

State OKs Haven Industries as 'Employment Center'

SARASOTA -- Community Haven for Adults and Children with Disabilities, Inc. is certified as an "employment center" by the Florida Department of Management Services.

Respect of Florida is a state use program that helps participating non-profit organizations market their products and services produced by people with disabilities to government entities. Community Haven is an occupational day training program that serves more than 140 adult clients with disabilities.

John McBride, RESPECT's service contacts director, will work with Community Haven's Director of Adult Services, Brad Jones to identify future procurement opportunities. 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 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 also provides 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.