

## A Job Well Done

### DIVERSITY & ABILITY STRENGTHEN THE TEAM

Every week, Wiley's Home Center in Rincon, GA opens at 9:00 am and starts its busy day. Lee enthusiastically punches the clock precisely at 10:00 am. Detra, the company's president, remarks that Lee is never late and is always eager to start the day. Lee helps the store function by doing an array of things, such as dusting, checking the tags on furniture, filing paperwork, and her all-time favorite; mopping!

Lee has worked at Wiley's for 2 years and is continuing to grow in her role at the business. She isn't new to working, however. Lee worked for 10 years at Kroger before deciding expand her skills and go to Wiley's. Lee gives much of the credit to her Job Coach, Mandy, but Mandy says that Lee is the real star. "Mandy is the best job coach ever. She takes care of me and is always nice to me. I love my team and they love me too!" Lee exclaims. Mandy has served as Lee's job coach

### Working in the community has helped Lee discover her abilities and create an independent life for herself!

for 8 years and provides ongoing support. She checks in with Lee and her employer at least twice a month and provides Lee with tools that continually build

◀ With EmployAbility, Lee has sharpened her skills to be a valuable employee at Wiley's Home Center



▲ Your donation connects enthusiastic workers like Lee with meaningful employment in the community!

her work skills, all while establishing natural support and working relationships within the community.

Lee's mother, Diana, had apprehensions when she was first approached about possibly allowing Lee to step out of her comfort zone and become a working woman. "My child is not going to work with a bunch of strangers; you've got to be kidding!" Diana said when asked if she would let Lee start her first job. EmployAbility's staff and case managers didn't give up and finally convinced Diana. This difficult decision turned out to be the "best thing ever," according to Lee's mother. Lee's parents solidified a schedule that coordinated their daughter's transportation to and from work. Mandy worked alongside her, demonstrating to her parents that Lee was safe and taken care of until she felt comfortable in her role as an employee.

"A job has given her a life," Diana stated. "People don't know how much effort goes into EmployAbility's services. I mean, they work with the individuals, they know every one of them, they know every little quirk. She has a great life!" Diana feels that Lee's vocabulary has grown,

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**DR. KEN BOYD**  
Executive Director

## A YEAR OF GROWTH AND GRATITUDE

### WE ARE THANKFUL FOR YOUR SUPPORT

As 2018 begins to wind down, we pause to gather with our friends and families and reflect on the past year and acknowledge the things that we are thankful for. In addition to being thankful for my family and friends, I am also thankful to have the honor of serving as EmployAbility’s Executive Director. I am blessed to have the privilege of working with a great staff team, our board of directors, and committed volunteers, all of whom work tirelessly to create opportunities for the individuals in our services.

In October, EmployAbility hosted the inaugural Flourish garden party that showcased our folks’ culinary, hospitality, and gardening skills. It was a wonderful celebration of the value that adults with developmental disabilities can add to a workplace as employees and co-workers and to the greater community as neighbors and friends.

We also met our challenge grant goal and are now in Phase 1, actively planning our kitchen expansion project, aimed at providing more kitchen space, opportunities, and growth for our culinary trainees. As we continue to make great strides toward community integration and meaningful employment for adults with developmental disabilities, we also realize there is still work to be done. **With your support there is no limit to what we can achieve!**

In this month dedicated to giving thanks, I’d like to express my appreciation for everything that you do to help our folks reach their goals. Thank you for your continuous support throughout the years.

Happy Thanksgiving to you and your family!

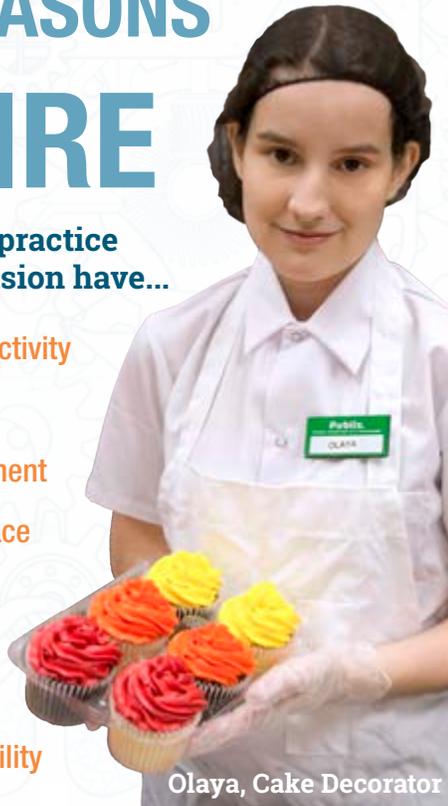
“Learn to be thankful for what you already have, while you pursue all that you want.”

Jim Rohn

# 6 REASONS TO HIRE

Businesses that practice Diversity & Inclusion have...

- Increased productivity
- Lower turnover
- Brand enhancement
- Positive workplace culture
- Tax incentives
- Demonstrated commitment to social responsibility



Olaya, Cake Decorator

▼ WELL DONE, continued from page 1

along with her confidence, since she began working. That confidence from being a part of the store’s team has helped her develop independence; she found a roommate and moved into her very own apartment! Diana urges parents to think about the opportunities for their children and not their children’s disability when deciding whether or not to let them work.

Detra reminds other local business of the importance of having a diverse workplace. Hiring adults with developmental disabilities adds positive value to the business. She urges other local businesses to “take a chance,” ensuring that the businesses will benefit in more ways than one. Detra continues to express her appreciation for Lee at Wiley’s Home Center, and reiterates that Lee is a valuable part of Wiley’s team. She feels that Lee has even helped her hone her own professional skills as well. “When I’m having a stressful moment, Lee makes me feel that it’s not worth stressing over; I call her my soul cleanser.”

To learn more about hiring through EmployAbility, visit [www.employabilityga.org/community-employment](http://www.employabilityga.org/community-employment) or call (912) 644-7500.

# Giving Heart

## HOW ONE VOLUNTEER BRINGS JOY TO OTHERS BY USING HIS MUSICAL ABILITIES

Once a month with his guitar in tow, Sean McCammon travels to EmployAbility for his 1:00 pm show. Staff call it “the party of the month.” Sean began volunteering at local nursing homes over 20 years ago and says for him, volunteering is like breakfast; it’s the most necessary and important part of the day.

Sean volunteers in EmployAbility’s Day Habilitation, playing the guitar and singing for the 48 individuals in the program. Our Day Habilitation program serves adults with moderate to severe cognitive and physical disabilities. For many adults with the significant disabilities, day to day interaction is often limited, so Sean’s live performances are the highlight of our individuals’ afternoons.

“A long time ago, I was talking to God and I told Him I wanted to use music as my way of giving back to the community... Apparently, He said yes!” Sean plays everything from “Proud Mary” to “Jingle Bells.” He recalls a time where he played “Georgia on My Mind” and was very emotional. “I melt when they sing along,” he says. When asked where he gets the motivation to faithfully and constantly volunteer, he said,

**“Somebody saw something in me that was beneficial to the world, and I feel the same way about the individuals in Day Habilitation.”**

Humble about his talents, he makes a point to say he believes his music is the way he helps take care of our individuals. The musical portion of EmployAbility’s Day Habilitation program is comforting and is something they look forward to.

Sean says that he is amazed by EmployAbility’s Day Habilitation staff and all of the hard work they put into making sure the individuals have the best days possible. Sean’s positive attitude is infectious and his service continues to impact the lives of our folks and our staff tremendously. “Jesus had a little bread and a little fish, and that taught me to take what I have, feed people, and do good. My music is my bread and fish.”

To learn more about how you can volunteer, visit [www.employabilityga.org/volunteer](http://www.employabilityga.org/volunteer) or call (912) 644-7510.



▲ *With the help of volunteers like Sean (right), Adam (left) and others enjoy music, art, and community outings that bring meaning to each day!*

## WE MET OUR FIRST GOAL!

We are thrilled to report that donors helped us accomplish the challenge grant! With \$5,000 raised and the \$10,000 grant awarded, EmployAbility Catering has begun its journey from a cozy kitchen to a spacious culinary classroom.



**This renovation is a big task, and we still need your help!** Visit [employabilityga.org/kitchen](http://employabilityga.org/kitchen) to make your designated donation and help talented folks like Antoine use their abilities to find work in the community!

**Antoine, Catering Trainee**

# Gift for a *Lifetime*



**SOCIAL ENTERPRISES OPEN  
THE DOOR TO GROWTH AND  
CAREERS**

When EmployAbility first began connecting adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD) to employment opportunities, it became clear that, although open to diversifying their workforce, employers lacked the resources to provide extra supports to our individuals to succeed in their job.

**An innovative solution was the answer to that challenge: social enterprise businesses that would create employment opportunities for the individuals in our services**, allowing trainees to join a professional work environment that understands their needs as well as provide necessary skill training.

Our largest retail social enterprise, **EmployAbility Catering**, is a culinary arts training program that gives trainees experience working in a commercial kitchen setting. With tourism and hospitality such a huge economic driver in the Savannah area, this program gives our individuals a solid foundation for working in the thriving hospitality and food service industry.



There, trainees learn hard skills to successfully navigate a commercial kitchen. They also learn basics like sanitation and safety, as well as more advanced skills like learning the jargon and pace of the kitchen, how to function as part of the team, and specific skills that will prepare them to be qualified kitchen support staff or line cooks.

Not only do trainees learn to make a diverse array of delicious items and to plate and display them attractively, they also learn valuable soft skills – how to serve and the importance of customer service. In addition to fulfilling catering orders, trainees assist the chef instructors with making ‘Meals-To-Go’ each week. Affordable take and bake meals, our ‘Meals-To-Go’ options change each week and are a convenient way for busy folks to have a delicious and nutritious homemade meal with minimal effort.

Our second retail social enterprise is **EmployAbility Custom Printing**, a full-service print shop with a selection of quality items – t-shirts, tote bags, koozies, and napkins, for example – that can be customized for any purpose. Again, trainees learn skills that build their confidence and help them to transition to a future job, while earning income for the business that helps to raise needed funds for all areas of training.

Both EmployAbility Catering and EmployAbility Custom Printing will have a variety of holiday-themed and gift-worthy items this winter. **An easy way to make a real difference in the life of an adult with IDD is to support EmployAbility’s training programs by purchasing pre-made or custom items this holiday season!**

◀ *When you purchase from EmployAbility Catering or EmployAbility Custom Printing, you connect people to valuable training that creates opportunities for employment!*

## Planning a holiday party? EmployAbility will make your event extra special!

**EmployAbility Catering**  
Parties, receptions, and more  
**(912) 644-7535**  
[employabilityga.org/catering](http://employabilityga.org/catering)

**EmployAbility Custom Printing**  
Custom holiday napkins, clothing, and more  
**(912) 644-7495**  
[employabilityga.org/printing](http://employabilityga.org/printing)

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EmployAbility, including its training programs, is a 501(c)3 organization.  
Our mission is to prepare people with developmental disabilities for employment and community integration.