Beacon is thrilled to announce a huge new step in our efforts to expand employment opportunities for people with disabilities in Arizona. One of the larger e-retailers in the world has chosen Beacon Group to partner with them in Arizona for their alternative workforce hiring program. Specifically, they have contracted with Beacon to recruit and employ as many as 150 people with disabilities at their facilities in Phoenix!

Two years ago, Beacon committed to growing these kinds of opportunities in the Phoenix metro area. Beacon provides more employment options — primarily in Tucson — than any other rehabilitation organization in Arizona.

Since we made that commitment, we have added new service programs and a number of new community worksites to provide more of these opportunities. To date, we have doubled the number of people finding employment through our efforts. A year ago, we were averaging just over seven individuals placed in jobs each month. Today, we are averaging twice that number. This new partnership with the large internet retailer will mean we will again double our current numbers!
One of the themes that is found in nearly all of our newsletters is the wide array of employment choices we offer people with disabilities. At Beacon Group, people can choose to work:

- Part time in manufacturing and part time in a day treatment program
- At our manufacturing facility in a supported setting
- As a part time on-call employee in our manufacturing facility
- On more than 40 different supported Beacon Group community worksite crews such as Beacon Secure, vehicle washing, our Landscaping Division, etc.
- At a job for another company with Beacon Group supports
- As an employee on one of Beacon’s contracts including facilities services and custodial
- For another company where Beacon Group helps them find employment

In the past year, over 1,600 people with significant disabilities took advantage of these choices offered by Beacon Group. Examples in this newsletter of employment choices include our new contract to help people get jobs with one of the world’s largest internet-based retailers within their Phoenix fulfillment center and working for Beacon Group at the Phoenix Federal Building and Courthouse.

We continue to expand these choices. Beacon Group is proud to be working with these employers who want to hire people with disabilities for their workforce. Again... more choices! We don’t just offer the employment choices; we encourage everyone to maximize their employment aspirations, work with them to meet employment goals and to honor their choice.

There are some disability support organizations and government regulatory agencies who want to eliminate some of the employment options mentioned above for people with disabilities. As illustrated in Dustin Tolliver’s story (see “Change of Plans” on the following page), we work hard to advocate for and protect these choices.

You, too, can become an advocate! You don’t need to understand all of the intricacies of the policies and regulatory issues. Just tell people about the wide array of employment choices Beacon Group offers people with disabilities. We believe that offering all these choices will ultimately maximize the employment opportunities for people with disabilities. Thanks for supporting Beacon Group!

Heidi Kirkland has joined Beacon Group as the Director of Marketing and Development. A Tucson native, Heidi graduated from Pepperdine University. She returned to Arizona and directed marketing implementation for many local organizations including SportsCorp, Assessment Technology Inc., and Tucson Orthopaedic Institute, and championed various local fundraising and public relations initiatives in her volunteer roles. Heidi also has owned a printing business and marketing consulting firm. She has taught marketing as an adjunct Professor at the University of Arizona’s Entrepreneurship program, business classes at Salpointe Catholic High School, and through Pima Community College’s Small Business Development Center programs.

In her new position, Heidi hopes to enhance communication among Beacon stakeholders and spread the word about how the organization serves disabled people and businesses in the community. Under the strategic goal of “diversifying funding sources for a more sustainable organization,” she looks forward to “inspiring the wonderful Beacon Group fan-club to take action.” She says, “Whether it’s telling a friend or co-worker about what we do, hiring a disabled employee, or sharing our donation link on social media, every action by a Beacon supporter helps ensure that people with disabilities continue to have choices and promising opportunities.”
When Dustin Tolliver was invited by Beacon to attend the SourceAmerica’s Grassroots Conference this summer and to be part of the organized visits to local congressional leaders, he eagerly agreed.

After his plans for a career in the military were ended by a devastating diagnosis, he had found the second chance he was hoping for with a job on the custodial crew at the Federal Courthouse in Phoenix. That job was part of the AbilityOne Program, a special set-aside contract that provides jobs for people with disabilities and is administered through SourceAmerica.

Dustin had planned on a life in the military like his father when he joined the U.S. Air Force in 2001. It was a huge change leaving his home in North Pole, Alaska for his stationing at Luke AFB outside of Phoenix. He worked there as a structural engineer. He was even deployed for seven months to Kuwait. It was all going to plan until he returned from overseas.

He noticed he was starting to have difficulty speaking and couldn’t handle tools like he could before. He was sent to see a doctor, which eventually led to him being diagnosed with Multiple Sclerosis (MS). The Air Force had no choice but to give him medical retirement.

Dustin had also recently gotten married and started a family. Eventually, he and his wife, Martha, would have three boys. He got a job at USAA Insurance, but then lost that job after a year and a half due to his MS. After another year and a half working for an online college, he was let go. Dustin could have stopped working altogether, but even more than before, he wanted to work and needed it for his own sense of purpose.

After three frustrating years of trying, Dustin finally found a job through Goodwill on their custodial team at the Sandra Day O’Connor Federal Courthouse (as part of an AbilityOne contract held by Goodwill). Two years ago, Beacon took over four of those contracts in the Phoenix area – including the contract at the Federal Courthouse.

At this point, Dustin transferred to another Beacon custodial team at the Federal Bankruptcy Court in downtown Phoenix. The Sandra Day O’Connor Courthouse is much larger with more outside areas. Dustin was having a difficult time keeping up with his duties.

The Bankruptcy Court has eight floors. Dustin is responsible for cleaning and maintaining the entire fourth floor – by himself! That means vacuuming, sweeping, mopping, dusting and removing trash from all the offices, restrooms and common areas.

Eddie Ayala, the Custodial Supervisor for the Bankruptcy Court Building, says, “Dustin is always very positive and is a team player. He doesn’t want anyone to take care of him or get off easy. He has a great attitude and great character.”

Dustin was asked to attend the SourceAmerica Grassroots Conference to represent Beacon and the AbilityOne Program because he is a great example of who the program helps. He was a worthy spokesperson for the thousands of people who, just like him, have a disability and would be without a job if it weren’t for programs like this.

“I still want to work and challenge myself,” says Dustin. “I love working with Beacon because they recognize what you can do, not what you can’t.”

“Even when his life changed, Dustin Tolliver never gave up.”

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Dustin could have instead stopped working and collected social security benefits. But he wasn’t looking for an easier way. His disability had made him change his plans, but it didn’t change his positive outlook.

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Based on our past success of helping people with disabilities, Beacon was awarded this opportunity to launch a major effort to identify, recruit, assess, interview, train and, ultimately, help hire up to 150 new people for well-paying, part-time employment as soon as possible. We have already opened a Simulation Training Center in Tempe where we are conducting initial interviews and hands-on assessment of potential candidates. We are offering all of our current caseload the chance to apply for these positions, but we are going to need many more people with disabilities to fill all the spots available. We have also started reaching out to many other agencies and rehabilitation organizations in the Phoenix area to expand our pool of potential candidates. These include the Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA), Mercy Maricopa Integrated Care and the Social Security Administration. In addition, we are working with local rehabilitation programs such as WEDCO, Valley Life, MARC Community Resources, Focus Employment, Lifewell and La Frontera Empact.

The professional staff overseeing this new effort includes: Todd Weber, Project Manager; Marcel Mayberry, Recruiter; Adriene Gentile and John Trujillo, Employment Support Coordinators; and Nichole Walla, Beacon’s Director of Phoenix Operations. As we fill these new positions, we will also be providing Job Coaches to ensure smooth transition and trouble-shooting support on site. Before being considered for possible employment, candidates will be required to submit an application to Beacon and provide documentation of disability. These candidates will then be screened to ensure that their abilities — as well as any limitations — are compatible with the essential functions of each job before moving on to the next phase. All candidates must be at least 18 years old, have a high school diploma or equivalent, be able to lift up to 49 pounds, and be able to pass a background check and a drug screening.

The assessment criteria will take into account each candidate’s work history, education level, volunteer experience, any specialized training and hobbies. They also will need to have a reliable source of transportation, including public (Beacon’s Simulation Center and both work sites are located on regular bus routes).

The final step in Beacon’s assessment process will be a face-to-face meeting at our Simulation Center and...
Center in Tempe. Candidates will be interviewed by Beacon staff and then given a live simulation of the actual job functions of the job they are applying for — either sorting packages or filling orders.

All job openings are regular part-time positions in the Phoenix area that will pay above minimum wage with benefits. They are competitive real jobs in the real world. They are for individuals who are serious about wanting to work. Although there will be job coaching and support from Beacon, each individual hired for these positions will be required to meet and maintain performance expectations.

Beacon’s Project Recruiter, Marcel Mayberry, is already reaching out to referral agencies and organizations that serve people with disabilities on a regular basis, looking for potential candidates. He is offering many great job opportunities for their clients looking for the chance to work. Marcel is happy to hear from anyone interested or wanting more information. He can be reached during business hours at (480) 298-2383.

This is an unprecedented opportunity for the people we serve, and we are very grateful for the confidence our community and this large retailer has shown in our people and programs, and are looking forward to years of adding more and more jobs in local businesses for people with disabilities!

ABOVE (Left to Right): Beacon Group’s dedicated project staff in our Phoenix office includes Todd Weber, Marcel Mayberry, Adriene Gentile, Nichole Walla and John Trujillo.
Beacon wishes to recognize and thank our generous donors for their ongoing contributions. The list below reflects gifts received through June 30, 2017.

**$10,000 and above:**
- Stan & Susan Hilkemeyer
- Connie Hillman Family Foundation

**$2,500 to $9,999:**
- Bank of America Foundation
- Michael & Anna Belton
- Danville Services of Arizona
- Steve & Kathy King
- Lovitt & Touché
- Skip & Lille Whitley
- Doug Wylie

**$1,000 to $2,499 continued...**
- Mission Management & Trust
- Greg & Penni Natvig
- Dee O’Neill
- Sandy & Matt Pevarnik
- Pima County ECAP
- Mark & Ellen Plendl
- Raytheon Charitable Giving
- Marc Simon
- Rick & Deborah Williams
- Cliff & Judy Wood

**$500 to $999 continued...**
- Amazon Smile Foundation
- Kathryn Anderson
- Elena Ardon
- Charles & Jean Ares
- Winifred Baran
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- James & Deborah Barnett
- Deanna & Robert Bates
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- Russ & Sharon King
- Elizabeth Larson
- Robert & Elizabeth Leko

**$1,000 to $2,499 continued...**
- Patricia Anderson
- Arizona G & T Cooperatives
- Rick & Vickie Babitt
- Edward Beggy
- John & Barbara Bentley
- Robert & Schyrell Bower
- Susan Brind
- Natalya & Marc Brown
- Caster & Wheel Supply Company
- John Cho
- City of Tucson — ECAP
- Jim Click Automotive Team
- Stephen Cohen
- Juan Contreras
- Mary Davila
- Josephine Leonard
- Joan Levitt
- Jane & Albert Lockwood
- LeRoy & Ann Loder
- Jon Martell
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- Maureen McFetish
- Scott Meyer
- William Miller
- MITC
- James & Nancy Murtagh
- Kudagai & Swarna Murthy
- Paul Natvig
- Anthony & Ann Marie Nespoli
- James & Dena Orr
- Monica Parry
- Gwen & Dan Pendergrass
- Don Peterson
- Elsa Peterson
- Norma Peterson
- John & Peggy Prugh
- Kenneth Radbill
- D.J. Raemaker

**$500 to $999:**
- Helen & Michael Reynolds
- Theresa Riess
- Shelbee Rivard
- Alex Rodriguez
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- Paul Rosado
- Butch & Denise Ryan
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- Katie Svetlik
- Linda Thrasher
- John Weierman
- Anne & William Weiner
- Angela Weir
- John Wilcox
- Ruth Wylie
- SMG Tucson Convention Center
Former Beacon President and CEO, Steve King and his wife, Kathy, have received some well-earned recognitions for their 35 years as Beacon’s First Family. At the official retirement party in March, Board Chairman, Skip Whitley announced that the Board had approved naming the Beacon Headquarters building the “Steve and Kathy King Community Center” in their honor. Congratulations, and thank you for your service to our organization!

Beacon’s Former President Receives Recognitions

ABOVE: In May, the National Council of SourceAmerica Employers (NCSE) presented Steve King (second from Left) with their Management Excellence Award in recognition of his 42 years of leadership and service to people with disabilities in Iowa and in Arizona.

FROM LEFT: Steve and Kathy King, and Board Chairman Skip Whitley.

ABOVE: Skip Whitley recognized the Kings’ many years of service and dedication to Beacon Group during Steve’s official retirement celebration on March 24, 2017.

BELOW: Beacon’s main headquarters in Tucson has been re-named the Steve and Kathy King Community Center.
Finding qualified candidates for your company’s job openings might be as easy as being in the right place at the right time!

To find a room filled with ability, eagerness, dedication, loyalty and gratitude, be sure your company has a presence at the 2017 Disability & Rehabilitation Employment Awareness Month (D.R.E.A.M.) Job Fair!

Last year, more than 50 local employers interviewed and networked with local residents with disabilities to find dozens of qualified and motivated employees. Now it’s your turn... Register today!

A D.R.E.A.M. Job Fair Success Story!
Southern Arizona Family Services had an employer table at the 2016 D.R.E.A.M. Job Fair in Tucson. They interviewed and hired five individuals that same day in the areas of housecleaning, companion care and direct care workers. They liked the fact that the job seekers were well-prepared with many of them already having their fingerprint cards, CPR certification and first aid certification. The company said it was the best Job Fair that they have attended and all the job seekers showed up for training!