

Cornucopia, Inc. Annual Report 2015



Photo by Bob Perkoski

Celebrating 40 Years

Message from the President of the Board & Executive Director

In 2015 Cornucopia celebrated its 40th anniversary of providing vocational training services and employment opportunities to people with disabilities. It was also a year of transitions. Scott Duennes retired after nearly 30 years of serving as the organization's Executive Director. Following a regional search, Nancy Peppler, an energetic and creative leader, was hired to lead Cornucopia to new heights by building on its past successes and expanding community resources to support the mission of Cornucopia.

During 2015, we focused on expanding our connections in the community. Our success was measured by experiencing a fabulous fundraising year, increasing the use and reach of social media to tell our story, and growing our events, including our popular \$5 Fridays at Nature's Bin.

We also moved forward on elements of our strategic plan, including a branding and marketing project which will ultimately help us to communicate to our stakeholders the unique story of Cornucopia with clarity and purpose. This is expected to help us serve more people with disabilities, attract more shoppers to Nature's Bin and Nature's Bin Catering, further expand our fundraising, and develop more employment opportunities for the people we serve.

2015 was not without its challenges. Increased competition for grocery sales has impacted revenues at Nature's Bin and changes in funding structures and priorities at the national, state, and local levels resulted in significant shifts in program referrals. These are challenges we will overcome by continuing to be unique and innovative in our approach to delivering services and funding the mission of the organization.

As we look to the future, we will continue to adjust to market changes that affect our vocational services and our social enterprise, Nature's Bin. We will continue to seek the opportunities necessary to continue the fulfillment of our mission while maintaining the financial sustainability of Cornucopia.

We hope that you take the time to read the stories of successes in this annual report. Each decade has seen changes in funding, referral source patterns, and shopping patterns. One thing has remained constant; Cornucopia was founded and exists to provide people with disabilities the workplace experiences, training, and support they need to be able to become and remain employed in the community. As we say every day, "It's why we're here."

Sincerely,

Tony Rospert, President, Board of Trustees



Nancy Peppler, Executive Director



In 2015 Cornucopia celebrated its 40th anniversary. We look back to our grassroots beginning in Lakewood's "Birdtown" neighborhood and remember the challenges and opportunities of those early years. While the community grassroots nature of this organization remains a part of its character and culture, we look forward to the new opportunities in front of us while standing firmly on a mission planted in our rich history.

2015 Report on Vocational Rehabilitation & Employment Services

For 40 years, Cornucopia has been serving Northeast Ohioans with disabilities by providing job training, skills development, paid real-world work experiences, and job placement services to fulfill an integral part of our mission to help people develop the skills necessary to secure and sustain long-term employment. We can look back on our path over the past four decades and reflect upon the many twists and turns that have given us opportunities to learn, develop, and grow. This is not all that different from the journeys that the individuals we serve come across on their pathways to employment, facing both challenges and opportunities along the way.

In 2015, Cornucopia provided services to 219 individuals who had barriers to employment due to cognitive limitations, developmental disabilities, mental health conditions, autism, neurological disorders, mobility issues, and/or speech, hearing, or visual impairments. These individuals received a total of 411 vocational rehabilitation services, often times tapping into more than one service of community-based assessment, job training, and/or placement services.

Our strong relationships with our community partners, Jennings Center, Eliza Jennings, TJ Maxx, Darice, and our own Cornucopia Vocational Training Center and Nature's Bin market have provided our consumers with solid training platforms to experience the challenges of day-to-day work demands while also seeing the many joys that work brings in fulfilling lives. Many times training leads to employment at our program sites. During the course of the year, six former trainees were hired by our partnering site employers after they had an opportunity to observe the individual's work performance and dependability during the training period. In 2015 Cornucopia placed 40 job seekers, many with multiple disabilities, into permanent jobs with Greater Cleveland employers. Sixty percent of these individuals realized success in maintaining their employment over an extended period of time.

Partnering referral agencies, the Cuyahoga County Board of Developmental Disabilities and Opportunities for Ohioans with Disabilities, have continued to collaborate with Cornucopia by referring eligible individuals with disabilities in need of vocational rehabilitation services in their pathway to employment. Additionally, Cornucopia is one of a dozen Ohio agencies that have teamed up to collaborate in helping find jobs for people with barriers to employment. The group is called the Employment Collaborative of Cuyahoga County, and it's overseen by the

Cuyahoga County Board of Developmental Disabilities. Giving employers one point of contact by collaborating across the county widens the pool of potential employees and helps both get better job matches.

As we move forward, we continue to dedicate ourselves to the fulfillment of our mission. Our staff ensures that services are consumer-focused and maintain high quality standards in delivery of those services. It is through these committed and devoted team members and the work that we all do together—our referral counselors, community partners, employers, staff members, board members, donors and community foundations—that we can support people with disabilities in sustaining meaningful long-term employment and ultimately effecting positive change in their lives.



1970s

Cornucopia was founded in 1975 by Brian Daw and Anne McEvoy who shared a dream to create a place where people with and without disabilities could “do with” rather than “do for.” The Bin opened at 12213 Madison Avenue in June and Ben Bonanno was elected president of the first Board of trustees. Cornucopia acquired a thrift shop and a group home in 1977. The Bin moved to a larger space at 12413 Madison Avenue in 1978.

Success through the Decades

Photos by Anne Akers

Completing a Milestone Year | *Patricia G.*



Patricia G.'s employment journey touched many facets of Cornucopia. Patricia first started with Cornucopia in the vocational training program at Eliza Jennings. There Patricia excelled, working side-by-side with Cornucopia staff in the housekeeping, laundry and dietary departments. Through that program, Patricia discovered she had a strong desire to learn culinary skills and seek employment in the culinary field. In September, **2013** Patricia transferred to (and became the first official trainee in) the Cornucopia Vocational Training Center and Catering Kitchen in Lakewood. Under the guidance of her Case Manager, Shelly Bishop, Patricia successfully completed her training earning a Serv Safe certificate and becoming the first graduate to be hired as a Prep Cook at the Vocational Training Center.

When a relationship was developed with Sodexo Food Services to hire Cornucopia's culinary training graduates, Patricia was an ideal candidate for a position as a part-time salad prep cook at the prestigious Key Tower in Cleveland. Patricia's positive attitude, winning personality and successful work experiences through Cornucopia's vocational training programs positioned her well for success in the competitive workplace. We are thrilled to say Patricia was hired at Sodexo at Key Tower in July 2015, where she continues to be successfully employed. Congratulations Patricia!

On the job 29 years ... and counting! | *Mike S.*



Lakewood, Ohio has been the home to Cornucopia and Nature's Bin for 40 years and Mike S. has been a part of Cornucopia's history for over 30 of them. Mike is one of thousands of people who have participated in vocational training through Cornucopia, thereby learning skills that last a lifetime.

Mike completed a vocational training program in **1986** through the original "Bin" on Madison Avenue where he worked alongside Cornucopia Case Manager, Sandy Gross to learn key elements of various jobs in a grocery store and of being a good employee and co-worker. Mike must have learned these skills well because upon graduation from Cornucopia he was hired by Rini-Rego Stop-n-Shop, which became Giant Eagle, and has been working for them ever since. That's 29 years! "I learned that each of us has a role to fill and that every roll is important," Mike explained.

"When I first started at Giant Eagle I used to do price checks and clean ups but my eyesight isn't so good any more so now I mostly collect carts from the parking lot and bag purchases for customers," Mike said.

Mike works 15 - 20 hours per week. When he's not at work Mike is following along with his favorite Cleveland sports teams, especially the Cleveland Indians. Mike stops in to visit the staff now and then at Nature's Bin and reminds us that he is still on the job and going strong.

**We continue to dedicate ourselves to the fulfillment of our mission.
Our staff ensures that services are consumer-focused and maintain high
quality standards in delivery of those services.**

1980s

Cornucopia began farming and bought a six-acre farm in North Ridgeville. Cornucopia sold the thrift shop, added a deli-bakery and two additional group homes in Cleveland. In 1986-1987 Cornucopia began downsizing and focused back on its core training program at The Bin. Other holdings were sold and Scott Duennes was named Executive Director. Cornucopia attained its first national CARF accreditation.

18 Years of Nurturing Beauty | *Bob L.*

Ralph Waldo Emerson said, "The earth laughs in flowers." If that is the case then Bob L. has brought joy and laughter to many gardens! Bob has worked part-time at Puritas Road Nursery since March 1997 where he waters and nurtures flowers in the greenhouse, fills and plants pots, prunes plants and helps out with maintenance. Bob participated in work adjustment at the original Bin in **1976**. He mastered many of the jobs around the store and he learned important soft skills to work successfully in the community. Bob tried out a few different job opportunities early in his working career but the love of plants that was nurtured by his father was his passion.

That passion is clear to his co-workers and to Dale Heyink, owner of the nursery. "Bob is a man of few words but knows where everything is in this place and he knows what needs to be done," Dale said. "We know we can depend on Bob. He takes the bus here and is on time every time." If love blooms where kindness is planted, then love and kindness are plentiful at Puritas Road Nursery.



Success in the Family Business | *Jerry B.*



Jerry B. has been a dependable part of his family's business since he graduated from Cornucopia's vocational training program at Nature's Bin in **1993**. His first job was at Brennan's Market on Madison Avenue in Lakewood. Jerry brought his freshly-minted job skills to the produce department rotating and re-stocking fresh items on the store shelves. He was also responsible for bringing product up from basement storage on a conveyor belt.

After five years at the market on Madison, Jerry moved on to a new position at Brennan's Catering and Banquet Center in Cleveland and has been there ever since. In this position Jerry is an important part of the team that prepares the venue for parties and events. "Jerry works 20 hours a week," commented owner, Sean Brennan. "He sets tables with flatware, cups and saucers, and helps to set up seating in the rooms whether that is for a program with rows of chairs or rounds with chairs for a party or wedding. He also washes dishes and helps the team clean-up after an event. The job can be pretty physical and Jerry is a hard worker." Jerry added, "Some days are harder than others but it's a pretty fun job."

Eight Years of Success | *Natalie O.*

Natalie O. has been a part of the team at Oatey Company since 2007. Based in Cleveland, Oatey distributes over 6,000 plumbing products to businesses in more than 70 countries around the world. Natalie packages parts into boxes in one of the first steps to sending these products on to their final destination.

Natalie came to Nature's Bin in **2006**. She completed a two week work assessment and then began seven months of work adjustment training with Cornucopia Case Manager, Sandy Gross. Much of Natalie's work centered on packaging products for the grocery and produce departments. She learned to package products, heat seal, label and stock. Bagging groceries for customers was Natalie's favorite job. She enjoys people, and her engaging personality made her a welcome addition to every department. Natalie is a high energy person! Besides her work at Oatey, she is involved in many activities and also plays keyboard with her family's band. Well done Natalie!



2015 Financial Summary

Retail Sales at Nature's Bin were \$6 million in fiscal 2015 in an increasingly competitive retail environment.

Vocational Rehabilitation Services earned revenue exceeding \$915,000 in fiscal 2015.

Fundraising/Development raised \$230,000 in fiscal 2015 for Program Support. In addition, more than \$140,000 was raised for capital funding support for Nature's Bin.

Statement of Financial Position

Current Assets

Cash and Cash Equivalents	\$72,659
Accounts Receivable - Net	\$338,093
Inventory	\$395,045
Total Current Assets	805,797

Property, Plant & Equipment

Land	\$297,289
Autos and Trucks	\$83,658
Office Equipment	\$129,674
Store Fixtures	\$127,763
Machinery & Equipment	\$943,209
Leasehold Improvements	\$23,494
Buildings	\$1,621,513
Accumulated Depreciation	(1,380,963)
Total Property, Plant & Equip	\$1,845,637

Endowment	\$167,435
Deposits and other assets	\$6,331
Total Assets	\$2,825,200

Current Liabilities

Accounts Payable	\$268,216
Notes Payable-Current	\$25,989
Accrued Liabilities	\$103,628
Total Current Liabilities	\$397,833

Notes Payable-Long Term	\$19,726
Total Liabilities	\$417,559

Net Assets

Board Designated	\$167,435
Temporarily Restricted	\$152,984
Fund Balance	\$2,087,222
Total Liabilities & Net Assets	\$2,825,200

Statement of Activities

Revenue

Sales Revenue (Net)	\$5,944,295
Cost of Sales	\$3,965,321
Gross Margin	\$1,978,974
Rehab. Revenue	\$915,691

Expenses

Retail Operations	\$395,584
Depreciation & Administrative	\$437,253
Program, Wages, Benefits, PR Taxes	\$2,399,921

Total Operating Expenses	\$3,232,758
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Operating Expenses in Excess of

Operating Revenue	\$(338,093)
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Other Income (Expense)	\$2,642
Net Assets Released from Restrictions	\$30,000
Donations & unrestricted Grants	\$230,489
Interest Expense	\$(8,192)

Total Other Income (Expense)	\$254,939
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Increase in Unrestricted Net Assets	\$(83,154)
Restricted Grants	\$152,984
Net Assets Released from Restrictions (Includes Capital Restricted Grants)	\$(30,000)

Change in Net Assets	\$39,830
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Sources of Revenue

Donations, Grants & Other Sources 7%	Retail Margin 63%
Vocational Services 30%	



2000s

Cornucopia diversified and expanded its training platforms to better meet the needs and interests of its consumers. This led to programs hosted by Eliza Jennings nursing home in Cleveland; Jennings Center for Older Adults in Garfield Heights; the TJ Maxx store in Woodmere; and Darice Wholesale Crafts in Strongsville. Nature's Bin on Lee Road closed in 2004 and Nature's Bin in Lakewood expanded in 2005.

Community Support | Thank you for your support in 2015!

Foundation Donors

AmazonSmile Foundation	First Energy Foundation	Lakewood/Rocky River Rotary Foundation
Anonymous	The Folk Charitable Foundation	Arthur B. McBride, Sr. Family Foundation
The George W. Codrington Charitable Foundation	The Harry K. Fox and Emma R. Fox Charitable Foundation	The Nord Family Foundation
The Cleveland Foundation	The Giant Eagle Foundation	Nordson Corporation Foundation
Community West Foundation	The David H. & Barbara M. Jacobs Foundation	The Reinberger Foundation
Community West Foundation/Presidential Fund	KeyBank Foundation	The Thomas C. and Sandra S. Sullivan Foundation
Deaconess Foundation	The James Kirkwood Fund of the Columbus Foundation	The S.K. Wellman Foundation

Individual and Corporate Donors

Linda Absher	Scott & Marcia Duennes	Mary Kimberly	Michael & Susan Rospert
Anne Adamson	Amy Dwyer-Shute	Donald & Mary Kuehn	Karen Ross
aetna	James & Syndie Eardly	Kurtz Bros. Central Ohio, LLC	Chuck & Kathy Rotuno
ALL Family of Companies	Susan Englehart	Lawler Construction, LLC	Al & Dolores Russo
Anonymous	EY	Ken & Mitzi Long	Jeffrey Sabatine
Apple Growth Partners	Thomas & Claudia Esposito	Micki MacKinnon	Dawn Saddler
Jeffrey Ashby	Larry & Rosemary Faulhaber	Jay & Sally Magee	The Sanson Company
Mark & Cindy Bacon	Forest City Enterprises	Maloney + Novotny	Omid Sattarian
Donald Bain, Jr.	Jim Francisco	Michelle Maniscalco	Herbert Schilling
Barlean's Greens	Garden of Life, LLC	Rich Mazzola	Ellen Schneider
Joshua Basen	Michael & Loren Garruto	Melissa Meany	Joe & Nancy Shucofsky
Joseph & Kathleen Bertsch	Marcy Gasler	Medical Mutual	Lori Sides
Matthew & Susan Beverstock	Gordon & Susan Geiger	Anne Meldrum	Jeffrey & Cheryl Simon
Blue Jay Communications	Geiger's	Donald & Sara Messinger	Skoda Minotti
Bradley Boeckman	Jackie Gerber	<i>In Honor of Tony Rospert</i>	Rick & Andrea Stahl
Ben Bonanno	Shannon Gilfillan	Midwest Box Company	Mike & Wendy Summers
Michael & Bridget Borato	William Ginn	Dave & Judy Mooibroek	Kevin & Amy Switalski
Steven & Susan Bradley	Gold Medal Mortgage Inc.	Donald & Shirley Moore	Lynn Szczepanski
Brian Brennan	Ryan Gorczyca	Kathleen Moran	Chad & Amanda Szczepanski
Tony Brice	James & Susan Gross	Wally Mueller	Elizabeth Tereck
Dale & Cynthia Brogan	<i>In Memory of Alan Laich</i>	Mutual of America Life Insurance	The Cleaning Authority
William Brown	Kenneth & Kathleen Haber	Eustacia Netzel-Hercher	Bill Thompson
Joanne Calkins	Susan Hecht Remer	Edward & Anne Nolan	Thompson Hine
Denise Calvitti	Tim & Julie Holmes	Oatey, SCS	Tomlinson Industries
Zoe Carlisle	Michael Hoopingarner	OEConnection, LLC	Cheryl Turner
David Catan	Huntington National Bank	Bob & Shelly Orlandi	UBS Financial Services, Inc.
Cleveland Industrial Warehouse	Hurricane Labs	Orthopaedia Associates, Inc.	UNFI
Ron & Laura Coill	David & Colette Ide	Jack & Anne Palomaki	UnitedHealthCare
Andrew Costanzo	Dorothy Ipavec	<i>In Honor of Susan Geiger</i>	Walford Industrial Park, LLC
CPI-HR	Jakprints, Inc.	Peoples Bank	Susan Walker
Colleen Craven	Keith & Cheri Jameson	Nancy Peppler	Kyle Weigand
Richard & Maryanne Cullom	Stephen Jenkins	Pet Safety Systems	Dave & Kate Westerfield
Darice, Inc.	JLL Community Connections	John & Marlene Phillips	Edward Wiczulis
Judy DeFrancesco	Dave & Jill Johnson	Robert Phinney	Wiley's Finest
Patrick & Elizabeth DeFrancesco	Julie Johnson	PNC	Mary K. Wilson
Pat & Barbara DeFrancesco	Paul & Mary Johnson	Susan Pray	Paul Wolansky
Jennifer & Denise DeFrancesco/Zerucha	Paul & Toni Johnson	Erica Regan	Walter & Judy Wright
Richard Dempsey	Michael & Janet Jones	Reitenbach Properties, Inc.	Janice Young
William Denihan	Alison Joyce	Barbara Richardson	Marlene Zepkin
Joseph DiFranco	Joyce Buick GMC	Heather Richmond	Kalman Zucker
Paul Dirksen	John & Sherril Kaczmarek	Presbyterian Women at	<i>In Honor of Nancy Peppler</i>
David Dorosy	Daniel Karchmer	Rocky River Presbyterian Church	
Charles Drumm	Patricia Kelley	Tony & Kristy Rospert	

In Honor of Scott Duennes

Joshua Basen	Paul Dirksen	Julie Johnson	Mike & Kate Joyce	Jack & Sally Morgan	Mark Thomas
Michael & Bridget Borato	Gordon & Susan Geiger	Paul & Mary Johnson	Sean Joyce	Kelly Petty	Ronda Van Den Bossche
Tony Brice	Bob Hasman	Alison Joyce	Edward & Nancy Medley	Tony & Kristy Rospert	Susan Walker
Byron & Mary Anne Crampton	Tim & Julie Holmes	Daniel Joyce	Anne Meldrum	Lori Sides	Ron & Jan Zmich
Judy DeFrancesco	Stephen Jenkins				

2010s

Cornucopia recognized the need to expand its kitchen and bought the former McDonald's just 300 feet away. This property was developed into Cornucopia's Vocational Training Center (VTC) and Catering Kitchen where people with disabilities learn practical food-prep skills that prove valuable as they seek employment in the community. In 2015 Scott Duennes retired and Nancy Peppler was named the new Executive Director.

2015 Board of Trustees

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Erica Regan, *A.Shulman Inc.*

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Nancy H. Pepler, Executive Director

Cornucopia's Community-Based Training Locations

Nature's Bin
18120 Sloane Avenue, Lakewood, Ohio 44107

**Cornucopia Vocational Training Center &
Administrative Offices**
18228 Sloane Avenue, Lakewood, Ohio 44107

Eliza Jennings
10603 Detroit Road, Cleveland, Ohio 44102

The Jennings Center
10204 Granger Road, Garfield Heights, Ohio 44125

T. J. Maxx
27149 Chagrin Boulevard, Woodmere, Ohio 44122

Darice, Inc.
21689 Drake Road, Strongsville, Ohio 44149



Cornucopia programs are accredited by CARF,
The Commission on Accreditation of
Rehabilitation Facilities.



**Cornucopia, Inc. is a nonprofit organization that
helps people with disabilities develop skills and
confidence leading to sustainable employment.**