



Where Brighter Futures are Realized

2239 East 55th Street
Cleveland, Ohio 44103-4451

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Vocational Guidance Services is a highly acclaimed, successful, private, not-for-profit, 501(c)(3) vocational rehabilitation agency with 126 years of dedicated experience serving individuals with disabilities or other barriers to employment.

2239 East 55th Street
Cleveland, Ohio 44103-4451
PHONE 216.431.7800
TTY 216.431.0073

359 Lowell Street
Elyria, Ohio 44035
PHONE 440.322.1123

1 Victoria Square, #280
Painesville, Ohio 44077
PHONE 440.350.3651

1260 North High Street
Columbus, Ohio 43201
PHONE 614.291.0233

13102 Triskett Road
Cleveland, Ohio 44111
PHONE 216.476.3020

www.vgsjob.org

VGS' Pathways Newsletter
is published four times a year
for friends and supporters.

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**VOCATIONAL
GUIDANCE
SERVICES**

Where Brighter Futures are Realized

I have abilities

I need an
opportunity

OUR MISSION:
*Preparing People with
Barriers to Employment for
a Brighter Future*

How can you help VGS?
HIRE. ADVOCATE. DONATE. VOLUNTEER.

PATHWAYS

SUMMER 2016



Forrest had unsuccessfully attempted several jobs before he came to VGS, but it was here that he found what he was looking for. Forrest has a significant visual impairment as well as some mental health issues, so he had some obstacles to overcome when it came to finding employment. At VGS Forrest met counselors who worked with him one-on-one, focusing on his strengths and abilities and helping him to determine his vocational goals. Forrest's strengths include his knowledge of computers, his interpersonal skills, and his desire to help. With VGS staff guidance and assistance, Forrest determined that he'd like to find a position in a retail store. He did some additional community based training and received technical support to ensure his success. Forrest applied for a position at Macy's and got the job!

Forrest has worked in the men's department at Macy's for the past several months and he loves his job. With some enhancements to assist him with his visual impairment, Forrest is becoming very successful in his job and has even created a "following" of regular customers who seek him out for his assistance in the store. Macy's has been a wonderful employment partner, allowing VGS to provide enhancements for Forrest, such as placing a magnifying glass at the cashier counter and applying labels to stock items that correspond to an app on Forrest's phone that makes it easier for him to find a color or size in the stock room.

Forrest says that his job at Macy's has changed his life. He's well on his way to his brighter future and we couldn't be happier for him.

Congrats, Forrest!



Dear Friends:

It's hard to believe but we are halfway through 2016 already. And you know what that means...SUMMER!!! If you are at all like me, just saying the word summer conjures up memories of growing up: family cookouts, swimming at our local pool, family vacations and being packed into the back of the station wagon with my sisters, and of course my first summer job. I remember working out in the hot sun, working up a sweat, being exhausted at the end of every day, and at the end of the week getting paid. Having that money in my hand always made the toil of the week become a distant memory and it made me feel like I was a "grown up". I had my money and I could make decisions on how I wanted to spend it...or at least some of it. I had the watchful eyes of Mom and Pops who gave me some guidance to make sure I didn't squander it all. Thinking back on that job and what I learned always makes me smile.

This summer VGS will provide "earning while learning" work opportunities to individuals with disabilities who will be transitioning from high school to adult services in the very near future. For many this will be their very first opportunity to earn a paycheck. It will be their first chance to not only learn the hard skills of a job but the soft skills of how to keep a job. The importance of showing up to work on time in the appropriate work attire. Learning how to properly interact

with co-workers and how to interact with a supervisor. It will be a summer full of learning. A summer that will prepare them for the next phase of their lives and at the same time put some money in their pockets to that they can learn the value of a hard day's work.

From all of us at VGS, we hope that you and your loved ones have a wonderful summer filled with lots of sun and a little relaxation.

Regards,

Robert E. Comben, Jr.
President and CEO



**Acomplishing
Our Goals**

Reaching Our Brighter Futures



We believe that no two people are exactly the same.

Each person has their own strengths and abilities.

VGS is here to help individuals tap into those strengths and build additional skills, as well as to provide opportunities to move off the sidelines and into jobs either through our social enterprises or through community-based employment.

DID YOU KNOW?

Comprehensive services are provided at VGS' East and West side facilities in Cleveland, as well as in Elyria.

Services are also provided at our facilities in Painesville and Columbus.

VGS has expanded its operations to offer services in a total of 26 Ohio counties.

2,626 Individuals

VGS provided services to more than 2,600 individuals in *Cuyahoga County*.

322 Individuals

VGS provided services to more than 320 individuals in *Franklin County*.

288 Individuals

VGS provided services to more than 280 individuals in *Lake County*.

207 Individuals

VGS provided services to more than 200 individuals in *Lorain County*.

CHANGING LIVES & STRENGTHENING OUR COMMUNITIES

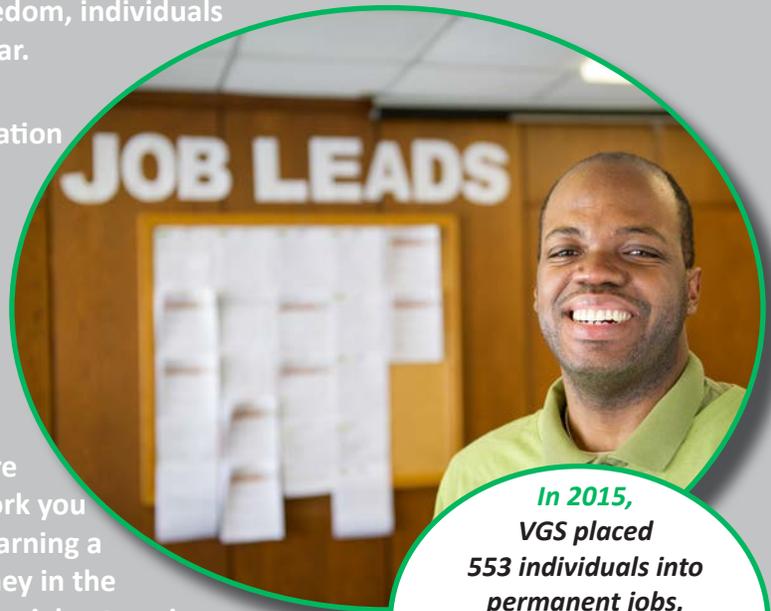
VGS serves nearly 3,600 individuals with physical disabilities, mental disabilities, a history of substance abuse, economic challenges, veterans injured in defense of our freedom, individuals injured on the job, and/or a history of incarceration each year.

VGS provides a comprehensive range of vocational rehabilitation services including work evaluation, work adjustment, skills training, job placement, and social enterprise work opportunities.

The work that VGS does has a ripple effect that can be seen in two ways:

1. **Fueling the local economy** – At VGS we believe that the best way for someone to master and retain the skills they are learning is by doing, and we believe that if you are doing work you should be paid for it. The individuals in our programs are earning a paycheck - some for the first time - and they spend this money in the community. VGS is also a job creator through our multiple social enterprises. *Every week at VGS, 1,000 individuals overcome their barriers to employment and earn a paycheck.*

2. **Breaking cycles** - As individuals develop new skills and work habits they take those skills and habits home and model them for their families and friends.



*In 2015,
VGS placed
553 individuals into
permanent jobs,
273 of whom were
individuals with
significant disabilities.*

How you can help: **HIRE. ADVOCATE. DONATE. VOLUNTEER.**

We all share a common story, one in which our successes were not achieved alone but rather with the support of our loved ones and others.

Today we invite you to provide that support to an individual who is working toward his or her brighter future at VGS.

Please consider making a gift to
VGS' 2016 Annual Fund Campaign
online at www.vgsjob.org.

Should you have any questions about becoming a VGS supporter please don't hesitate to contact VGS' Vice President of Development Adam Ross, at 216.881.6014 or adamross@vgsjob.org.

Together we can change lives and strengthen our community through services that educate, empower, and provide the opportunity to earn a paycheck!

Thank you!

VGS is now CIMS Certified!!!!

Having undergone a comprehensive assessment of its management structure and green cleaning operations by an independent accredited CIMS-GB (Cleaning Industry Management Standard Green Building) assessor, VGS is proud to announce its Certification with Honors to the ISSA Cleaning Industry Management Standard Green Building Criteria.

CIMS is the first consensus-based management standard that outlines the primary characteristics of a successful, quality cleaning organization.

This certification successfully demonstrates VGS' commitment to the delivery of environmentally preferable services designed to meet customer needs and expectations.

For more information about VGS' Custodial Services or for a Custodial Services quote please contact

Dan Nelson – Director of Services

Phone: 216-406-6030

Email: DanNelson@vgsjob.org