

Careers Industries
Enriching the lives of people with disabilities

Quarterly News

SUMMER 2012



Greater Grain: Born Out of Need and Mission

In just a few short months Careers Industries' latest venture—Greater Grain Gluten-Free Goods—has become the “go to” grocery store for the growing number of Racine County residents who either must eat a gluten-free diet or desire more natural food choices. Greater Grain is Racine County's first store to offer primarily gluten-free foods, as well as other specialty items including organic meats and dairy and Wild Alaskan salmon.

Since opening March 1, store inventory has grown from nearly 400 products to more than 600 mostly due to customer suggestions. More than 1,000 customers have made purchases. Careers Industries executive director Joe Greene has both a personal and professional stake in the specialty grocery store's success.

With the threat of more budget cuts in our uncertain economy, Careers Industries has been actively pursuing additional business opportunities and revenues to increase wages and services for our participants, add to our bottom line and make the organization less reliant on public dollars. The specialty store, born out of both business and personal need, presented itself as perfect opportunity to achieve those goals while benefiting the surrounding Racine community at the same time.

Nearly 21 million people have celiac disease or some form of sensitivity to gluten, a protein found in all foods and products containing wheat, barley and rye. The disease affects as many as three million Americans, including Joe Greene's wife. The only treatment is a lifelong gluten-free diet. Many people are gluten-free out of necessity, like Joe's wife, but a growing number are gluten-free by choice, as evidence emerges that this diet may treat other medical conditions and living gluten-free simply makes one feel better.

The U.S. market and demand for gluten-free foods and beverages has grown to more than \$6 billion in sales. To meet the growing demand, most grocery stores now carry some gluten-free products but until Greater Grain *(Continued on page 4)*



Greater Grain carries more than 600 products.

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Director of Fulfillment Services—Gary Goodsell

Director of Internal Services—Vicki Maki



Veronica proudly shows off her temporary tattoo and participants learn the moves to the Electric Slide at the summer picnic.

Director's Message

Executive Director Joe Greene

Besides moving into our new facility, much has occurred since our last newsletter. While we continue to excel at those things we do best, there are many persistent and growing challenges affecting persons with disabilities and the organizations that serve them.



A major concern is the budgetary pressure and/or lack of oversight of the Managed Care Organizations (MCO's) that control the flow of funding for our participants. We have seen agency day service programs (similar to our IDS program) cut and the requirement to provide such services transferred to group homes where participants live. This has led to some organizations to completely close down their residential programs because the State has reduced funding to such a low level that services are unsustainable.

Across the state we have seen many persons with disabilities lose their funding if they choose to remain with an agency such as ours instead of working in the community. While a growing number suggest agencies such as Careers Industries should close and ALL persons we serve should be employed in the community, realistically that's not feasible. Like all of us without disabilities, one size does not fit all. Many of the adults with disabilities we serve are not ready and/or able to succeed on a permanent basis in a competitive, community-based job.

We believe the ideal scenario, and what currently exists, is a continuum of services that allows each person to reach their maximum potential. Careers Industries has been providing this continuum—this choice—for over 40 years and we will continue to do so. We will not sit idly by and quietly let others make decisions on how best to serve a person that they may see only twice a year.

Working with parents and caregivers, Careers Industries will continue to address the injustices taking place that, if left unchecked, will have dramatic consequences for the persons that need our support the most. We are committed to assuring that budgets, mismanagement and perceptions do not ignore our most vulnerable people and eliminate their ability to choose how they can best contribute to our community.

Sincerely, Joe Greene

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "William J. Greene". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized 'W' and 'G'.

Partners in Employment Participants Find New Jobs

If you shopped at Greater Grain Gluten-Free Goods earlier this year or dined lately at Top Dog Hot Dogs, then you may have met Matt Pierson, one of two recent Partners in Employment (PIE) program success stories. PIE helps participants and others with developmental or similar disabilities find jobs and internships that match their employment interests.

Matt started work at Top Dog, one of his favorite restaurants, in May and Mike Kumbier started his new job at Waterford's Cotton Exchange restaurant in June. Both were placed in paid internships first to gain the experience necessary to help them find permanent jobs. The Department of Vocational Rehabilitation funds the internships providing additional value for the internship provider.

Mike interned first at the Cotton Exchange. After Careers Industries job developer Sue McKeown spent time learning about his interests and capabilities, she found that jobs with repetitive tasks are best suited for him. Family and community contacts connected Sue and Mike to the restaurant.

After a tour and looking at what needs might fit his skills, Mike started his internship in February filling cups with coleslaw and tartar sauce for the Friday fish fry. Everyone was so impressed with Mike's progress that he added breading fish to his tasks. When the person responsible for breading fish left, Mike was offered a permanent job.

"Each week, we've been adding a little bit to his responsibilities. It's very satisfying to see him succeed and it's just great to have him here," says Cotton Exchange co-owner Dan Prailes.

Adds McKeown, "It's a great human service to give someone who has had some challenging situations an opportunity, as the Cotton Exchange has done with Mike. While there was somewhat of a learning curve for co-workers because Mike communicates only using a keyboard, we support PIE participants on the job until everyone is comfortable."

At Top Dog, Matt Pierson draws on his strong people, customer service and organization skills honed during past PIE work experiences including his recent internship with Greater Grain.

"We had a need going in to summer, our busiest time of year, to help keep things fully stocked and cleaned, as well as to have someone maintain our lobby area," said Top Dog Owner Caleb Robinson. "Matt does a great job and always goes above and beyond, and Careers Industries' provides support and on-the-job training. It's really a win-win situation."

Matt is doing so well that he has started assisting Robinson with similar tasks at his newest venture, Smok'd on the Water.

"Matt is very proud of his work," says Trish Wimer, his Careers Industries job developer. And, so are we.



Matt Pierson at Top Dog Hot Dogs.

"Matt does a great job and always goes above and beyond"

Top Dog Owner Caleb Robinson



Mike Kumbier at the Cotton Exchange.

Positive Reviews for Greater Grain

Even though Greater Grain Gluten-Free Goods has only been open for a few months, the reviews and feedback we've received from both media and customers has been overwhelmingly positive.



"THUMBS UP: Hold the rye. And, the wheat and Barley. Even if you don't need gluten-free to combat celiac disease, you do some good by making a few purchases at Greater Grain Gluten-Free Goods."

Racine Journal Times Editorial

"I'm really enjoying the corn pastas. My husband is not affected by Gluten, but he's having two and three helpings. Tonight I made some with the Alfredo sauce mix and added chicken bits and it was GREAT!"

Customer post on Facebook

"My husband, children and I are all GF for medical purposes. We appreciate having such a great little store available to us with great prices. We found many things to buy. "

Customer e-mail

"Because they have already been eating gluten-free for eight years—they are pros on knowing what's "in" on the GF market."

Celiac in the City blog

Greater Grain Continued from Front Page

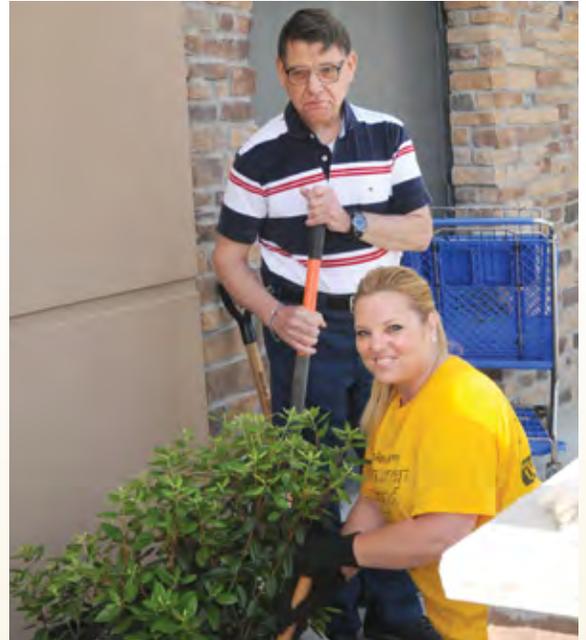
opened its doors, Racine County had a limited selection and availability. Consumers who needed or wanted to purchase gluten-free often had to travel longer distances or go to several different locations to meet their needs. Joe and his wife often drove to Milwaukee's west suburbs for their gluten-free goods.

That's changed now with the opening of Greater Grain Gluten-Free Goods. The specialty grocery brings a convenient Racine-area gluten-free shopping option. Additionally, Greater Grain provides customers the opportunity to support Career Industries with every purchase. As the store's tagline implies, shopping at Greater Grain is good for the body and for the soul.

As the first supervised, hands-on retail training site for persons with disabilities in Racine County, Greater Grain becomes an important component of Careers Industries' Partners in Employment (PIE) program. PIE helps participants and others with developmental or similar disabilities find jobs and internships that match their employment interests. The objective of the Greater Grain training experience is to serve as a stepping stone to a permanent retail job in the community. On page 3, read about how Matt Pierson progressed from Greater Grain intern to "hire" at local eatery Top Dog Hot Dogs.

Whether or not you eat gluten-free, we promise you'll find something yummy at Greater Grain.

New Beginnings



We continue to spruce up our beautiful new building. Participant Mike Strueder and staff member Shannon Bardega tend to the new landscaping with donated plants from Shopko. That's just the beginning. Stay tuned for news about a new corporate gardening program.

Summer Fun

Integrated Day Services (IDS) participants are big baseball fans with three Brewers games on their summer schedule. Participants have also visited Great America and have gone fishing.



Tyler Weidman shows his team spirit at recent Brewers game.

Fulfillment Services Begins Work for Caterpillar, Inc.

Our Fulfillment Services division recently finished their first run for Caterpillar, Inc.'s South Milwaukee operation. The company supplied a four foot wide roll of filter material that our participants cut into various sizes for the company's electric motors. We cut about 500 filters, enough to last the company for one month. Our participants will continue to provide this service monthly with the number potentially doubling or tripling. Board member John Clapper referred Careers Industries to Caterpillar.

Other work that has kept our Fulfillment Services participants busy include four new re-packaging jobs for Andis in which FS participants unpacked contents, labeled product and repacked the materials into a new gift box. We've also resumed work with North American, our can liner partner, to package bulk-shipped taco trays into heat-sealed sleeves. For Custom Services Unlimited, our participants assembled and packaged a small amount of components and literature into a master box for final shipment.

Work with Cordstrap in which participants package metal buckles for cargo securing systems remains strong and steady.



Bob Bradley assembles literature for Custom Services Unlimited.

Smooth Wheels

United Commercial Travelers—Racine Council 337 recently donated two wheelchairs to Careers Industries Integrated Day Services Program (IDS). These wheelchairs will allow IDS participants who have difficulty walking longer distances the opportunity to participate in more community outings. We also received additional wheelchair support from United Seating & Mobility which provided a wheelchair wash and inspection.



Participants try new wheel chairs from United Commercial Travelers-Racine Council 33.



United Seating & Mobility provided wheelchair washes and inspections recently.

Thank You Donors

Our sincere thanks to all of the recent donors that have seen fit to contribute to Careers Industries. Please let us know if we have inadvertently left off your name!

In memory of Michele Smetana:
 Frances Smetana
 Bill & Linda Seidel
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Mark Your Calendars

Aug. 5
 Starving Artist Fair at Gateway Technical College, Racine,

Aug. 12
 Knights of Columbus Arts & Crafts Fair, Echo Park, Burlington

Aug. 16
 IDS Sailboat Ride August 16

Aug. 22
 IDS Brewer Game August 22





The Racine CARE (Careers Advocates for the Rights of Everyone) Committee models new t-shirts available for sale.

Your Words

“The Careers’ team has provided my residents care, love, and support for the many years we have worked with your facilities (Racine & Burlington). You provide attention, positive structure and we are very happy to have you there to assist our residents!!!!!! Thanks so much and give everybody a pat on the back.”

Misty Gilbert, Residential Care Coordinator, Willow Run Adult Family Group home

Your support is welcome...

- Here is my gift of \$_____ made payable to
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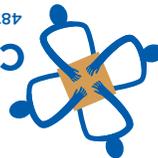
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**Careers Industries enriches
the lives of people with
disabilities through work,
care and community.**

