Skills INCORPORATED
CREATING JOBS THAT CHANGE LIVES

Pathways

FALL 2010

>>> OUR MISSION:
We change lives by training and employing persons with disabilities.

CEO's CORNER

by Todd Dunnington

Our nation just completed its annual celebration of National Disability Employment Awareness Month. While there is certainly progress being made, the rate of unemployment for working age adults with disabilities is still at least twice as high as for persons without disabilities. Considering that one out of every five individuals has a disability, one begins to see the magnitude of the challenge. The good news is that employers are realizing the value of expanding their diversity and inclusion initiatives to include the employment of persons with disabilities. Increased awareness has helped to reduce barriers. Surveys show that most employees indicate a preference for working in an environment that promotes inclusion. Plus, many employers now acknowledge and understand that reasonable accommodation can be achieved at relatively low cost and minimal disruption. As for all employees, ongoing employment is based on performance and contribution. When employers open their doors and their minds, they discover the rewards and benefits of both hiring and employment of persons with disabilities.

ALL IN A DAY'S WORK:
Committed to Success

Jasmin Alonzo with her mentor, Sherry Fiedler

Mentoring is a way of teaching and sharing knowledge with others. It is also an integral component of the Skills Inc. Aerospace Internship Program (AIP). The success of each student enrolled in the program is based in part on the mentoring they receive while at Skills Inc. **Jasmin Alonzo,** a recent AIP graduate, has flourished with the support of her mentor **Sherry Fiedler**, Enumclaw High School, AIP staff, and her family.

Jasmin's journey began last fall. Like other students, her introduction included working in different areas of the shop. The goal is to expose students to different facets of our operations. Jasmin started working with Sherry Fiedler, an estimator on the Sales and Estimating Team, who expressed an interest in working with a student. While working with Sherry, Jasmin found her niche. She was able to add value from the start by working on data entry tasks, which allowed Sherry to serve customers more quickly.

Jasmin's hard work, dedication, and great attitude gave her the confidence to succeed in this role. After she graduated this past June, she was hired full-time. Sherry has continued to mentor and teach Jasmine while adding new responsibilities to expand her role.

The mentors at Skills Inc. often benefit from the experience as much as—or more than—the mentees. Sherry summarized her experience as follows, "After working for so many years, these young people remind us of what it was like to start out and how exciting it is to learn new things and face new challenges."

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"Mentoring definitely impacts my life as much as the students'."
- Sherry Fiedler

Please visit our website:
www.skillsinc.com

What a Blast

Our Auburn facility is home to Skills Inc.'s **Shot Peening** Center of Excellence. We currently have two Wheelabrator 8-nozzle pass-thru machines, accommodating stringers and ribs up to 20' in length. We also have a Goff wheel style machine that consists of a circular 72" table that is used for peening smaller parts. Skills Inc. has six certified Shot Peen operators.

Shot peening is a special metal surface treatment intended to extend the fatigue life of most metals. The impact of small spherical media (called shot) makes a dent in the surface which creates a layer of compression that is beneficial in preventing the formation of fatigue cracks. A large portion of our work is the wing ribs that support the Boeing 737 line in Renton.

This area has proven to be an excellent training ground for our Aerospace Internship Program (AIP). This has been evidenced through the strong mentoring relationships developed by **Sue Hoke** over the past few years, including one with 2007 AIP graduate, and now Skills Inc. employee, **Annie Thomas**.

Austin Frampton, who recently earned his certification, is currently mentoring AIP student, **Nate Spencer**. Nate's mother, who works at Skills Inc., observed the positive transformation of students in the program and encouraged him to apply. Whether you are mentoring or not, the benefits of the AIP are very visible. The aerospace industry needs to develop talent for the future, and Skills Inc. is excited to contribute.

"We are proud of the quality job we do at Skills Inc. in the Shot Peen department and consider our work a very critical part of the aircraft manufacturing process," reported **Rick Ingram**, Shot Peen Supervisor.

- Sue Hoke

Austin Frampton with mentee, Nate Spencer

<< COMMITTED TO SUCCESS | *cont. from pg 1*

Jasmin is grateful for the opportunities that she has received at Skills Inc. She is quick to point this out and recognizes those who have been so instrumental in her success. She is now considering college and possibly a career in technology. Jasmin knows she will have to work hard but realizes that her future is full of possibilities.

- Cheryl Roe

Employee Q&A

Skills Inc. has three facilities and an offsite lab in Redmond. We asked key questions of one person from each location about his/her experience at Skills Inc. We have a diverse population of employees; this is a sampling of their perspectives.

Q: Why do you like working for Skills Inc.?

A: I really like to work for Skills because it has given me the opportunity to work with a team that has helped me with my career, and I have also had the chance to meet great people. I have been working for Skills for almost eleven years, and I still love it.

~ Tuan Bui, Surface Team Lab Manager, Redmond

A: Skills has given me a lot of opportunities to move ahead and do better in my job. I have had my ups and downs, but I came through with the help of Skills. I love working with my supervisor Jessica Myers and my manager Bill Heeter. They have given me a lot of guidance to grow here.

~ Rhonda Dotson, Lead Quality Inspector, Ballard

Q: Why does our mission matter to you?

A: I was moved by the fact that Skills Inc.'s mission is to hire people with disabilities because I'm a single parent raising a special needs daughter. The mission has to matter to all of us—each, perhaps, to a different degree. If you stray from that and think you have it bad, take time to think about the greater good that Skills offers to all of us with normal lives and no disabilities of any kind. I guess, in a nutshell, I enjoy working for a company that truly gives back to the community in more ways than one and truly changes lives.

~ Augie Martinez, Deburr Supervisor, Arlington

A: I used to have a brother with a serious learning disability and witnessed the challenges he had throughout his life, including how difficult it can be for a person with a disability to find and retain a job. Skills provides opportunities for people who might not otherwise get a chance to be successful in the workplace. As a result, our employees are very diverse, and that is a wonderful thing. Skills Inc. is really a unique company.

~ Gail Gilbertson, Information Systems Manager, Auburn

Taking Stock in Our Community

Donivhen Dodson at Safeway

When Skills Inc. can help vocational clients find a job, it's a real win-win situation. Clients become employees, where they earn income, acquire experience, make friends, and have a sense of purpose and responsibility. The employer gains an employee who is hard-working and dedicated. **Donivhen Dodson** is one of those people. Donivhen began working with Skills Inc. when he was a Division of Vocational Rehabilitation client and a Summer Youth Employment Program (SYEP) participant in 2009. He obtained experience as a Junior Camp Counselor Trainee at a local community center, where he supervised and interacted with campers.

After SYEP, he moved into job placement with Skills Inc. Vocational Services. Donivhen was eager to work and was interested in the retail sector. His persistence, ambitious nature, and hard work (both independently and with his job coach) paid off. After two interviews, he was offered a Courtesy Clerk position at **Safeway** in the University District in May 2010.

"I really enjoy working at Safeway," said Donivhen. "Safeway provides me the opportunity to work and to demonstrate that I have the ability to move up in the company."

Donivhen has needed few accommodations, but, when he does, Safeway has been quick to respond. Safeway is widely recognized throughout the US and Canada for their commitment to the employment and support of persons with disabilities. Other employers look to Safeway as a leader and steward of best practices in **diversity**, **inclusion** and **accommodation**.

Donivhen thoroughly enjoys his work. He hopes to use the knowledge gained and the working world experience as a stepping stone for the future. Donivhen is looking forward to attending college while continuing to work at Safeway.

- Genny Seidensticker

Imagine Disability Inclusion

On October 4, 2010, Microsoft hosted the first ***Washington State Disability Inclusion Conference****. Over 400 people came together to focus on the importance and benefits of recruiting and hiring persons with disabilities. Not only is it the right thing to do; it's the smart thing to do. Businesses gain great employees while persons with disabilities get great opportunities.*

The goal of the conference was to "provide attendees with the latest information on disability related topics that support the hiring, promotion, retention and inclusion of employees with disabilities in the workplace." It included experts representing the public, private, and government sectors.

Jack Meehan & Marc Tabalbag at Boeing

Mentoring Matters

October 20th was **National Disability Mentoring Day**. This program, started in 1999, is hosted by the American Association of People with Disabilities in partnership with the U.S. Department of Labor Office Disability Employment Policy. The purpose of this nationwide effort is to promote career development; additionally, it is an opportunity to advance disability as a central component of diversity recruitment and inclusion. Mentees are matched with mentors aligned with their career interests. One of the goals is to increase the confidence of students and job seekers with disabilities. This was the case with **Marc Tabalbag**, an Aeropsace Internship Program student from Todd Beamer High School in Federal Way. He had the good fortune of shadowing **Jack Meehan,** Integrated AeroStructures Leader at Boeing Fabrication in Auburn. Marc came away from this experience even more committed and enthusiastic about the prospects of working in the aerospace industry.

When employers promote mentoring, students and job seekers can take the next step in assuming important roles in the workforce.

- Cheryl Roe

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AIP Support Continues to Grow

The 2010 Skills Inc. Golf Tournament was a great success! We had over 130 golfers who participated, and many of our valued customers, vendors, employees and friends also came out to support our event. Participants from **PSC Environmental Service**, who have attended every year, took first place in what turned out to be a highly competitive tournament.

During the awards luncheon that followed, we heard briefings from students, mentors, and our partners from **Federal Way and Enumclaw High School Districts.**

Dean Larson, Rick Baker, Jimmy Spears, & Rhonda Dotson

Gail VanHoof & Cheri Long, from Enumclaw School District, at the award luncheon

The support that Skills Inc. receives from the community is phenomenal—as are our employees who choose to mentor. Mentoring is more than imparting knowledge and teaching skills; it is sharing your life experience. A few Skills Inc. employees who started as students have been some of our best mentors because they can relate to the interns.

We want to thank everyone for supporting Skills Inc. and to remind you that all proceeds from the 2010 Skills Inc. Golf Tournament directly benefit the Aerospace Internship Program. **It is a success because of you!**

- Missy Parkinson

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SAVE THE DATE

4th Annual "Bowling with Bounds" Tournament

King 5 News Gary Chittim & Dennis Bounds with Skills Inc. Employee Sharon Gowdy