

AUGUST 1998

The WORK nish PLACE



Center of Attention



A Center Industries Employee at work on the M-16 magazine line in Wichita, Kansas.

Center Industries Corporation (CIC) is located in the heartland of the country (Wichita, Kansas) and at the epicenter of employment for people with severe disabilities. It is the employment arm of the Cerebral Palsy Research Foundation in Wichita and currently employs over 100 people of which 75% have disabilities.

FULL RANGE OF SERVICES

Center Industries (CI) was founded by John F. “Jack” Jonas with one goal - to provide support and programs for people with disabilities. Today, his sons, Peter and Pat, run the multi-million dollar operation which provides a diverse range of opportunities for people with disabilities.

On one property, Center Industries is housed in a block of three industrial buildings which contain the manufacturing and administrative arms of the company. Across town, the parent company, the Cerebral Palsy Research Foundation of Kansas, Inc. boasts a small residential community of accessible homes on its 30-acre campus which also includes the Daniel Carney Rehabilitation Engineering Center and a Mobile Rehabilitation Engineering Shop.

REHABILITATION TECHNOLOGY

At the David M. Carney Rehabilitation Engineering Center, engineers and technicians perform on-site evaluations in homes and in the workplace. The staff assists people with disabilities to identify an assistive device or modification to the environment which will enable them to carry out various tasks and live independently. If a needed device or modification can't be purchased, the Center staff has the capability of actually designing such items. The center is equipped with sophisticated CAD computer equipment and specializes in adapted work environments.

The Boeing Good Neighbor Fund was instrumental in providing the funding for a comprehensive fabrication shop at the Carney Center. Several expert

fabricators are available to make individual items of wood, metal and plastic materials.

A registered occupational therapist performs assessments of range-of-motion, mobility and seating and particular attention is given to the work, school or home environments. The therapist specifies posture seating in wheelchairs which can be fabricated and/or installed by the Carney Center's shop personnel.

A state-certified vocational counselor advises people with disabilities on occupational goals and assists them in obtaining employment. A unique vocational evaluation system Work/Abilities provides assessment of work-related capabilities. The Available Motions Inventory (AMI) analyzes hand functions to determine the most competent motions, the optimum orientation of work tasks and the utilization of adaptive equipment. Vocational counseling, vocational evaluation and job placement are all performed as direct services or on a referral basis here. The Carney Center staff has the unique ability to utilize the services of engineers and fabrication technicians.

A separate area called Technology for Learning in the Classroom (TLC) is a cooperative effort of the Cerebral Palsy Research Foundation and the South Central Education Service Center which provides consultation and assistive devices to individuals in the classroom.

The Device Lending Library has a large variety of assistive equipment for use in the home and the workplace which can be borrowed on a trial basis prior to purchase. This is an invaluable service to people with disabilities who can discover first-hand which item best serves their needs before actually purchasing the device. The ABLEDATA device information database is in use at Center.

JWOD PROJECT

The manufacturing division of the Cerebral Palsy Research Foundation, Center Industries Corporation became a focal point for positive employment opportunities with the awarding of a major project through the Javits-Wagner-O'Day (JWOD) Program to manufacture ammunition magazines for the U.S. Army Armament on Chemical Acquisition and



Peter Jonas (left), Center Industries, Jimmy Morgan (second from left) Director of the U.S. Army Armament and Chemical Acquisition and Logistics Activity, talk with Sean McDowell (right), who does a quality check as part of the JWOD M-16 magazine project.

Logistics Activity (ACALA). This project, awarded in 1997, has recently begun operation in earnest and has meant jobs for several dozen people with severe disabilities as a result. The initial award for the project was \$900,000 but has a potential of sales over a five-year period of close to 14 million dollars. The award was made possible in part by the work of Dr. Ken Oscar and Ms. Cean Hartleben who worked to streamline the acquisition process for this item. This action saved valuable time and resources for the government. One secret to success for the project has been close communication and partnership between Ms. Hartleben and Peter Jonas of Center Industries. The award also reduced the government's administrative lead time for future magazine buys from 300 days to just 30 days.

On a tour of the facility and production line recently, Jimmy C. Morgan, Director of the U.S. Army's Armament and Chemical, Acquisition and Logistics Activity (ACALA) said: "We're excited about this partnership and believe it represents a great opportunity for both parties to benefit."

CIC is no stranger to industry and manufacturing. They've managed a production line for Boeing for several years now and continue to receive additional jobs from the airplane manufacturer.