

Qwest

Newsletter of Industrial Opportunities, Inc.

IOI Client Annual Christmas Program "Charlie Brown Christmas"



Cherokee County Chamber of Commerce Annual Awards



Industrial Opportunities, Inc. is the proud recipient of the Business of the Year award. IOI was recognized for our response to the COVID-19 Pandemic and how quickly we provided the community with masks.

every other area of society, the Pandemic has impacted the employment of the disabled. Statistics indicate that the unemployment rate for disabled persons is still more than twice that of non-disabled and the labor participation rate is less than half that of non-disabled and the challenge of returning to work is also made more difficult. The events of the past two years make intentional efforts to address this situation even more critical than ever before.

This year also marks the 30th year of the Disability Employment Awareness Awards being presented as a part of the Chamber's annual dinner. These awards recognize people who refuse to be defined by a disability and also businesses, who recognize that having a disability does not diminish the value and contribution these people can provide for their organization. In a climate where there is a premium on getting and keeping good employees, this attitude becomes an even more important consideration for employers.

Natalie Wilson was presented the Personal Achievement award. With the assis-

tance of Vocational Rehabilitation, she maneuvered her way through obtaining an education and has achieved a vocation that helps to ease the path of others who are being challenged by the education process and also in finding employment. Along with working with Vocational Rehabilitation, she also took the Praxis, which is an extremely difficult test. She is now a teacher in the Exceptional Children's Program and is employed at The Oaks, which is an alternative setting for students that have experienced difficulty in the regular high school setting. Having observed her in the classroom, her caring and empathetic attitude is readily obvious. Natalie shared that she does not shy away from a challenge, but faces them head-on.

Agency. When we present an Employer Award, it is usually the result of a corporate commitment to give and enhance the employment opportunities to a person with a disability and recognize their value as a prospective employee within their company. A relatively new initiative with Vocational Rehabilitation, is an internship program.

This involves placing persons in positions which provide training and learning opportunities and which can also lead to future employment. This was the case, recently, which involved a lady be-



ing placed with a company and, as a result, getting her NC Property Insurance License and NC Casualty Insurance License. Ultimately, after achieving these milestones, she was hired into the Agency. We congratulate our recipient, both for providing this training opportunity and also for going the extra mile to extend the training situation into an employment success.

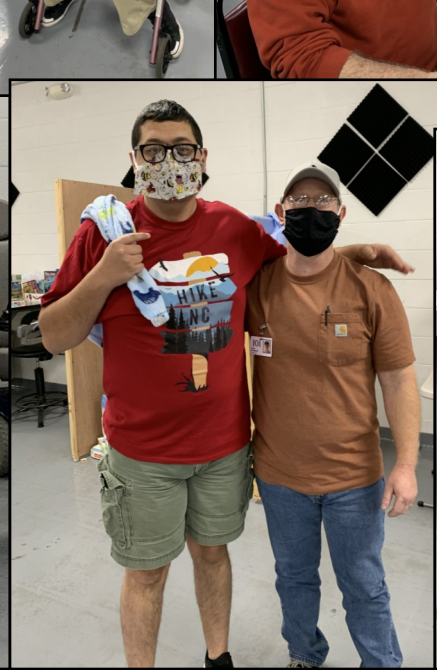
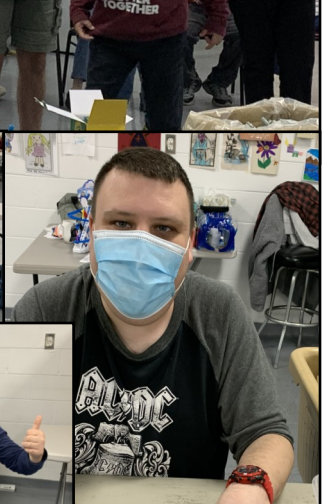
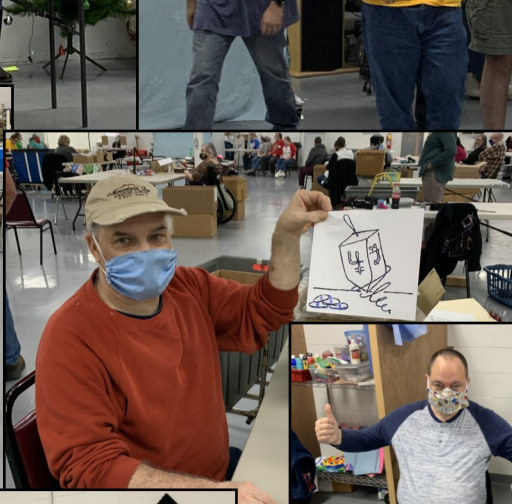
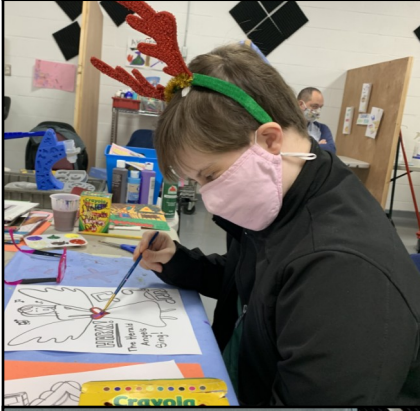
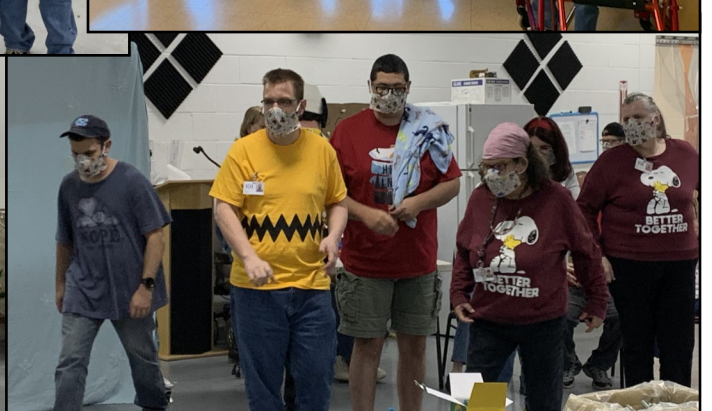
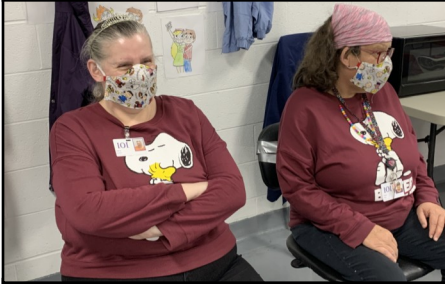
A special "Thank You" to our local banks for their contribution to make the meals and awards possible.



This year marks the 31st anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act. This was a landmark piece of legislation that was directed at establishing and preserving the rights of and advocating for the inclusion of persons with disabilities in every aspect of society, not just employment. The month of October is designated as Disability Employment Awareness Month. The theme for this year's celebration is "America's Recovery: Powered by Inclusion". There has been significant progress made over the years in helping create a level playing field for this segment of our society, but as with almost

This is again, shown by her hard work and dedication required to get her teaching degree.

The Employer Award was presented to Nationwide Insurance, Mike Gilliam



My Work, My Choice

<https://ateamusa.net/>

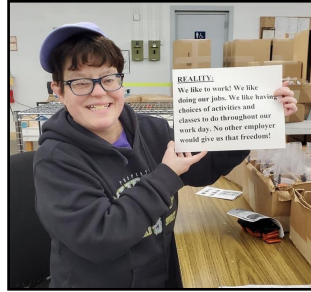
A goal in most of our lives is to love where you work and these individuals really do love where they work!
A choice to work under 14(c) is just that, a choice.



Reality: We like our jobs. We are hard workers. We are your most loyal employees! We are treated like a person, not like we are "special"!



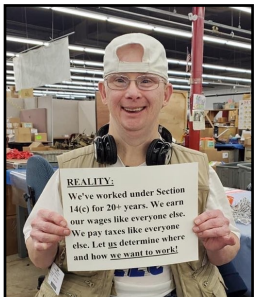
Reality: We do not want to lose our jobs! We would not have no other place to go. We would not have our friends if we had to leave.



Reality: We like to work! We like doing our jobs. We like having choices of activities and classes to do throughout our work day. No other employer would give us that freedom!



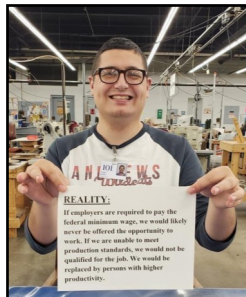
Reality: Working, no matter where, helps build self-confidence, friendship and independence. Everyone deserves a chance to have those things in life.



Reality: We've worked under Section 14(c) for 20+ years. We earn our wages like everyone else. We pay taxes like everyone else. Let us determine where and how we want to work!



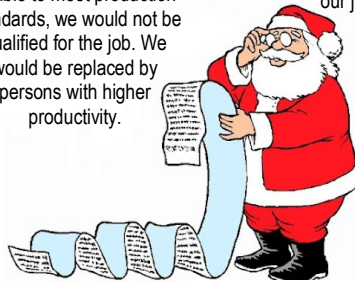
Reality: Working, no matter where, helps build self-confidence, friendship and independence. Everyone deserves a chance to have those things in life.



Reality: If employers are required to pay the federal minimum wage, we would likely never be offered the opportunity to work. If we are unable to meet production standards, we would not be qualified for the job. We would be replaced by persons with higher productivity.



Reality: It's wrong for the jobs to be taken away. It's not easy for just anybody to work in the community. So, don't take away our choice, our jobs!



Quest Fellowship

- In memory of Judy O'Brien Sheridan & Chris O'Brien by Tom Sheridan
- In memory of DJ O'Connor by Brian O'Connor
- In memory of Susan O'Brien & Chris O'Brien by Mary Jane and Chris Galvin
- In memory of Leonard Bensman by Peter & Patricia Cook
- In memory of Susan O'Brien & Chris O'Brien by Tom O'Brien
- In memory of Jack & Maxine Earley by Charles & Judy Miller
- In memory of Annabelle Golem by Betty Carpenter
- In memory of Bob Fink by Harry Baughn
- In honor of Tom O'Brien by Ken & Peg Isidor
- In memory of William, Shirely, Kathy, Judy, Sue & Chris O'Brien by Jim & Ellen O'Brien
- In memory of Doug, Maxine & Jack Earley by Nan Earley
- In memory of Cecile Mattox Campbell by Jane Campbell

Supporters

- Andrew Reichman
- A+ Products, Inc.
- Fred & Karen Willes
- Jack Smoot
- Donna Tipton-Rogers & Hayden Rogers
- George Heilner
- Angela Hovis
- Joel Storrow
- Kathleen Roberts
- Dan & Margaret Sifferlin
- Jill Kelly
- Roger & Regina Holloway
- Karen Ann Simmons

Visit our website
www.industrialopportunities.com



Sign-up to receive our newsletter on-line

'Tis the Season



Industrial Opportunities Inc. employees donated \$1,000 to Cherokee County Toys for Tots. Shown are Carolyn Anderson, Jovita Velasquez-Ramirez, Toys for Tots Marble/Andrews coordinator Dave O'Meara, Linda Moore, Juanita Phillips, Pam Holloway and Travis Lovingood.



Several IOI employees collected and donated gifts for the Angel Tree Program through Community Connections. Pictured above are Jessie Marcus, Jill Thistle, Pat Lennex, Kristen Matheson, & Carrie Jump. IOI also made a \$1,421 donation to United Way this year.



Throughout the year, IOI employees participate in several fundraising efforts to donate to local charities, including a \$1,000 donation to the Cherokee County Food Bank. Shown are Frank Jones, Arlene McLean, Marcia Johnson, Edwin Alvarez, Shannin West, & Riann Crowe.

A
Savior
IS
Born



As the Holiday Season is upon us,
we find ourselves reflecting on previous
years and on those who have helped us
shape our business.

We value our relationship with you and
look forward to working with you
in the year to come.

We wish you a Happy Holiday Season
and a New Year filled with
Peace & Prosperity!

This is the artwork for the 2021 IOI Christmas card.
It was designed by the winner of Christmas Card Contest: Davi B.

Yes, I would like to contribute to the capital needs of I.O.I.

All Gifts are Tax Deductible

Enclosed is a gift of \$ _____ toward capital improvements at I.O.I.

I make this gift:

- In memory or honor of _____
- To benefit the client activity fund.
- To benefit the IOI Endowment Fund.
- Enclosed is my Quest Fellowship donation.

Name: _____

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

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