

FCDC NEWS

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FCDC Member Feature



COF Training Services has been providing opportunities for special needs clients since it was established 52 years ago. It started out in a house on North 68 highway with 12 clients. At that time, it was called the Franklin County Rehabilitation Center. Today COF provides services to over 150 clients in Franklin, Osage, and Coffey counties. They support three Thriftopia stores and provide a valuable labor source to seven companies.

If you talk to Craig Evans about COF, you will quickly realize this is a man that is passionate about what COF does for its clients as well as the businesses they serve. He is dedicated to the mission of COF and the positive impact it has on special needs clients that they support. He arrived at COF in 2005 and is the Director of Employment and Volunteering. Craig grew up sharing a home with a family member that needed assistance and he has carried that ethos of support into his life's work. He has worked to become a behavior modification and workplace accommodation specialist which is critical to the success of COF.

COF understands that their clients need to be in a healthy work environment. This takes going beyond reasonable accommodations that industries cannot afford to provide on their own. Accommodations include climate controlled environments, auditory controls, customized schedules, stationery work environments, transportation, and assistance medication delivery. These accommodations assure that the clients can perform the work successfully and with a high level of quality.

A key element of COF's success is that they are ISO 9000 certified. They have held this special certification for five years. This is highly regulated and is an industry standard for Quality Management Systems.

COF is also a 14C certified employer through DOL. In many industries, employees can lose their job based on not meeting standardized production rates. At COF, through their 14C certification, the clients will never lose their job based on their personal production rate. Their production level is tied to their abilities as an individual. The primary purpose of a 14C certification is to maintain job security for the person with a qualifying disability. A 14C certified program focuses on a person's quality and does not punish for lower quantity.



The quality of products coming out of a COF program is extremely well respected. As mentioned, the emphasis is not on quantity but on quality. COF is regularly recognized by their customers as having the highest quality product. In addition, the delivery of that product is reliable and consistent. The quality management system provides a flexible work schedule, in a supportive work environment, that rewards quality, with high ethics.



So, what types of products do these great people produce? Two examples are air mask for commercial airlines, and ammunition for our military. In both instances it is clear that quality is important. They have produced both of these products. This is a great example of the high-quality work done by COF clients. They do this at a low cost, with high quality, and on time delivery. COF can build a program to support just about any industry need for labor. They can do this at a COF location which opens up additional space and labor for the industry partner. It is a great way to increase production, lower cost, and utilize physical plant space more efficiently. In 2018, COF produced over 1 million dollars of product to their customers.



COF provides economic advantages to area industry. Just as important, COF provides self-esteem, purpose, skills, and pride to the individuals employed there. These great individuals would otherwise not be engaged in our economy and our society. It truly is missional work. I like to think of it as doing well by doing good.

It is a GREAT day to live in Franklin County!

Paul Bear

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