

Handi-Crafters Times

ANNUAL REPORT 2024-2025 Empowerment and Opportunity

Handi-Crafters Named Non-Profit of the Year

On May 13, 2025, Handi-Crafters was Honored at the Chester County Chamber of Business and Industry's (CCCBI) inaugural Business of Excellence Awards Luncheon at the Desmond Hotel. In front of community leaders, corporate

commitment of our partners and stakeholders who champion our mission each day. Together, we are creating meaningful opportunities and measurable outcomes for hundreds of individuals in Chester County and beyond.



partners, and fellow honorees, we proudly received the Non-Profit of the Year Award.

This recognition is a testament to the dedication of our staff, the resilience of our program participants, and the steadfast

Executive Director April Ennis-Pierson accepted the award on behalf of Handi-Crafters, joined by members of our Board of Directors, staff, and key partners. In her remarks, she shared:

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The 38th Annual Hankin Invitational

The 38th Annual Hankin Invitational, held on October 7, 2024, brought together incredible corporate donors and sponsors for a tremendous day of stewardship and sportsmanship. Set against the backdrop of the picturesque Whitford Country Club, the 2024 tournament, sponsored by Hankin Group and Bentley Systems, raised a remarkable \$335,000 to benefit Handi-Crafters



Opportunity Center. 232 golfers took the course throughout the day for this sold-out tradition, uniting Chester

County's great community partners for an even greater cause.

"The Hankin Invitational is far more than a day of golf—it's a lifeline for Handi-Crafters. The support raised through this tournament directly sustains our programs, our people, and our ability to create meaningful work opportunities for individuals with disabilities. Without this event and its sponsors, much of what we do simply wouldn't be possible."

— Denny Howell, Board President, Handi-Crafters

Golfers enjoyed a beautiful day on the greens, engaging in friendly competition and partaking in contests such as the golf cannon challenge and chances to win cash prizes. Competitors also had the special opportunity to win a Ford Bronco-Sport, courtesy

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Herr's Honored with 2025 Best Friend Award



Denny Howell, Greg Bentley, April Ennis-Pierson and Ed Herr

At Handi-Crafters, partnerships are at the heart of our mission. Each year, we recognize one extraordinary partner with the **Best Friend Award**—an Honor reserved for those who go above and beyond in helping us create meaningful opportunities for individuals with disabilities. In 2025, we were extremely proud to celebrate this year's Best Friend Award recipient.

Herr's, a family-owned snack food company headquartered in Nottingham, Pennsylvania, is widely recognized for its beloved products and its deep commitment to community. Since 2014, Herr's has partnered with Handi-Crafters in a co-packing relationship that has provided our program participants with valuable, hands-on work experiences. Together, we have packaged more than **2.5 million snack items**—a milestone that not only reflects productivity, but also represents thousands of hours of skill-building, confidence, and pride for the individuals we serve.

Board President Denny Howell praised the partnership: "Herr's is a valued customer and trusted partner. For over a decade, Ed Herr and his team have placed their confidence in our program, and we are grateful to be considered a partner of such an incredible company."

In his remarks at the award presentation, Ed Herr, Chairman and CEO of Herr's, reflected on what it means to be recognized:

"We believe in Handi-Crafters' mission and are Honored to support individuals who are developing skills and working towards their goals. At Herr's, we are proud to be known as a good neighbor, and we believe that one of the best things you can do in life is to do something good for others."

The **Best Friend Award** was formally presented to Herr's May 1, 2025, at Handi-Crafters' Annual Spring Benefit Evening, presented by Bentley Systems. The celebration also Honored **Habitat for Humanity ReStores** with the Community Partner Award, highlighting the many ways local organizations help expand opportunities for our program participants.

This recognition of Herr's reflects more than a decade of shared vision and impact. Their partnership has strengthened our mission, elevated the work of our participants, and shown what is possible when business and community come together in service of others.

Best Friend Award Honorees:

- 2015 Jennifer and Robert McNeil
- 2016 Robert Spatola and Family
- 2017 Bentley Systems
- 2018 CTDI
- 2019 Hankin Group
- 2024 Aaron Muderick, Crazy Aaron's Thinking Putty
- 2025 Herr Foods, Inc

Habitat for Humanity ReStores Named Handi-Crafters' 2025 Community Partner of the Year

Handi-Crafters Opportunity Center has named the **Habitat for Humanity of Chester County ReStores** its 2025 *Community Partner of the Year*, recognizing the organization's growing partnership that has opened doors for dozens of individuals with disabilities.

The award was presented May 1 during Handi-Crafters' Annual Spring Benefit Evening, presented by Bentley Systems.

"What started as occasional volunteer visits has blossomed into a weekly tradition at both the Caln and Phoenixville ReStores," said April Ennis-Pierson, Executive Director of Handi-Crafters. "Our clients aren't just helpers — they've become part of the ReStore family."

Each week, Handi-Crafters participants volunteer at both stores, taking on tasks such as stocking shelves,



arranging furniture, pricing donated items, cleaning, and greeting custom-

ers. For many, the outings have become a highlight of their week.

"Some of our clients were shy at first, but thanks to the warm welcome from the ReStore team, they've blossomed into confident, contributing members of the crew," said John Baer, Handi-Crafters' Community Participation Services Coordinator.

The partnership has been equally valuable for Habitat. "The consistent and dedicated support from the Handi-Crafters team has created a more organized and welcoming environment in both of our ReStore locations," said Stacy Bagent, ReStore Operations Director. "Their routine has become an important part of our weekly operations."

For client Willie, who volunteers at

both stores, the work has become a source of pride. At Caln, he once stopped on his way out the door to take out the trash he had forgotten. In Phoenixville, a customer recently praised his thorough sidewalk cleaning. Willie's dedication, staff say, is a perfect example of the partnership's impact.

"Their routine has become an important part of our weekly operations."

The Community Partner of the Year Award is given annually to organizations whose collaboration strengthens Handi-Crafters' mission. Last year's honoree was Krapf Coaches.

Handi-Crafters Volunteers Deliver Meals and Hope Through Community Service

At Handi-Crafters Opportunity Center, volunteerism is more than an act of service—it's an opportunity for participants to build confidence, independence, and meaningful connections within their community.

Wheels for years, emphasized the impact of these efforts.

"Our involvement with Meals on Wheels helps serve the people in the community who are in need," he said.



Through the **Community Participation Program**, individuals at Handi-Crafters regularly give back by engaging in volunteer opportunities across Chester County. One meaningful partnership is with **Meals on Wheels of Chester County**, where participants help deliver meals to local residents in need.

Each delivery represents more than a warm meal—it's a moment of human connection. Volunteers bring comfort, kindness, and a friendly smile to the doorstep, reminding neighbors that they are not alone.

"Meals on Wheels helps the community out," shared one participant, reflecting on the experience.

Longtime staff leader Calvin Brown, who has guided Handi-Crafters' partnership with Meals on

Wheels through volunteer experiences like this, Handi-Crafters participants are not only contributing to their communities—they're discovering their own strength, compassion, and purpose. Each outing reinforces the organization's mission of empowering individuals through meaningful work and community participation.



Community Spirit Shines Bright Through Volunteerism at Handi-Crafters

Handi-Crafters' mission to empower individuals through meaningful work continues to thrive—thanks in no small part to the generosity of volunteers who give their time, energy, and heart to make a difference. Over the past year, volunteer engagement at the Thorndale campus reached remarkable levels, with **more than 1,390 total volunteer hours** contributed by corporate partners and individual supporters alike.

Corporate Partners Step Up

Twelve local companies rolled up their sleeves to support Handi-Crafters' programs and facility needs, contributing a combined **520 hours** of service. Volunteers from organizations such as DLL, Meridian Bank, CPI, Arkema, FIS Global, IMC Construction, Johnson & Johnson, United Way, HTA Insurance Services, the Chester County Chamber of Business & Industry, Bentley Systems, and others spent time assisting in workshops, refreshing spaces, and lending a hand wherever needed.

dedicated group of individual volunteers gave an extraordinary **870 hours** of service. From mentoring participants and assisting in production workshops to helping with special events and maintenance projects, these community members have become an integral part of the Handi-Crafters family.



Several volunteers contributed hundreds of hours over the year, embodying the true spirit of service and compassion. Their consistent presence supports staff, uplifts clients, and enhances the daily experience across Handi-Crafters' programs.

A Grateful Community

"We are deeply grateful for every person and organization that steps forward to volunteer," said leadership at Handi-Crafters. "Each hour of service has a direct impact on our mission to create opportunities and build brighter futures for the individuals we serve."

From corporate teams to individual champions, Handi-Crafters' volunteers exemplify what it means to be difference-makers—proving that when a community works together, everyone benefits.



These partnerships not only provide valuable manpower but also strengthen community bonds—showing how business and philanthropy can come together to promote inclusion and purpose.

Individual Volunteers Make a Lasting Impact

Alongside the corporate crews, a

Inaugural Staff Awards Celebrate Handi-Crafters' Difference Makers

Handi-Crafters marked a proud milestone this year with the launch of its first-ever Staff Awards—an initiative designed to recognize the “difference makers” whose leadership, dedication, and compassion fuel the organization’s mission every day.

At the top honors, the **Hollywood Spatola Leaders of the Year Award** was presented to **Kim Parrott** and **Phillip Hicklen**. At the time, Kim served as a Program Specialist in the Adult Daily Living Center (ADLC). Since then, she has advanced to **Director of Rehabilitation**, where her professionalism and commitment continue to inspire her colleagues and the individuals she supports. Phillip, who was then a Community Participation Specialist, has since transitioned into the role of **Employment**



Kim Parrott



Phillip Hicklen



John Baer

Specialist–Job Coach, helping clients thrive in competitive workplaces throughout the community.

The **GEM Award (Going the Extra Mile)** was presented to **John Baer**, Community Participation Specialist, in recognition of his steady dependability and willingness to exceed expectations—a hallmark of his service at Handi-Crafters.

In addition to the new awards, the organization also launched a **monthly Employee of the Month** recognition program to celebrate ongoing excellence and teamwork throughout the year.

Handi-Crafters also Honored several long-serving employees for their outstanding tenure. **Kathie Osborn** retired in December after 33

years of service in administration. Two additional Honorees—**Linda Zimmerman**, Director of the ADLC, and **Karen Martel**, Workshop Supervisor—each surpassed the 40-year mark. Karen concluded her remarkable career with her retirement in February 2020.

“These awards shine a spotlight on the extraordinary people who make Handi-Crafters what it is today,” leadership reflected. “Their dedication and compassion ensure that opportunity thrives here every day.”

Handi-Crafters Honors Chris Broome's Legacy and Welcomes New Director Andrew Arnell

Handi-Crafters experienced an important leadership transition this year, celebrating the retirement of longtime **Director of Employment and Community Services, Chris Broome**, while welcoming **Andrew Arnell** as her successor.



Chris retired after 29 years of dedicated service. She first joined Han-

di-Crafters in 1996, serving in workforce development programs before becoming director in 2007. Over nearly three decades, Chris championed community-based employment, managed key business partnerships, and led the integration of **Community Participation Supports (CPS)** into Handi-Crafters’ service model. Her leadership created pathways to meaningful work for countless individuals.

Following her retirement, Handi-Crafters welcomed **Andrew Arnell** as the new **Director of Employment and Community Services**. A seasoned leader with experience in program development, workforce services, and behavioral health, Andrew has held leadership roles with **Devereux Advanced Behavioral Health, Holcomb Behavioral Health Systems**, and other organizations. His expertise in community

engagement and client-centered services positions him well to build on Chris’s legacy and guide the department into its next chapter.



“Chris leaves behind an incredible legacy of dedication and impact, and Andrew brings the vision and experience to continue advancing opportunities for the individuals we serve,” leadership shared.

Handi-Crafters Remembered Longtime Colleague Beth Welsch

The Handi-Crafters community was deeply saddened by the loss of **Beth Welsch**, a beloved colleague and Workshop Supervisor who devoted 18 years to serving individuals with disabilities.

Beth experienced a medical event shortly before Christmas 2024 and had been hospitalized. On Sunday, January 5, 2025, her family shared the heartbreaking news that “The Lord called Beth home. She was surrounded by her family.”



Beth’s kindness, compassion, and dedication touched countless lives. She was remembered by colleagues as someone who not only loved her work, but who poured her heart into the people she served.

“Beth’s absence has been deeply felt,” reflected members of the Handi-Crafters leadership team. “Her passion for helping others was evident every single day. She embodied the heart of our mission.”

To Honor her In Memory of, the **Handi-Crafters Board of Directors** dedicated a flowering cherry tree just outside the third window of her former workshop. On **June 16, 2025**, the board and staff gathered with Beth’s family to formally dedicate the tree in her Honor. The ceremony provided a meaningful opportunity to reflect on her years of service and the profound impact she left behind.

Beth’s legacy continues to live on in the work she championed and in the compassion and joy she shared throughout her years at Handi-Crafters.

From Intern to Program Specialist: Casey Mihalik's Path with Handi-Crafters

When Casey Mihalik joined Handi-Crafters as a social work intern through West Chester University, he was looking for a new perspective. Having previously worked with veterans and individuals experiencing homelessness, he wanted to better understand the disability community—a population that held personal meaning for him. What he discovered was a sense of belonging and purpose that would shape the start of his career.

Through Handi-Crafters’ long-standing partnership with WCU’s social work program, Casey immersed himself in all aspects of the organization. He worked alongside clients in the production workshops, shadowed staff across departments, and embraced every opportunity to learn.

“It felt like being on a crew,” Casey recalled. “I liked accomplishing things with my hands, and there was a strong sense of belonging.”

Upon graduation, Casey accepted a

position as a **Program Specialist** at Handi-Crafters, turning his internship into a career. **Kim Parrott**, **Director of**



Rehabilitation, praised his dedication:

“Casey’s knowledge and leadership during his internship were extraordinary. We are truly glad that he chose to stay with us at Handi-Crafters, and we are grateful for the positive impact he makes for our team.”

Casey’s impact has already reached beyond daily responsibilities. This past holiday season, he organized a special

project to ensure every individual in the **Adult Daily Living Center (ADLC)** received a meaningful gift.

Instead of choosing generic items, he created personalized shopping lists based on each person’s interests. Rallying friends, family, and supporters, he made sure every participant felt seen and celebrated.

Reflecting on his journey, Casey shared: “At Handi-Crafters, I can see both the immediate and long-term impact of what I do. That’s something special.”

Jordan Earns First Paycheck, Builds Confidence at Handi-Crafters

March marked a proud milestone for Jordan — her very first paycheck.

Since joining Handi-Crafters, Jordan has impressed her supervisors with her strong focus, positive attitude, and eagerness to learn. In the workshop, she quickly picked up new skills and became a reliable team member, contributing with both care and enthusiasm.

When that first paycheck arrived, it meant more than a financial reward — it represented achievement, independence, and growing confidence.

Moments like these are made possible through the generosity of Handi-Crafters' donors. Every contribution supports the training, guidance, and opportunity that empower individuals like Jordan to build skills, reach goals, and take meaningful steps toward greater independence.



Kevin Excels Through Skill Development at Handi-Crafters

Progress takes practice — and Kevin is proving just how powerful that can be.

Under the guidance of Workshop Supervisor Joe, Kevin has spent the past several months honing his vocational skills on a detailed cord reconditioning project. Joe provided hands-on coaching, introducing small but meaningful adjustments to help improve both productivity and precision.

Kevin took each suggestion to heart. With determination and steady focus, he refined his technique — and the results have been remarkable. Today, the cords he sorts, cleans, and packages meet near “out-of-the-box” quality standards. His work is meticulous, his confidence high, and his pride in his accomplishments unmistakable.

Handi-Crafters is proud to partner with CTDI, a global engineering and logistics company, on this initiative. Together, our teams sort, clean, and rewrap power cords and cables — giving them new life and new homes with consumers across the region. This partnership not only promotes sustainability but also provides mean-

ingful, skill-building employment opportunities for our participants.

Stories like Kevin's highlight the impact of donor support at Handi-Crafters. Contributions directly



fund the training, supervision, and opportunities that empower individuals to strengthen their skills, achieve independence, and discover their potential through meaningful work.

Charged for Success: Peter's Year as a PECO Energy Force Ambassador

In partnership with PECO Energy's Energy Force Ambassador Program, Handi-Crafters is proud to celebrate the success of Peter W, who graduated from the program in May after a year of meaningful community engagement and personal growth.

The PECO Energy Force Ambassador Program promotes inclusivity, environmental stewardship, and

ed numerous community events across the region, confidently interacting with attendees and sharing what he had learned. His enthusiasm and professionalism quickly earned him respect and admiration from both his fellow ambassadors and program leads.

The program culminated in a special graduation ceremony in May, where Peter was Honored alongside 13 other ambassadors. Surrounded by family, friends, and supportive community partners, Peter proudly received his certificate of completion—marking a major milestone in his personal and professional journey.

“Through the program, I made new friends and learned so much from the other ambassadors,” Peter shared. “It really helped me feel more comfortable working in the community and talking to others. I'm ready to take the next step and look for a job beyond Handi-Crafters to grow my career.”

Today, Peter is working with the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR) to explore competitive employment opportunities, building on the confidence, skills, and connections he gained through his ambassador experience.



energy efficiency by training individuals with disabilities to serve as community educators. Ambassadors learn about PECO's Energy Efficiency programs and attend regional events to share practical energy-saving tips with the public through engaging demonstrations and outreach.

Peter was encouraged to apply for the program after learning about the opportunity through Handi-Crafters. His positive attitude, communication skills, and natural leadership—along with the support of his Life Share family—helped him stand out as a strong candidate.

He began by completing specialized ambassador training, gaining knowledge about energy conservation and public engagement. Over the following months, Peter attend-

Handi-Crafters Staff Takes Training Seriously

At Handi-Crafters, training isn't just required — it's a cornerstone of quality care and service. Throughout the year, staff across all departments took part in a series of professional development sessions designed to strengthen safety, enhance skills, and ensure the highest standards of support for the individuals we serve.



Nurses with AED

On November 12, 2024, employees completed Heartsaver First Aid, CPR & AED certification, led by instructors from Good Will Ambulance of West Chester. This nationally recognized certification equipped participants with life-saving techniques and the confidence to respond effectively in emergencies.

In addition to CPR training, staff engaged in Handle with Care - de-es-

calation training, gaining valuable strategies for managing challenging situations with calm and empathy. Community Participation Support (CPS), Nursing, and Employment Services teams also partnered with Chesco Connect to complete wheelchair securement certification, ensuring safe and proper transportation practices for individuals with mobility needs.

Handi-Crafters also held Incident Management training, reinforcing staff awareness of reporting procedures, prevention strategies, and continuous improvement under state and ODP guidelines.

All full-time employees follow a 24-hour annual training curriculum, though many exceed that standard — pursuing additional coursework and certifications to advance their knowledge and professional growth.

“Every training we complete strengthens the safety, confidence, and competence of our team,” said one supervisor. “It's part of what makes Handi-Crafters such a trusted and caring environment.”

By prioritizing ongoing education and skill development, Handi-Crafters continues to ensure that both staff and clients thrive in a safe, supportive, and empowering community.



A Culture of Quality: Handi-Crafters Excels in ODP QA&I Performance

At Handi-Crafters Opportunity Center, quality isn't just a requirement—it's a mindset that shapes every level of service, support, and leadership. Over the last three years, the organization has demonstrated outstanding progress through the Office of Developmental Programs' (ODP) Quality Assurance and Improvement (QA&I) process, a statewide framework designed to ensure providers deliver person-centered, high-quality services to individuals with disabilities.

Handi-Crafters completes annual assessments and provides reporting to the Commonwealth, Office of Developmental Programs. "Our commitment to quality runs deep," said Executive Director April Ennis-Pierson. "Every improvement we make through the QA&I process ultimately strengthens the supports we provide to the individuals and families who count on us."

Building Momentum: Results from the 2023–2025 QA&I Plan

Spanning from March 2023 through June 2025, the organization's most recent QA&I Plan focused on four key quality goals aligned with ODP's person-centered mission —employment, community participation, incident prevention, and staff training.

Competitive Integrated Employment (CIE) led the way as a major success story. Handi-Crafters set an ambitious goal to increase CIE placements by 50 percent by June 2025—from four to six—and exceeded it, reaching **eight successful community employment placements**. Addi-

tional clients remain in active job searches, supported through the agency's ongoing employment readiness and coaching initiatives.

Growth was equally impressive in **Community Participation Supports (CPS)**. The number of partner sites expanded from two to five, surpassing the original target, while client participation **grew by 53 percent**, from 70 to 113 individuals. These results speak to the organization's steady push to expand opportunities beyond the workshop walls—helping participants explore new environments, develop skills, and give back through meaningful community engagement.



Not every goal came easily. Despite new tools, training, and certified investigators, Handi-Crafters did not meet its **10 percent incident reduction target**—a reflection of the increasingly complex needs of the population served. However, enhanced reporting, trend analysis, and proactive interventions have strengthened the agency's incident-prevention strategies moving forward.

On the training front, the results were clear-cut: **100 percent compliance maintained** across all departments. Directors ensured every staff member met ODP and internal train-



ing requirements through quarterly monitoring, updated curricula, and timely corrective action. This continued investment in staff development remains a cornerstone of Handi-Crafters' quality commitment.

Looking Ahead: The 2025–2028 Quality Management Plan

Handi-Crafters' new three-year Quality Management Plan sets a clear roadmap for continued excellence through June 2028. The plan centers on four priority goals: strengthening staff training to ensure 100% compliance each year; increasing community employment placements by 50% with enhanced tracking through the new Vertex Client Management System; expanding community participation by 10% to build stronger connections and learning experiences; and reduc-

ing reportable incidents by 10% through proactive monitoring, staff education, and data-driven prevention. Together, these initiatives reinforce Handi-Crafters' commit-

ment to continuous improvement and person-centered quality care.

A Shared Commitment to Excellence

With every QA&I cycle, Handi-Crafters continues to build on its foundation of accountability and person-centered care. The process has strengthened internal systems, reinforced staff competencies, and sharpened the focus on measurable outcomes that make a difference in people's lives.

"Quality isn't a one-time effort—it's something we live every day," said Ennis-Pierson. "We're proud of how far we've come, and we're committed to going even further to ensure the individuals we serve have every opportunity to succeed."

Handi-Crafters Derby Gala Raises More Than \$125,000

Handi-Crafters tipped its derby hat to generosity on **Thursday, May 1**, when nearly 200 guests gathered at



the Spatola Center on the Handi-Crafters campus for the annual **Spring Gala**. With a lively Derby Day theme, the evening raised more than **\$125,000** in support of the organization's mission to create meaningful opportunities for individuals with disabilities.



Guests arrived in full Derby spirit, donning colorful attire and elaborate hats that brought a touch of Kentucky flair to Barley Sheaf Road. A lively "Best Dressed" contest added to the excitement, as our celebrity judges selected winners from among the many eye-catching ensembles. The fun continued as Handi-Crafters friends "pre-purchased" and named

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Adult Daily Living Center: A Model of Compassion and Excellence

At Handi-Crafters, the Adult Daily Living Center (ADLC) stands out as a shining example of care, connection, and purpose. Licensed under the



ADLC Staff

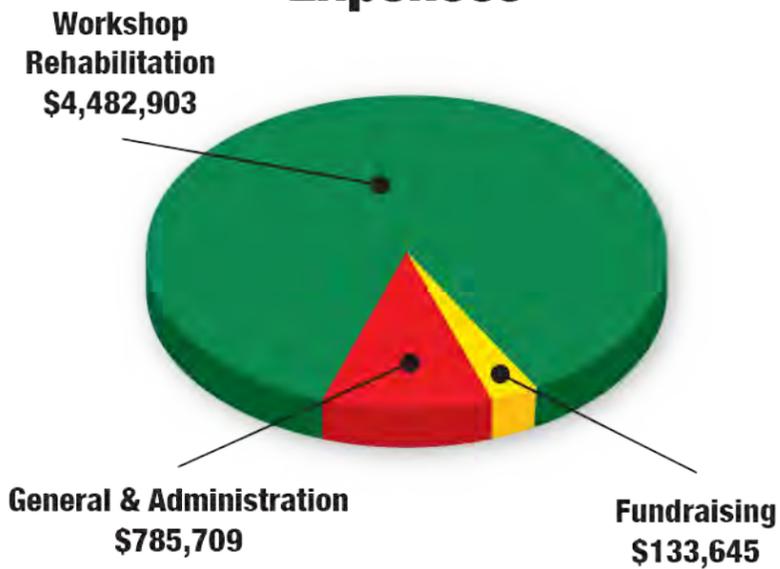
Pennsylvania Office of Developmental Programs (ODP) 2380 regulations, this program provides a vibrant, structured environment for adults with developmental disabilities who thrive with daily support, companionship, and meaningful activity. Each day at the ADLC is active and

engaging—filled with energizing group activities, creative projects, social gatherings, and individualized care designed to meet the unique

needs of every participant. The atmosphere is warm and welcoming, where laughter, music, and conversation fill the rooms, and staff work hand-in-hand to create a safe and joyful experience.

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Expenses

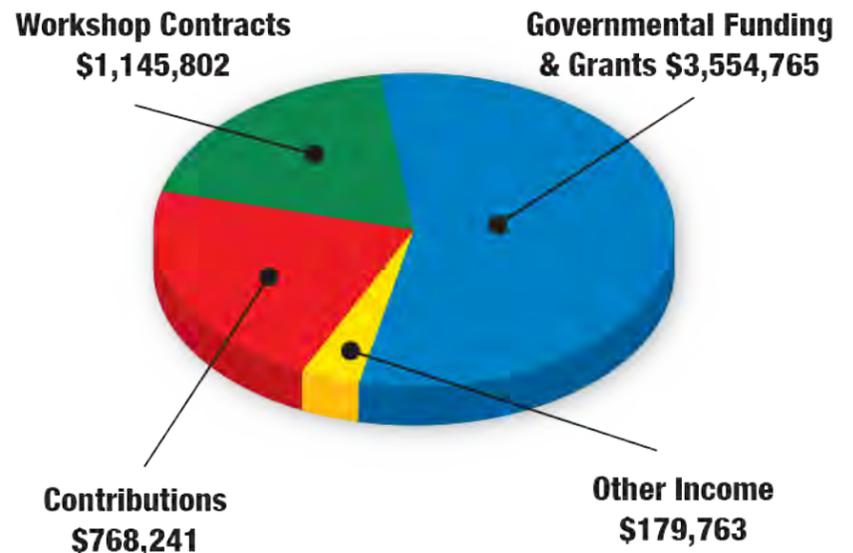


Workshop Rehabilitation	\$4,482,903
General & Administration	\$785,709
Fundraising	\$133,645

Total Expenses..... \$5,402,256

July 1, 2023 - June 30, 2024

Revenue



Governmental Funding & Grants ..	\$3,554,765
Workshop Contracts	\$1,145,802
Contributions.....	\$768,241
Other Income.....	\$179,763

Total Revenue and Support \$5,648,571

Handi-Crafters is a registered 501c3 organization. A copy of our Audited Financial Report is available for review by contacting, Sam Arena, Senior Director of Finance and Administration. Samuel.Arena@handi-crafters.org

CQ Medical: A Partnership that Powers Purpose

Since launching our partnership with CQ Medical in 2020, this collaboration has been nothing short of transformative for Handi-Crafters. In the past fiscal year alone, CQ Medical represented 15% of total sales, with our skilled workforce assembling over 250,000 units. Together, we have now produced more than one million units—a milestone that speaks to the strength and longevity of this relationship.

But beyond the numbers lies the true impact: **meaningful employment for 15 individuals with disabilities.** This partnership demonstrates how inclusive sourcing not only meets business needs but also uplifts lives by providing steady work, skills development, and a sense of pride.

Precision Work that Builds Skills

At the heart of this collaboration is the **Shim Assembly project**—a multi-step task requiring fine motor skills, cognitive sequencing, and visual acuity. Workers align and snap small components, thread and rotate parts, and conduct quality checks to ensure mechanical function. Adaptive tools such as jigs, visual guides, and on-site supervision make this complex work accessible and achievable, empowering our team to deliver industry-standard results.

“This partnership is a testament to what’s possible when mission and business align,” says **Mariana Tarau, Director of Business Operations.** “CQ Medical trusts us with work that is precise and complex—and in doing so, they give our team the opportuni-

ty to grow, gain confidence, and contribute to something bigger than themselves.”

More Than a Business Transaction

CQ Medical’s continued collaboration is not just about production—it’s a vote of confidence in our mission. Their commitment shows that:

- Corporate partners value vocational rehabilitation and inclusive employment
- Handi-Crafters can deliver precision work at scale
- Disability-inclusive workplaces are productive, sustainable, and impactful



This partnership stands as a shining example of what happens when **business goals and social purpose intersect.** Together with CQ Medical, we are proving that every unit assembled represents not just quality output, but also **empowerment, skill-building, and dignity for the workers who make it possible.**

Our Top Business Customers

CTDI	Crazy Aaron’s	The Eastwood Company
CQ Medical	Air King	FSI
Herr’s	Sunny Sky	
Dumond	Stichler Candies	

State and County Leaders Visit Handi-Crafters

On **September 6, 2024,** Handi-Crafters was Honored to host **Kristen Ahrens, Deputy Secretary of Pennsylvania’s Office of Developmental Programs (ODP),** along with members of the ODP leadership team, the Chester County MH/IDD team, and representatives from the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR).

The visit included a guided tour of Handi-Crafters’ campus, where guests saw firsthand the organization’s long-trusted vocational workshop model in action. For more than six decades, Handi-Crafters has provided meaningful work opportunities to individuals with disabilities—an option that many program participants and their families continue to value and choose.

Following the tour, leaders from ODP, OVR, and MH/IDD joined Handi-Crafters’ leadership team and Board of Directors for a discussion about service delivery and future opportunities.

“It was important for us to host this visit,” said **April Ennis-Pierson, Executive Director of Handi-Crafters.** “We wanted to show the Deputy that we have an excellent program—one that families trust and participants choose—and at the same time demonstrate how we align with the state’s goals around community participation and competitive

integrated employment. We take vocational training seriously, and we are committed to offering a continuum of opportunities that meet individual needs and preferences.”



In recent years, Handi-Crafters has strengthened its programming by aligning with **Community Participation Supports (CPS)** standards and tracking **Competitive Integrated Employment (CIE)** outcomes. These efforts build on the strong foundation of its workshop model while ensuring compliance and readiness for future developments in disability services.

Deputy Secretary Ahrens praised the organization’s progress and noted that Handi-Crafters is well-positioned to adapt to future directions in service delivery.

“All in all, it was a terrific and instrumental visit,” Ennis-Pierson added. “We were pleased that the Deputy came, and we look forward to continuing this important dialogue with our partners at the state and county levels.”

Mary Finds Success in Dual Roles, Pursuing Her Passion and Purpose

When Mary joined Handi-Crafters in 2021, she quickly made her mark as a confident, motivated self-advocate ready to grow and take on new challenges. Through her hard work in the Work Center, she honed her



goal—making T-shirts. With guidance from her Job Coach, she connected with Shirts N More in Coatesville, where she now works one day a week creating custom apparel. Mary's dedication and enthusiasm have paid off so much that her Job Coach has successfully phased out—proof that she's thriving on her own.

But Mary's story doesn't end there. She continues to work at Handi-Crafters, proudly managing two jobs that reflect her passion, determination, and commitment to meaningful work.

Mary's success embodies the mission of Handi-Crafters—empowering individuals to achieve independence and fulfillment through employment.

Interested in hiring one of our talented individuals pursuing competitive employment? Contact **Andrew Arnell, Director of Employment and Community Services**, to learn more.

skills, built confidence, and developed a strong sense of independence that set her on the path toward her dreams.

In 2024, with encouragement from her support team, Mary decided it was time to chase a lifelong

Tiffany Finds Her Stride at Thorndale Goodwill

At Handi-Crafters Opportunity Center, success stories often begin with a simple step toward independence—and for Tiffany, that step has turned into a confident stride.

After graduating from Handi-Crafters' World of Work training program, which helps individuals build job readiness skills and explore career goals, Tiffany set out on her employment journey. Her determination and enthusiasm quickly led her to a position at the Thorndale Goodwill, where she has now been employed for more than a year as a **Merchandise Processor**.

In her role, Tiffany handles a variety of tasks that keep the store running smoothly—sorting clothing donations, tagging items, placing them on racks, and preparing them for the sales floor. Her attention to detail and reliability have made her a valued member of the Goodwill team.

"Tiffany has grown tremendously—it's really nice to see," said her Job Coach, **Alyssa Watterson**. "The biggest thing is watching her independence shine. She takes the bus to work, clocks in and out on time, and consistently receives great feedback

from her manager."

Tiffany's week is a full one—balancing her position at Goodwill three days a week with two days of work at



Handi-Crafters' Work Center. Her commitment to both workplaces demonstrates her strong work ethic and love for what she does.

Alyssa and the entire Handi-Crafters team are proud of Tiffany's accomplishments and the confidence she has developed along the way. "She's a model of success and an inspiration to others," Watterson added.

Tiffany's journey reflects the power of opportunity and support—proof that with the right tools, encouragement, and perseverance, independence and achievement can flourish.

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Handi-Crafters Derby Gala Raises More Than \$125,000

horses that competed in virtual races down the track—each one met with cheers and laughter and prizes.

Mint juleps, thrilling horse races, and delicious Derby-inspired catering completed the unforgettable evening.



"This event was not only a celebration of our mission, but also of the community spirit that makes our work possible," said Handi-Crafters leadership. "The energy in the room reflected the pride and commitment of everyone who supports us."

The success of the evening was thanks in large part to the dedicated efforts of the gala committee: **Jeanne Spatola, Theresa Glass, Lynn Laurent, and Lisa Henry Lacey**, whose creativity and leadership brought the event to life.

At Handi-Crafters Opportunity Center, we celebrate our program participants who achieve competitive employment opportunities.

Cliff, who has been part of the Handi-Crafters family since 2010, is a proud competitive employment success story for his hiring at Wendy's!



Program Specialist Kathy Miller, who has worked with Cliff for the past eight years, always knew that he would excel in an employment position. Miller, who first began working with Cliff when she was his workshop supervisor, has always had a deep admiration for Cliff's strong work ethic.

"Cliff doesn't like to miss work," expressed Miller. "He loves to work."

Cliff, with over a decade of consistent workshop production and ability to pick up new skills quickly, was originally hesitant to pursue employment outside of Handi-Crafters.

Handi-Crafters staff, including Employment Specialist Philip Hicklen, encouraged Cliff to consider all the different possibilities in store.

Together, Hicklen and Cliff began

to gradually explore volunteer opportunities in the community. From volunteering with Meals on Wheels and the Chester County Food Bank, Cliff began to develop the confidence he needed to take the next step in his journey.

"Cliff already had the work ethic," remarked Hicklen. "He just needed to build the confidence in himself."

Together with Hicklen, Cliff discovered Wendy's was the job that best aligned with his interests and values. After completing a successful interview, he was hired in April!

Today, Cliff is thriving in his role! He undertakes many responsibilities in the fast-paced food service industry and handles it all like a seasoned pro. From dishwashing duties, frying food, and maintaining the cleanliness of the restaurant, Cliff has carried over many of the skills he learned at Handi-Crafters to his new role.

His favorite job responsibility? Frying the French fries!

Even though Cliff has only been in his new role for a few short months, Hicklen is proud of all ways he has seen Cliff grow interpersonally in this role.

"I've seen him come out of his shell and build new relationships out in the community," reflected Hicklen. "He has built relationships with customers."

Cliff has also built new relationships with his co-workers, which he says is the most rewarding part of the job.

"My co-workers are very nice,"

remarked Cliff. "I like working with them."

When he is not at Wendy's, Cliff is still dedicating his time to working at Handi-Crafters, which further highlights his commitment and dedication to work!



A homegrown Handi-Crafter's success story, Cliff has grown from a superstar in the workshop to a valued employee out in the community! His journey shows what Handi-Crafters is all about – empowering others to believe in themselves and helping them reach their full potential!

A Letter from Leadership

This past year has been one of momentum, pride, and renewed purpose at Handi-Crafters. A highlight was hosting Deputy Secretary Kristen Ahrens of the Office of Developmental Programs (ODP) along with leadership from the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR) and Chester County MH/IDD. This important visit showcased our long-standing workshop model and the meaningful outcomes we achieve every day.

We emphasized that workshop programs are not a last resort — they are a vital choice. Handi-Crafters provides individuals the dignity of productive work, the support they need to thrive, and the pride of being valued contributors. We were proud to share the results of our Quality Management Plan, demonstrating how we align with ODP's pillars and advance participant outcomes.

Our staff are the key to everything we do. Nearly 80 passionate, front-line professionals work side by side with participants, forming a true village of support that keeps them safe, builds confidence, and helps them grow. We are proud of the workers our participants have become — both in our community programs and in our successful co-packing business.

Looking ahead, we are embracing innovation. Our new client management system will allow us to track outcomes like never before, measure progress with accuracy, and apply a truly person-centered, data-driven approach to our work.

This year also brought heartfelt transitions as we bid farewell to staff retiring after 25, 30, even 40 years of service. Their dedication and institutional knowledge shaped the foundation of our programs. At the same time, we promoted leaders from within and welcomed new team members whose energy and focus will carry us forward.

Together, we are building a future where every individual we serve has the opportunity to succeed, belong, and shine. Thank you for standing with us and for helping Handi-Crafters remain a place of purpose and possibility for almost 65 incredible years!

We gratefully acknowledge the dedicated leadership and guidance of our Board of Directors and Management Team, whose commitment makes our mission possible.

Denny Howell
President, HCOC Board of Directors

April Ennis-Pierson
Executive Director, HCOC

Handi-Crafters Board of Directors:

Denny Howell – President
Joseph Howard – Vice President
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Andrew Arnell –
Director of Employment and
Community Engagement
Linda Zimmerman –
Director of Adult Daily Living Center
Madison Chambers –
Director of Development

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Handi-Crafters Named Non-Profit of the Year

“We are deeply honored by this recognition. It celebrates the heart of who we are at HCOC—people working together to create real opportunity and meaningful outcomes. We continue to expand horizons, create opportunities, and help every individual we proudly serve to uncover their full potential.”

We were humbled to stand

alongside other distinguished awardees whose leadership continues to shape the region's future. This award reflects not only the legacy of Handi-Crafters but also the vibrant community that surrounds us and believes in our mission.

As we look ahead, we carry this honor as both recognition and motivation—to build on our strengths, embrace innovation, and continue delivering on our promise of helping individuals thrive through opportunity.

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Adult Daily Living Center: A Model of Compassion and Excellence

Under the dedicated leadership of Linda Zimmerman, the program continues to achieve exceptional results during annual inspections, earning high marks for its quality of care, compliance, and person-centered approach. Linda and her talented team embody Handi-

Crafters' mission through their compassion, professionalism, and commitment to helping each participant live life to the fullest.

The ADLC remains one of the most cherished parts of Handi-Crafters' service continuum—a place where individuals are not only supported but truly celebrated. Every day is an opportunity to feel love and security, nurture friendships, and share in the simple joys that make this program so special.

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The 38th Annual Hankin Invitational

of our friends of Brian Hoskins Ford. A major highlight of the tournament was the annual helicopter ball drop, which saw nearly 700 golf balls hit the green. Winners of the furthest and closest to the pin contest each received \$500 in cash prizes!

The attention was in the details throughout the day, and the tournament was executed seamlessly thanks to the exceptional hospitality provided by Whitford County Club. A delicious afternoon halfway house spread courtesy of the Hilton Garden Inn Exton-West Chester was another of the day's many highlights, which featured a signature drink and a special taste of Philadelphia menu.

As the sun began to set over the rolling hills of Exton, golfers exited the course to the celebratory sound of bagpipes, signaling the end to an exciting day of golf.

The 38th Annual Hankin Invitational was an inspirational display of

greatness on the course and in the community. Since its inception, the Hankin Invitational Tournament has raised \$2.6 million dollars benefitting the individuals at Handi-Crafters Opportunity Center. This partnership is deeper than a day of golf—it highlights Hankin Group's long-standing commitment to enriching the lives of adults with disabilities in the community.

“We're proud to see how the Hankin Invitational has helped Handi-Crafters grow over the past decade. Together with our sponsors, we'll keep raising the bar to make an even greater impact.”

— Michael Hankin, COO, Hankin Group

While another successful tournament is officially in the books, the legacy and impact of this tournament remains steadfast throughout the year; it is a reminder of the impact of philanthropic commitment and the power of bringing others together to reach their greatest potential.

Mission Statement

Our Mission is to provide individuals with various disabilities vocational job training, community socialization, and the support they need to achieve their competitive employment goals.

Our agency aligns its goals and services with “Everyday Lives,” the mission and vision of the Office of Developmental Programs (ODP). Established to support Pennsylvanians with developmental disabilities to achieve greater independence, choice, and opportunity in their lives.

Handi-Crafters Inc.

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