



Hudson Community Enterprises

68-70 Tuers Avenue
Jersey City, NJ 07306
Ph: 201-434-3303
Fx: 201-434-3660
www.hudsoncommunity.org

780 Montgomery Street
Jersey City, NJ 07306
Ph: 201-432-5959
Fx: 201-432-6227

HCE News

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HCE's Hispanic Outreach Grant Renewed

Hudson Community Enterprises, thanks to a grant of \$171,145 from the NJ Department of Labor awarded through the NJ Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services, will be able to continue its Hispanic Outreach Program. This vital program enables HCE to identify individuals within the Hispanic community with disabilities and refer those individuals to DVRS. Hispanics are now the biggest minority in New Jersey, making up nearly 18 percent of the state's population, according to new census data. There were roughly 1.5 million Hispanics in the state last year, when the decennial census was conducted. In 2000, Hispanics accounted for roughly 13 percent of the state's population.

In the coming year staff from HCE will network with a broad range of organizations that serve Hispanic individuals to identify individuals from that community with disabilities. Staff will also reach out to employers and business groups in the area seeking employment opportunities.

Extended Employment a Pioneer of Today's Social Enterprise Businesses

The field of Vocational Rehabilitation has contributed significantly to the overall area of workforce preparation and training. Vocational Evaluation as a discipline has been able to capture a look at workers' soft skills. Supported Employment has created a model in terms of provision of much needed and elusive job retention. Extended Employment, which recognizes the value of work as a therapeutic approach to strengthening an individual's work skills concurrent with the provision of counseling support services, has established a model which is being utilized as a benchmark by today's social enterprise businesses. As part of its continuum of employment preparation services, Hudson Community Enterprises continues to operate an Extended Employment Program. This program prepares individuals with severe disabilities for employment of their choice that matches their unique work skills with jobs in the regional labor market. For some these jobs will be in the private sector, for some these jobs will be in the social enterprise businesses operated by HCE, and for some these jobs will be within the Extended Employment program itself. Paramount to employment is the choice of each individual.

Over the year HCE has expanded the scope of this program to better prepare the individuals in this program to attain their employment goals. Currently, the program offers work opportunities in a broad range of community based integrated employment sites as well as within its fulfillment services. These sites continue to grow and include the Hudson County Annex building, Bayonne Motor Vehicle, Newark Office of Emergency Management Services, Essex County Hospital, Newark Hall of Records, New Jersey Transit

Headquarters, Kean University, Red Bull Arena, as well as the recently added Hudson County Surrogates' Office.

These sites offered work opportunities in the areas of data entry, enterprise content management, and building management services. Overall these work opportunities comprised 75% of the total work hours offered to our Extended Employees.

Meet One of Our Records Management Specialists, Athena O'Garro



My road to recovery started way back in 1997. At that time, I was admitted to Beth Israel Manhattan. I had contracted the viral form of meningitis/encephalitis. After the virus took its leave from my body, I was left with the inability to walk and an impairment of my motor skills. I knew it would be an uphill battle, at least physically to pursue occupational success; but giving up on that after college just wasn't an option for me.

After college, my parents and I discussed the pursuit of a real occupation with my counselor at the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services, D.V.R.S. She began to help me find job placement without hesitation. I also looked for steady work on my own and asked some colleagues to help me. A professor from Saint Peter's College first told me about HCE in 2009 and I finally was able to get in touch in 2010. I graduated from the training program in October 2010 and have been employed with them ever since.

I am so grateful to everyone who helped me: Dr. David Surrey, D.V.R.S, my family, HCE (of course) and many more. I am still on my road to recovery; but with the help of these people, I know I'm well on my way to accomplishing my goals.

HCE Expands Program for Students with Autism

HCE has been offering transition services for high school students with disabilities for over 18 years. Enrollment in the program of students with autism continues to grow. In March, 14 juniors and seniors from the Jersey City Public Schools will be entering our program. With the addition of these students a total of 27 students with autism will now be participating in HCE transition program.

The students that are currently enrolled have made remarkable progress and a good number attend various community based work sites where they are learning essential work skills.

A Glimpse at Our Project with the Hudson County Surrogate's Office

The Hudson County Surrogate's Office will shortly be occupying new space. The job of re-locating and re-organizing its over 300,000 historic records was daunting. With the expertise that it has developed in handling historic records, HCE mobilized a team of over 20 workers from its Extended Employment program and is basing these workers on site at the Hudson County Administration Building for what will be a four month project. As part of the project, HCE workers are removing old folders from these files, creating a master index with customized software designed by HCE's IT staff, preparing new folder labels and placing these folders in a customized filing area being constructed by the County.

This project is not only giving the Surrogate's Office more efficient access to its files, but it giving HCE workers valuable work experience in data entry that can be transferrable to other project in this area.

HCE Board member, Maureen Burns recently visited our team and saw the pride our team takes in a job well done.



Improving the Community One Person at a Time

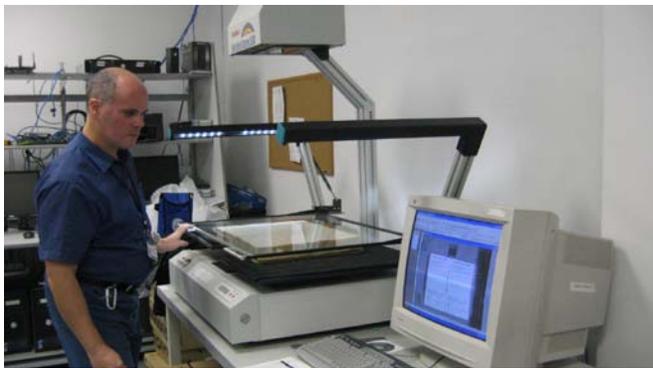
Large Format Scanning- An Added Value to our Clients and Employees

Hudson Community Enterprises Records Management business is able to offer Large Format Scanning to its various business customers. HCE uses state of the art equipment to image Large bound books, large registers, tax maps, engineering drawings, CAD Designs, "As Built" drawings, diplomas, certificates, plumbing/contracting/construction, architectural design and many other drawing types. This allows HCE to customize jobs that require multi image types and combine all of this into one central imaging repository.

HCE has been successful in training special needs employees on the skills required to operate this sophisticated software. Our training department has built an "add on" to our 9 week imaging training program that instructs employees on the NJDARM requirements on the imaging standards of Large Format designs.

Dave Reguero was the project leader of an archiving project HCE completed for Atlantic County. The project was completed onsite, so Dave lived in May's Landing, Atlantic County from Monday to Friday for 6 months. This was a tremendous learning experience. Dave's advanced training on the system came in very handy when he was able to train Atlantic County Staff on the usage of the INDUS 5002 series Book Scanner. The project was very exciting for HCE since it allowed us to preserve Immigration and Naturalization records from the late 1800's for Atlantic County.

Dave has also spearheaded the imaging of historical Surrogate records for Hudson & Middlesex Counties and the imaging of Incorporations for Hudson County.



Improving the Community One Person at a Time

HCE's Employment Model Highlighted in Presentation to US Ass't Commissioner of Labor



Kathleen Martinez, Assistant Secretary of Labor for the Office of Disability Employment Policy (ODEP), came to Kessler Foundation on Friday, January 27th to hear presentations from employment initiatives supported by the Kessler Foundation and strategize for the future of employment policies for individuals with disabilities. She heard presentations on the successful strategies from other non-profits and social enterprises that promote employment for individuals with disabilities, including Hudson Community Enterprises, AHEDD, Jewish Vocational Services, Family

Resource Network, Employment Horizons, Arthur & Friends and JFK Johnson Rehabilitation Institute. HCE's President, Maureen Walliser, was able to discuss HCE's line of successful businesses and the jobs with benefits that they have created for persons with disabilities.

The Real Costs of Job Accommodations

All employees need the right tools and work environment to effectively perform their jobs. Similarly, individuals with disabilities may need workplace adjustments — or accommodations — to maximize their productivity.

Under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), an accommodation is considered any modification or adjustment to a job or work environment that enables a qualified person with a disability to apply for or perform a job. The term also encompasses alterations to ensure a qualified individual with a disability has rights and privileges in employment equal to those of employees without disabilities. The obligation to provide reasonable accommodations for job applicants or employees with disabilities is one of the key non-discrimination requirements in the ADA's employment provisions.

Most accommodations are low cost yet yield considerable direct and indirect benefits. In fact, data collected by the Job Accommodation Network (JAN) over the years reveal that more than half of accommodations cost employers nothing, and of those that do cost, the typical one-time expenditure is \$500 — an outlay that most employers report pays for itself multiple-fold in the form of reduced insurance and training costs and increased productivity.

Recently, with the assistance of the NJ Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired, two individuals with visual impairments were successfully able to enroll and succeed in HCE's document imaging training program.

