



2020

Annual Report

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To Governor Bill Lee, the Tennessee General Assembly, and our valued customers, partners and supporters



by Robert G. Rosenbaum, Ed.D., Chair

Committee for Providing Competitive Integrated Employment
for Individuals with Severe Disabilities



The Committee for Providing Competitive Integrated Employment for Individuals with Severe Disabilities (the committee) is charged with providing oversight to the Community Rehabilitation Agencies of Tennessee (CMRA), the central non-profit agency designated to implement Tennessee Code Annotated (T.C.A.) 71-4-701 – 71-4-705. This statute directs State governmental entities to purchase products and services produced by Tennesseans with disabilities when competitive standards are met in the areas of quality, availability, and price.

Another Successful Year. We are pleased to report during fiscal year 2019 – 2020 and through the middle of December 2020, the program has again experienced tremendous success; 232 people with disabilities were employed in this program, many of whom would not have had a job if it were not for this statute. Over \$11 million in gross revenue was generated and as a result real jobs employing Tennesseans who, otherwise, in most cases, would be dependent on public assistance in order to survive. This statute has given our fellow citizens the opportunity to be employed and able to have developed the dignity and self-sufficiency that goes along with being a contributing member of our State and communities rather than living off tax dollars in the form of public assistance. These are real jobs including occupations like grounds maintenance, janitorial services, car washes, vehicle inspections, commercial grease trap cleaning, and very significantly providing facility management to 19 rest areas across the State of Tennessee. In addition to these services, there are products sold to the State and local governments through the program such as drug testing kits, laboratory services, incontinent products, female hygiene products, uniforms and even premium coffee.

COVID-19. This year our program was faced with the difficulties and challenges brought about by the coronavirus. I am proud to report that we continued to work cleaning and sanitizing State office buildings as well as manning and maintaining the rest areas 24/7 just as always. I am extremely grateful to CMRA, all of its business partners and their employees for working on the frontlines during the COVID-19 pandemic.

In Summary. As previously noted every citizen of our State benefits from this program; first and foremost, providing our citizens with disabilities the deserved opportunity of meaningful, gainful employment in order to live more normal lives. Other beneficiaries of the program include support staff, State purchasers, and every citizen of our State as taxpayers. The dedication of the committee, CMRA, and all of our enthusiastic stakeholders working with this program are all to be commended for their hard work each and every day to make this program successful.

Hopefully, as you carefully review this report, you will see what this program has accomplished for so many with no real added cost to State government. You will be impressed, as we are honored to serve as members on this committee, and to be involved with a program that is doing so much good for so many. This is one of those unique programs that is a 'win/win' for everyone involved. It is cost effective, saves tax dollars, and provides employment opportunities assisting in nurturing self-sufficiency for our Tennessee family now and into the future. ♦

About the Program

workers with disabilities in local communities across the state.

Created by T.C.A. 71-4-701 – 71-4-705, the program seeks to employ Tennesseans with disabilities in providing goods and services to state and local government agencies. People with disabilities often face unemployment levels of 60 percent or more. Through this program, there are, at any given time, more than 230 people with disabilities employed statewide. These employees benefit through increased independence.

CMRA's partnership with various non-profit organizations, for-profit businesses, and advocacy groups across the state, have helped employ Tennesseans with disabilities on a variety of government contracts. ❖

Since 1991, the state of Tennessee, and CMRA, as the designated central non-profit agency (CNA) selected to administer the program, have worked diligently to identify opportunities for

Our Products & Services

Products

Premium Coffee

Custom Forms

Drug Kits

Female Sanitary Products

Incontinent Briefs

Uniforms

Services

Car Wash and Vehicle Inspections

Commercial Grease Trap Cleaning

Custodial/Janitorial

Lawn/Grounds Maintenance

Parks Maintenance

19 Rest Areas - Facility Management

CMRA's Business Partners



Axis7 Enterprises, LLC, Nashville

Alere Toxicology Service, Inc., Gretna, Louisiana

Certified Maintenance Service, Inc., Chattanooga

Dawn of Hope, Inc., Johnson City

Easterseals Tennessee, Inc.

Feichheimer Brothers Company, Cincinnati, Ohio

GH Solutions LLC, Mint Hill, North Carolina

Goodwill Industries Knoxville, Inc.

Hilltoppers, Inc., Crossville

Liquid Environmental Solutions of Tennessee, LLC, Nashville

Madison Haywood Developmental Services, Inc., Jackson

Memphis Goodwill, Inc.

New Horizons Life Skills, Inc., Nashville

Progressive Directions, Inc., Clarksville

Taylor Communications, Inc., Murfreesboro

Woodard Brothers Distributing, LLC, Nashville

Thank You to Our Customers



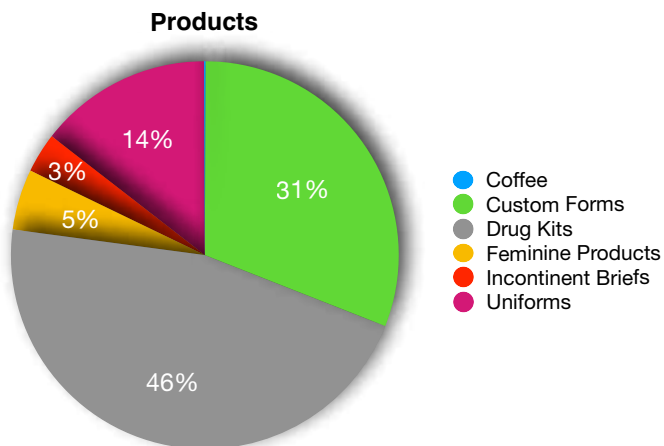
Alvin C. York Institute	TN Department Of Agriculture
Baddour Center	TN Department of Children Services
Bledsoe Co. Correctional Complex	TN Department of Correction
Deberry Special Needs Facility	TN Department of Education
Debra K. Johnson Rehabilitation Center	TN Department of Field Services
Dogwood Elementary School	TN Department of General Services
Environment & Conservation	TN Department of Health - Procurement
Family Promise of Greater Johnson City	TN Department of Revenue
Farmington Elementary School	TN Department of Safety
Hamblen County	TN Department of Safety - Planning & Research
Houston High School	TN Department of Transportation - Beautification
Houston Middle School	TN Department of Transportation - Bldg C & E
JLL	TN Department of Transportation - Gallatin
Mark Luttrell Transition Center	TN Department of Transportation - Rest Areas
Memphis Mental Health Institute	TN Department of Transportation Region I
Metro Davidson Correctional	TN Department of Transportation Region II
Metro Government of Nashville & Davidson County	TN Department of Transportation Region III
Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools	TN Department of Transportation Region IV
Middle TN Mental Health Center	TN Dept Intellectual & Developmental Disabilities
Military Department of Tennessee	TN Department of Environment & Conservation
Moccasin Bend Mental Health Institute	TN Emergency Management Agency
Morgan County Correctional Complex	TN Emergency Management Agency - TEMA
Motlow College	TN Real Estate Asset Management
Nashville State Community College	TN School for the Blind
Northeast Correctional Complex	TN School for the Deaf
Northwest Correctional Complex	TN Volunteer Challenge Academy
Riverbend Maximum Security Institution	TRICOR
Riverdale Elementary School	Trousdale Turner Correctional Center
Skills Development Services, Inc.	Turney Center
TDOT- Transportation/Central Services	Turney Center Industrial Complex
Tennessee Air National Guard	University of TN - Knoxville
Tennessee Rehabilitation Center	West TN State Penitentiary
Tennessee State Veterans' Homes Board	Western Mental Health Institute
TN College of Applied Technology Hartsville	Whiteville Correctional Facility
TN Correction Academy	

Program Products & Services

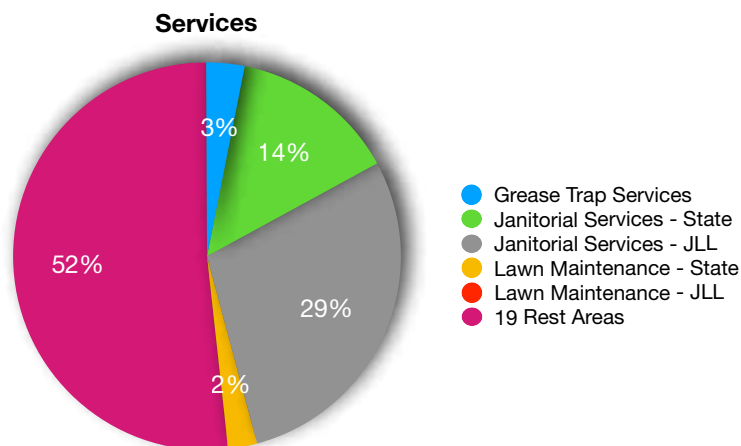
66% of the work hours performed on our government contracts are by Tennesseans with disabilities

Sales

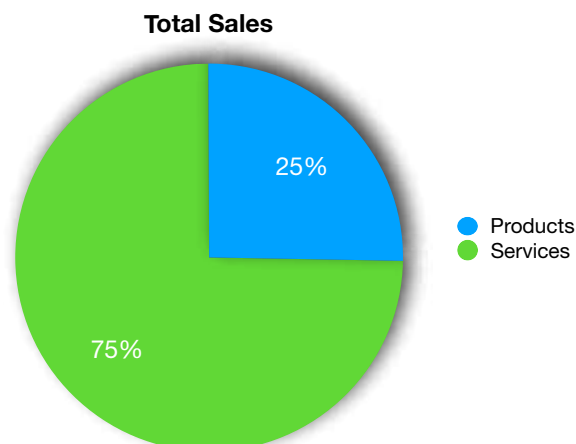
Products	
Coffee	\$3,246
Custom Forms	\$865,013
Drug Kits	\$1,291,141
Feminine Products	\$141,775
Incontinent Briefs	\$93,162
Uniforms	\$403,832
Total product income	\$2,798,170



Services	
Grease Trap Services	\$262,393
Janitorial Services - State	\$1,148,491
Janitorial Services - JLL	\$2,372,346
Lawn Maintenance - State	\$199,651
Lawn Maintenance - JLL	\$2,174
19 Rest Areas	\$4,258,161
Total services income	\$8,243,217



Products & Services Sales Combined	
Products	\$2,798,170
Services	\$8,243,217
Total services income	\$11,041,387



Employment Demographics *Annual Averages*

232 people
with disabilities
employed

111 people
without
disabilities
employed

of those employed

104 Females
239 Males

247 < 60 years old
96 > 60+ years old

109 African American
225 White
8 Hispanic
1 Other

Benefits of Employing Tennesseans with Disabilities on Government Contracts & CMRA's Role

While CMRA is committed primarily to the employment of people with disabilities, a paycheck isn't the only benefit for employees. **Integration**, in the field of disability services, means providing opportunities for interaction with non-disabled people at work and in their communities.

In *Olmstead v. L.C.* (1999), the U.S. Supreme Court held that Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) prohibits unreasonable segregation of individuals with disabilities, and both policies and legal decisions since then have supported the idea that, in work environments, it is inappropriate to segregate people with disabilities. CMRA makes it a priority to work with business partners to integrate all contracts as much as possible, with a goal of ensuring that an employee with disabilities will have the same level of interaction with non-disabled people as would an employee without disabilities.

CMRA's Roles & Responsibilities. Community Rehabilitation Agencies of Tennessee (CMRA), is the designated Central Non-profit Agency (CNA) managing operations according to the program's statute. CMRA's staff of five works with both non-profit and for-profit businesses to provide products and services to government purchasers, while ensuring that at least 50% of the direct labor hours is provided by employees with disabilities.

CMRA staff members seek contracting opportunities, negotiate with prospective partners, seek competitive bids from vendors, assist in staffing contracts, create certification proposals, and implement the contracts once certified by the state.

In addition, CMRA inspects work sites, handles invoicing and payment distribution, ensures compliance with the program statute and all other applicable regulations and mediates any questions or differences between business partners and customers. As employment-related concerns and expectations for people with disabilities change, CMRA will continue to work with other agencies and advocates to help provide increased opportunities for employment and advancement.

CMRA's Contracting Process. Every certification proposal includes a detailed budget for review by the state Certification Committee ensuring that every product or service will meet the standards for quality, availability, and fair market price. The Certification Committee then sends its recommendation to the state Procurement Commission before the contract is finalized. This can take longer than a conventional bid process, but it ensures that local and state government purchases will be competitively priced and that all costs are properly demounted, which benefits everyone involved, including employees, purchasers, and ultimately Tennessee taxpayers. ❖

CMRA Provides COVID-19 Consultant for Business Partners

Initially, CMRA and its business partners addressed COVID-19 independently, focusing on their staff and environments independently. CMRA required its business partners to submit to CMRA their protocols for addressing COVID-19 and incidents.

After the initial submittals, CMRA realized a better approach would be to contract for the development of COVID-19 guidelines for its business partners and for providing a COVID-19 resource for the business partners.

CMRA contracted with its law firm, Hubbard & Smith, to provide COVID-19 consulting services. Robyn Smith, a partner in the law firm, serves as CMRA's COVID consultant. Smith drafted *CMRA's COVID-19 Guidelines* and *COVID-19 Incident Report Form*. She is available as a resource for business partners to call with questions about COVID-19 and to seek guidance when a COVID-19 incident occurs.

The *Guidelines* are tailored to the work business partners perform under their contracts with CMRA. They set forth the minimum standards for business partners based upon recommendations from the Tennessee Pledge, Universal Guidelines for All Businesses, the CDC, and the Tennessee Department of Health (the "Official Guidance"). The Official Guidance changes periodically, and as changes occur, the *Guidelines* are updated to reflect the changes. The most current version of the *Guidelines* are posted on CMRA's website, www.cmraonline.org.

CMRA's business partners are required to submit to CMRA a *COVID-19 Incident Report* anytime the business partner learns an employee has symptoms of COVID-19, received a positive test result for COVID-19, or has been in close contact with a person who tested positive for COVID-19. Before submitting the report, business partners call Smith. She assists in interpreting the *Guidelines* and answers any questions the caller has. After receiving the report, she forwards it to the entity for whom the business partner and employee perform work, such as TDOT or JLL. If she determines that a location needs to be specially deep cleaned, she calls the appropriate authority immediately. She also sends the person who reported the incident an email discussing the application of the *Guidelines*.



Robyn Smith
Hubbard & Smith
Nashville



Business partners began reporting COVID-19 incidents in August. From August through December 22, 2020, 39 incidents were reported.

Developing the *Guidelines* setting forth minimum standards and having a COVID consultant available for business partners is an approach that has worked well. The business partners have been appreciative of CMRA taking the lead. ❖

Stories from the Frontline — Working During COVID-19



Dan's Successes

When Dan began working at New Horizons Life Skills, he found more than a job. Before working as a landscaper for New Horizons, Dan

was lonely and depressed. He had no income. He was without a social outlet, and he did not have a schedule that gave him a sense of structure and purpose each day.

The benefits of being part of this team are innumerable. Working has built up Dan's self-confidence and has brought meaning to his life. He knows the team relies on him and he has risen to the occasion, becoming a more responsible person in the process.

Dan's coworkers and supervisors have embraced him like family. They encourage and look out for him as though he is a brother. He is treated with dignity and respect, and the guys never fail to let him know they need him on the team in order to get the job done. They tell him what a great job he does. As a result Dan feels valued, included and accepted at New Horizons, and this has lifted his spirits and made a huge difference in his life. He has a reason to get out of bed in the morning.

He spends his days outside cutting grass and takes pride in what he accomplishes every day in the fresh air. The benefits Dan experiences working for New Horizons are many. Dan experiences less depression, anger and social isolation. Words cannot express how much his life has improved because he is working with this team of people who care about him and nurture his growth and development as a person. Thank you to New Horizons for being such an instrumental part of Dan's journey and for enriching his life!❖

Brett Triumphs

The manicured landscapes of the two Interstate-40 Rest Areas in Dickson County reflect the hard work of a dedicated and meticulous Easterseals Tennessee member named Brett.

Three days a week, Easterseals Tennessee job coach, Sam, transports Brett to work where he clocks in at exactly 8:55 a.m. and works until he clocks out at exactly 2:55 p.m.

According to Sam, Brett's detailed work procedure is "precise and well done". His job routine begins with Brett putting on his work shirt, cleaning off the picnic table with his equipment; and in following government pandemic directives, he sanitizes his hands, wears two pairs of gloves and a mask.

Once prepared, Sam offers Brett guidance on where to start his lawn maintenance. Subsequently, Brett weeds, trims, and when autumn is in full swing, he'll use the leaf blower to ensure that the Rest Area "looks pretty".

Being on the autism spectrum, Brett is very attentive to detail, and his work is consistent. He only speaks when spoken to, yet always smiles whenever someone admires his landscaping. In addition, Brett likes being outside and is thrilled to do something he enjoys while earning a paycheck.

Having graduated from high school in the spring, Brett's family feels fortunate that he is moving forward in his community with his current job opportunity through the CMRA.

They are also very pleased that his supported employment enables him responsibility and self-esteem, along with acceptance and inclusivity, which will assist him in his future endeavors.❖





CMRA Welcomes New Business Development Director

Marc Jenkins is a native Nashvillian. After graduating from Lipscomb Academy, he received a B.A. from the University of Mississippi, a law degree from Vanderbilt University, and a Masters of Laws in Taxation from the University of Alabama. Jenkins joined CMRA in early 2020 and serves as Business Development Director. In that role, he manages the development and growth of certified contracts between the state and entities employing people with disabilities. Jenkins works closely with state agencies and business partners to find mutually beneficial opportunities while ensuring contract compliance.

Before joining CMRA, Jenkins served as Director of Legal Operations and Senior Counsel at Asurion, a Nashville-based global leader in device protection where he
continued on next page

Another Story from the Frontline — Working During COVID-19



Nate Franklin

Nate has been a part of the Woodard Brothers Distributing team serving the CMRA since July of 2019. Nate's commitment to detail and his consistent effort has been a key component of our company's growth over that time period.

His ability to communicate expectations effectively and efficiently to other members of the team has allowed him to grow into the role of Team Leader. Nate shows the unique skill to receive instruction from his superiors, and then convey those instructions to other members of the team in a manner that is easily understood.

Our President, Trent Ganstine, says of Nate, "Rather than simply telling other members of the team what has to be done, Nate takes the time to provide the information on why each task is important to achieve the desired outcome. Nate's ability to communicate details of the project to his teammates is essential to attaining quality results." Woodard Brothers Distributing and the CMRA are blessed to work with Nate Franklin.



**Woodard Brothers
Distributing**

**New Business Development
Director**
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successfully built the legal operations function by developing a framework and operating model for capturing, tracking, managing, and optimizing the legal team's technology products, support services, and internal team programs. He also served as Asurion's Senior Counsel, leading the drafting and negotiation of major revenue-generating commercial contracts with some of the largest companies in the world.

Jenkins' career started in private legal practice at Hubbard, Berry & Harris where he became partners with CMRA General Counsel Bill Hubbard and CMRA COVID Consultant Robyn Smith. CMRA was a client of his and the firm's during his time there from 2005 to 2013. Through these stops, Jenkins has developed customer service, emotional intelligence, business development, product management, technology development and leadership skills that he utilizes in his role at CMRA.

Jenkins is happily married to his wife Lindsay and has three children Conner 18, Quinn 10, and Lucy 5. He is an active participant in local community service and education. He currently serves on the Board of Directors of Strive Collegiate Academy, is a fundraising Co-chair for the Franklin Road Academy Annual Fund, and also serves as a Faculty Member of the PoLI Institute at Vanderbilt Law School, providing executive-level education on legal operations. ❖

Committee for Providing Competitive Integrated Employment for Individuals with Severe Disabilities



Robert G. Rosenbaum, Ed.D.
Chair



Michael Barbour
TN Department
of Intellectual and
Developmental
Disabilities



John Bissell
TN Department
of General Services



Tim Drown
TN Department
of Finance and
Administration



Louis Galbreath
Representing Blind
Industries



Conya Mull
Representing the
business community



Paula Knisley
TN Department
of Human Services

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Robertson, Jr.**
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**Rep. Johnny
Shaw**
Vice Chair



**Jennifer
Krahenbill**
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Parke Pepper
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CMRA Staff, Legal Counsel & Consultant



Robin Atwood
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Amanda Dean
Finance Director



Marc Jenkins
Business
Development Director



Reggie Parkerson
TDOT Contracts
Manager



Tara Lawson
Contracts
Coordinator



Bill Hubbard
Legal Counsel



Robyn Smith
COVID-19 Consultant



40 Rutledge St.
Nashville TN 37210
615-736-6090