

Independence Painting

by Sheri Muth

1. Executive Summary

People with disabilities are the most under employed but eligible to work population in the United States and this includes New York. Statistics have shown that people with disabilities want to work, are reliable workers and with limited, low cost supports – these folks are a wonderful asset to the work force. This social enterprise business plan for Independence Painting (IP) outlines a new way to combine the painting industry with rehabilitation supports to do business differently - but with quality and competitiveness - that is "self supporting and supportive". Once developed and tested, this model and its training materials, is expandable into any county in the country. In addition to the parent company Jawonio, this business is a collaborative model that draws upon state funding as needed for training; low cost long term supports if necessary; summer youth work funding; and its community to reach the goal of training & independent employment of people with disabilities in addition to running a productive business with satisfied customers. People with disabilities working reduces or eliminates government benefits, establishes tax paying citizens in our communities, decreases enrollments in high cost day programs and provides a needed business service to the community. But more importantly people with disabilities working enhance their "independence, equality and well-being". When people work they can go on a vacation, live in an apartment, go to a movie, go out to dinner – just like every other person in our community.

Independence Painting (IP) will be an interior painting service focusing on recurring contracts for commercial office complexes, school, and not-for-profit organizations. Second level marketing will focus on the residential customer gleaned from IP's parent company, Jawonio, fundraising database as the 10th largest employer and largest NFP in Rockland County. Third tier jobs in the down time of winter will focus on Jawonio's own facilities and homes with a competitive billing arrangement with its parent company.

IP will provide intensive job training prior to hire and supports on the job through social service funding to facilitate a reliable labor pool. In the summer IP will collaborate with the Youth Bureau for an employment program for special needs youth and college interns for work leadership/service learning. The collaboration will provide work leadership and role modeling for the youth, and leadership skill-building/service learning for the college students while in a real life work setting of painting.

IP facilitates Jawonio's mission by providing job training and meaningful competitive employment to persons with differing abilities. Profits from IP will be used to support other services at Jawonio Inc. a 501(c)(3) nonprofit corporation.

IP will provide businesses with a reliable, cost effective, quality alternative for their interior painting needs, trained and reliable employees that will meet the scheduled contract time frames of contracted jobs, and competitive pricing.

Crews of 2-4 workers with a skilled painter as work crew leader will be scheduled onto worksites in the community. Work crews will be grouped by skill level and work behaviors. Rehabilitation supports vary by additional social services staff at varying frequencies as needed, and funded from social services funding available in every state.

Start up grants are needed for the curriculum modification; development of marketing materials, initial marketing/sales for general contracts; the collaborative local college campuses plan and model; development of the proposal to be submitted for the state funding; and the gap in income to cover the first 6 months of overhead while the work crews increase to at least 4 crews with steady jobs to cover the overhead costs; van loan cost; along with manager and estimator/marketer.