

Community Haven for Adults and Children with Disabilities, Inc. Secures Partnership with Respect of Florida



*Florida Department of Management Services
Approves Haven Industries as “Employment Center”*

SARASOTA, FL – Community Haven for Adults and Children with Disabilities, Inc. Is now certified as an “employment center” from the Florida Department of Management Services – the agency that oversees and ensures Respect of Florida

[Respect of Florida \(RESPECT\)](#) is a state use program that helps participating non-profit organizations around Florida market their products and services produced by people with disabilities to government entities. In June of 2013, John McBride, RESPECT’s Service Contacts Director, was so impressed with **Haven Industries** – a successful occupational day training program that serves over 140 adult clients with disabilities through contracts with over a dozen light manufacturing companies—that he invited **Community Haven** to apply to become an approved employment center with Respect of Florida.

Mr. McBride will work with **Community Haven’s Director of Adult Services, Brad Jones** to identify future procurement opportunities best suited to a work force that delivers consistent, high quality work in light assembly and packaging. Established by the Florida Legislature in 1974, RESPECT operates as a preferential purchasing program for government agencies. The advantage to RESPECT employment centers and government entities is that these products and services are exempt from the competitive bidding process – providing employment to Floridians with disabilities and saving government entities time and money.

In addition to commodities, government entities also use RESPECT’s pre-negotiated service contracts to meet specific needs throughout the state from landscaping and janitorial services to call centers and vehicle cleaning. Haven Industries has recently expanded service based employment opportunities through Haven Landscaping & Janitorial Services, Heavenly Haven Bakery, and Chair Caning.

RESPECT will also provide Community Haven the resources to source new products and services. A recent referral from RESPECT resulted in a contract with a Cape Coral company to package 44,000 pounds of aquatic planting media into 10 and 20 pound bags.

Quick Facts about RESPECT:

- At least 75% of people employed by an applicant must have documented disabilities to become an employment center.
- 50 partner Employment Centers participate in the program throughout the state.
- Average Hourly Wage increased by 1.08% last year.
- 139 Floridians transitioned to Competitive Employment last year.
- 41 Floridians were transitioned to Supported Employment last year.
- Their mission “changing lives one purchase at a time” is similar to Community Haven’s mission to “empower independence and inclusion in all aspects of society for children, teenagers and adults with disabilities one person at a time.”

For more information about RESPECT of FL and Haven Industries, please contact Brad Jones at (941) 355-8808 ext. 221 or email bjones@communityhaven.org.

About Community Haven Community Haven for Adults and Children with Disabilities, Inc. is a 60-year-old (established 1954), community-based human service agency. Annually, 700+ children, teens and adults with physical and developmental disabilities are served. The mission of Community Haven for Adults and Children with Disabilities, Inc. is to empower independence and inclusion in all aspects of society for children, teenagers and adults with disabilities by meeting their needs for therapy, education, socialization, housing, fitness, vocational training, job placement and recreation. This is achieved by creating solutions with specialized services/programs that change the lives of consumers enabling them to become educated, self-sufficient, responsible community members involved in all aspects of everyday life. The organization fosters and promotes equal opportunities, a better quality of life and full involvement in the community for those served.