

Sierra Group's Workplace Foundation

2007 Annual Report

Reading Promise: We promise that if you spend the 7 minutes needed to read this report (*2 minutes if you thoroughly skim it*), you will ❶ Feel great about yourself, ❷ Make us feel great that we sent this to you, and ❸ learn about something that just might help someone that you know with a disability or injury that has touched their life. If we fail to deliver on any of these promises - please call us and let us know.

Sierra Group's Workplace Foundation has always been guided by two leading principles. First, we recognize that each one of us can be a philanthropist - we can all demonstrate an action that seeks to benefit our fellow man. Our second guiding thought occurred after reading Malcolm Gladwell's *The Tipping Point*. The notion that has guided us in our project selection is that a series of strategically placed small investments could create large scale change. This notion has guided us in our project selection and has served as the lens which will further refine our efforts for 2008-09. As you will see, our resources and gifts are given out, in hundreds and not millions of dollars - we believe that a series of small investments does affect lifelong improvements.

In 2007, the Foundation supported the following projects:

Employment Incentives: Our most ambitious project, Employment Incentives supports a website (www.employmentincentives.com) that serves as a unique portal for businesses that hire or retain employees with disabilities. In the past 12 months, the site has had over 740,000 visitors. We currently receive more than 80,000 unique visitors per month. They come because



we have organized Federal and State hiring incentives and programs in a business friendly, accessible manner. In addition to the Federal materials, the site currently has tax credit, capital equipment, training, and general funding information available for the following thirteen states:

- California
- Colorado
- Delaware
- Florida
- Massachusetts
- Nebraska
- New Jersey
- Ohio
- Oregon
- Pennsylvania
- Rhode Island
- Tennessee
- Texas

Those who have used our web portal report that they have secured over \$470,000 in various Federal and State tax credits, deductions, and training offsets during the past year.

Donation Request: Your gift of \$2500 will allow us to add and maintain information for another state. Sponsor a state today.

The Breakfast Club: Board President Janet Fiore and her business ally Bruce Sham (VP Sales for Mass Mutual/First Financial) lead this bi-monthly roundtable in Philadelphia. Business leaders such as Ed McBride from Exelon, Tony Gallagher from PAETEC, and others meet to share their business connections as they viewed resumes and video-taped interviews from area job seekers with disabilities. The power of the personal connections from this group resulted in 10 people with disabilities finding employment while 6 became connected with meaningful internships. Harvesting the power of relationships over coffee and eggs has forever changed the lives of these 16 people. The efforts of the Breakfast Club were extended by weekly meetings of the Job Club. Every week 10-14 job-seekers with disabilities met to help each other stay motivated while preparing for interviews and job fairs.

Donation Request: Your gift of \$300 will allow us to sponsor a Breakfast Club meeting in Washington, Philadelphia, Baltimore, or Wilmington.

Individual Micro-Grants: This past year, the Foundation gave \$6,364.00 to 22 people. Admittedly the amount to each individual was small, but each grant allowed for a wonderful outcome.

For example:

We provided \$500.00 to Octavia, which allowed her to keep her job as a childcare worker by providing her funding to buy a crib with collapsible sides, While Octavia had already received government funded training and education totally approximately \$12,000, the purchase of this accommodation by the Foundation, allowed this child care worker with multiple sclerosis to have a much needed work tool.

We provided multiple grants to cover transportation expenses for those newly employed, allowing nine people with disabilities to take a job and show up for work during the first two weeks before their first paycheck would arrive!

Donation Request: Your gift of \$100 will allow us to provide someone with a transportation voucher for a new job.

Recycle IT: Partnering with Orion Communities in Phoenixville, PA, 25 families including people with disabilities, in Chester and Montgomery Counties now have Pentium 3 computers with Windows 2000 and Microsoft Office. We secured the volunteers and components to rebuild these systems. Access to technology is no longer a dream but rather a reality for these recipients.

General Research: This year we participated in 17 ongoing meetings on disability and employment and shared this information with our network of partners and contacts. This is an important part of our commitment. Developing, learning, and sharing information is one of the ways that we seek to change the unemployment rate for people with disabilities. Check out our website for an array of White Papers and policy updates of interest to our cause.

Donation Request: Your gift of \$500 will sponsor the writing and dissemination of a White Paper by our Foundation staff researcher.

Our Team:

We have 5 part-time employees. Our team handles the administrative, research, web (Employment Incentives), and program needs that our projects demand. We are: Michael Fiore (Executive Director), Eliot Spindel (Web Specialist), Maria Dewan (Researcher), Beatrice Sylla (Program Specialist), and Glenn Moses (Program Specialist).

Together with a host of volunteers and a highly influential board of directors who share their time and talents, Sierra Group's Workplace Foundation stays on track and moving forward. Board members include, Skip Simonds, *Director of Research*, Melody Templeton, *Director of Corporate Relations*, Frank Henninger, *Higher Education Liaison*, Suzanne Padula, Mary Flynn, Joe Padula, Denise Barnes, Jeff Horner, Matt Murphy and co-founder Janet Fiore who currently chairs the Board.

Our Finances:

Our funding in 2007 was in large part provided by Janet and Michael Fiore and their consulting firm, The Sierra Group. In past years we have applied for and received funding from state and Federal appropriations as well as from other foundations that have supported our efforts. We anticipate securing more funds for our activities in 2008.

This year, given the incredible popularity of our Foundation's web portal, and the debut of our national forum, '*One More Way*', we anticipate a year filled with fundraising that supports our ability to reach and touch the lives of more and more people with disabilities, including injured veterans and their spouses.

Profit & Loss for 2007

Contributions Income	<u>\$34,315.95</u>
Expenses	
Auto/Travel	\$584.39
Bank Charges	\$208.44
Micro-grants	\$6,364.00
Insurance	\$105.00
Internet Costs	\$600.00
Dues & Subscriptions	\$1,579.24
Payroll	\$12,799.77
Office Supplies	\$3,279.44
Professional Fees	\$252.00
Program Expenses	\$8,885.97
Total Expenses	<u>\$34,658.28</u>
Net Income	<u>(\$342.33)</u>

Balance Sheet as of 12/31/07

Assets	
Checking/Savings	<u>\$5,065.38</u>
TOTAL ASSETS	<u>\$5,065.38</u>
LIABILITIES & EQUITY	
Payroll Liability	<u>\$635.92</u>
Total Current Liabilities	<u>\$635.92</u>
Equity	
Opening Bal Equity	\$3,000.00
Retained Earnings	\$1,771.79
Net Income	(\$342.33)
Total Equity	<u>\$4,429.46</u>
TOTAL LIABILITIES & EQUITY	<u>\$5,065.38</u>

With your support, the Foundation will consolidate our energies around three (3) areas for 2008. They are:

1. **Employment Incentives** (www.employmentincentives.com). The Foundation will seek to add 9 new states and increase the amount and value of supportive content on this site to attract **200,000 hits per month**. This is an ambitious goal, but the strength of the testimony offered by those who use this resource tells us



that people with disabilities are being hired and retained. And that is, after all, the goal of our efforts. **Your gift of \$2500 will allow us to ADD and maintain another state!**

2. The ***One More Way*** collaborative. This effort will combine the lessons learned from the Breakfast Club, the Job Club, Recycle IT, and several decades of industry experience to overcome the natural barriers of competition among providers in order to deliberately and proactively drive up the numbers of people with disabilities who become employed. This national program will in fact be 'one more way' to bring everyone together to do together what historically, has not been done as each of us act alone. *One More Way* will be 'one more way' to see that job seekers with disabilities - starting with veterans, get connected to the people, the programs and the specific businesses that are out there looking to work with them. Because we have learned that it's all too easy to get lost in the process, *One More Way* will shape the future regionally and around the nation by creating a remarkable and visible network that can serve the most important growth industries of the day.



With more than 15,000 national service providers and programs in place in our network to help people with disabilities, *One More Way* partners with businesses and agencies to help them access and coordinate these existing resources. In doing so, we create one more way to allow better employment outcomes for today and tomorrow. *One More Way* will create for its members a safe haven, where conversations can occur that side step the bureaucracy and confusion that often exists in programs and large hiring practices. Participants will find the true power of sharing information, contacts, and resources freely as employment opportunities for people with disabilities are developed. **Your gift of \$10,000 or more will help to sponsor the growth of this collaborative. Additional ways to participate are available.**

3. **Individual Grants.** The Foundation will continue to fund the needs of those with disabilities seeking their first job. Having money for transportation, parking, lunch, and a suitable wardrobe continues to be a difference that we are honored to make. **Your targeted gift of \$100 or more can and will be used to enhance someone's workplace needs.**

Our Request:

Beyond the obvious (please send a tax deductible donation), we ask that you let friends, family members, and business associates read this annual report. Disability and injury knows no economic, racial, political, or social boundary. Every one of us knows a person that has had their life touched by disability.

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Maybe it's a co-worker's kid with autism or maybe it's a neighbor's sister-in-law with multiple-sclerosis - the point is that disability and need are all around us.

In fact, it touched our lives dramatically in 2004-2005 when Janet fought and won her battle with breast cancer and avascular necrosis of her hips. This humbling, frightening, eye opening experience allowed us to get an up close, personal crash course on how disability impacts life and work, and how others *react* to it.

So be forewarned, our board, and our loved ones are fired up with renewed enthusiasm to use all that we have so that the resources offered by our Foundation are there to help you or your loved ones.

I hope that you have enjoyed our 2007 Annual Report. Please call or email with any questions.

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