI Since Fifth Decade



These clients have been dedicated to Industrial Opportunities, Inc. since the fifth decade of business. Front: Jordan Oliver (started in 2024) Middle Row L to R: Santiago Duarte-Elvira (started in 2024), Morgan Gooch (started in 2024), James Jordan (3 years of service), Nicolett Placiak (4 years of service), Haylee Smiley (1 year of service), Alyssa King (1 year of service) Back Row L to R: Joel Rogers (6 years of service), Joey Rowland (3 years of service), Scott Rynar (7 years of service), Charles Bradley (9 years of service), and Mark Gero (5 years of service).



These clients have been dedicated to Industrial Opportunities, Inc. since the fifth decade of business. L to R: Dana Gates (7 years of service), Tricia Slys (16 years of service), Judy Bailey (33 years of service), Nicole Casciato (1 year of service), & John Brown (1 years of service).

All Gifts are Tax Deductible - Industrial Opportunities, Inc. is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization

I make this gift:

- ☐ In memory or honor of _____.
- ☐ To benefit the client activity fund / IOI Endowment fund.



Name: _____

Address: _____ City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

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