

TIBH FOCUS

ON EMPLOYMENT FOR TEXANS WITH BLINDNESS AND OTHER DISABILITIES

TIBH INDUSTRIES NEWSLETTER XXIII • SEPTEMBER 2010

Tony Thompson is Building Memories At Horizon Industries in Tyler

Though totally blind, Tony Thompson possesses a valuable gift—his memory. He can remember any date, like the year a certain song reached the billboard charts' number one spot and most of his colleagues' birthdays. Thompson now has a new date he will never forget—December 13, 2009, the day he was named Horizon Industries' employee of the year, recognizing his 23 years of dedicated service.

"It definitely put a big smile on my face," Thompson said.

"I enjoy coming to work," Thompson said. "My team relies on me to do my job, and I count on them. We help each other out."

Originally from Lufkin, Texas, Thompson—who was born blind—has nine brothers and four sisters. He moved alone to Austin at the age of seven, attending the Texas School for the Blind and Visually Impaired. During his time there, he learned to read braille and developed a love of the Bible.

Thompson graduated in 1986 and moved to Tyler to live closer to his family.

Through a partnership between TIBH Industries, Inc. and Horizon Industries, Thompson now works as an assembler and packer for Horizon Industries. He has mastered virtually every job within the organization, including press board binder assembly, identification badge manufacturing and serpentine belt

creation for military transport vehicles. He also bands wiping towels to place on the conveyor belt.

Horizon Industries launched in 1976 as East Texas Lighthouse for the Blind. Its mission is to provide employment to people who are blind or visually impaired. Horizon Industries currently manufactures a broad line of wiping products ranging from delicate soft tissue towels to rugged reinforced biodegradable rayon. Applications vary between janitorial and high tech laboratories to food service, transportation and manufacturing industries. Horizon Industries also capably converts products to meet customer specifications and offers custom packaging and private labeling. Eighty percent of its employees are blind or visually impaired.

"I enjoy coming to work," Thompson said. "My team relies on me to do my job, and I count on them. We help each other out."

"Tony is dependable and always willing to do whatever you ask of him," James Moreland, Thompson's production supervisor at Horizon Industries, said. "He is here every single day. As a matter of fact, you have to make Tony take a day off from time to time."

Thompson's supervisors attribute his success to his winning attitude.

"Not only is he always willing to help out, but he does so with a smile on his face," Bruce Hendon, a crew leader at Horizon Industries, said. "He is always happy and cheerful and gets along well

with his team. He is a true pleasure to work with."

"I truly appreciate the work Tony does," Kenneth Bambeck, production supervisor at Horizon Industries, said. "Sometimes I close my eyes and try to do



Tony Thompson stands proudly in front of Horizon Industries' manufacturing machines.

things I normally do, and it helps remind me of the tremendous challenges he has overcome."

Thompson is a member of the National Federation of the Blind (NFB), a group that works to improve blind people's lives through advocacy, education, research, technology and programs encouraging independence and self-confidence.

Maybelle DeMore, Texas Woman's University, Learns Life-Changing Lesson Through Her Work



The benefit is twofold. In addition to providing jobs for Texans with disabilities, DeMore said she reaps both professional and personal rewards.

"We're not required to secure bids; the TIBH staff is approachable and helpful in selecting products, and they guarantee them," DeMore said. "Not to mention TIBH products are high-quality."

DeMore, whose 24-year-old granddaughter has Down Syndrome, also understands the importance of achievement.

"My granddaughter has gotten so much out of the Special Olympics, for example, and I see how getting out of the house has given her a lot and helped her achieve so much," she said. "I have the opportunity—at work—to do that for other people."



"Her enthusiasm for the project is infectious," Nancy Cinnater, who works in Texas Woman's University purchasing, said. "She trained me and has gotten me on board wholeheartedly."

"She is devoted to TIBH and to the cause," Diane Creed, a Texas Woman's University buyer and current State Use coordinator, said. "She is always stressing the importance of the program to others."

DeMore's passion and persistence certainly is paying off. Currently, Texas Woman's University is building a green-certified campus in Dallas, scheduled for a January 2011 completion date.

The university is planning to purchase "environmentally-friendly" maintenance products through the State Use Program.

Reflecting on her service, DeMore said, "My heart is in the right place, I do believe." It seems that many others, including her Texas Woman's University colleagues, would agree.

After 19 years of dedicated service to Texas Woman's University, Maybelle DeMore recommitted her occupational initiatives after attending a TIBH luncheon honoring Texas workers with disabilities.

"I went to a luncheon in Dallas, and it touched my heart to see the workers and their relationships with their colleagues and supervisors," DeMore, a Texas Woman's University purchasing supervisor, said. "The workers were recognized, and the satisfaction they were getting from it was uplifting. They just beamed."

Texas Woman's University has purchased through the State Use Program since its 1978 inception, providing meaningful employment for Texans with disabilities. The university acquires truckloads of Skilcraft paper, office supplies, laboratory gloves, cleaning supplies and janitorial products. The university has also utilized many temporary employees through the program, and has hired several permanent employees. "We are greatly pleased with the temporary staffing services program," DeMore said.

DeMore's charges include decentralized purchasing, vendor advising and locating, and order processing. She has served as the State Use coordinator for eight years.

"Maybelle is earnest about following the appropriate procedures," Jane Christiansen, Texas Woman's University supply store room manager, said.

While DeMore's first concern is university compliance, she says, "As I learned more about the program, I also learned about the heart and feel of it. It takes them [Texans with disabilities] outside of their families and caregivers and allows them to interact with other people. In some cases, they get to go to other sites and experience, for example, a university setting."

"I went to a luncheon in Dallas, and it touched my heart to see the workers and their relationships with their colleagues and supervisors," said DeMore.



Pat Engleman, customer service manager for TIBH Industries, presented a check to Jerry Diaz and Lois McCook at the DreamBuilders Luncheon demonstrating the company's ongoing support.

TIBH IN THE COMMUNITY

TIBH Industries, Engleman Support Recording for the Blind and Dyslexic

On March 26, 2010, nearly 50 people attended the Recording for the Blind & Dyslexic (RFB&D) DreamBuilders Luncheon at Austin's Renaissance Hotel. TIBH Industries—and its customer service manager, Pat Engleman—were recognized for their financial contributions to RFB&D. The event raised more than \$64,000.

RFB&D is a national nonprofit boasting more than 61,000 accessible audiobook titles. The organization works with leading publishers and technology innovators to bring materials to people who cannot read standard print effectively due to visual impairment, physical disability or learning disability.

"I have worked with the disabled community for the past 25 years," Engleman said. "When I realized how many children are teased because they have difficulty reading, and when I saw how hard it can be to overcome such a disability, I truly was heartbroken. It affects young people's self esteem significantly."

Available in every grade level and most subjects, RFB&D textbook and literature titles are accessible nationwide. In addition to the classics, RFB&D's digital library provides current, state-adopted text editions, ensuring version consistency for all students.

TIBH Industries has supported RFB&D, in varying capacities, since 2002.

"This support helps students access general education curriculum at the same time as their peers, work on assignments independently and actively participate in the reading and learning process, meet higher academic goals, and achieve academic success," Linda Nichols, the southwest region of RFB&D's area director, said.

"I am glad that TIBH recognizes the good this organization is doing in the community and has been able to help through the years," Engleman said.

Engleman also served on the board of directors (RFB&D's Texas Unit) in 2004.

Texas Council on Purchasing from People with Disabilities Meet and Greet

In June, members of the Texas Council on Purchasing from People with Disabilities went on-site in Corpus Christi, participating in events prior to their quarterly meeting.

On June 17, council members and TIBH staff toured the South Texas Lighthouse for the Blind. The tour, led by Nicky Ooi, afforded council members the opportunity to see the Lighthouse's products and meet the employees with visual impairment behind the production.

That evening, a meet and greet prefaced the June 18 council meeting.

"This was my first time to attend the meet and greet and council meeting," Rose Soto, marketing and job developer for the Corpus Christi State Supported Living Center, said. "It was an honor to receive the council in town, and, honestly, I attended because these events came to me. Before the opportunity to enjoy these experiences personally, I did not understand fully all that goes into running this program."



Fred Weber, Jr. (President and CEO, TIBH Industries) speaks with a group, including Raette Smith Hearne (Director, Agency Administration, CPA) and Lena Coleman (Executive Director, LC Foundation, Inc.) at the meet and greet on June 17.



Left to right: Fred Weber, Jr. (President and CEO, TIBH Industries), John Luna (Chair, Texas Council on Purchasing from People with Disabilities), Texas State Representative Abel Herrero, Yadira Gonzales, Rose Soto and Julius Brigham.



Members of the Texas Council on Purchasing from People with Disabilities and TIBH staff members toured the South Texas Lighthouse for the Blind in Corpus Christi on June 17.

TIBH Central Store Hosts Open House

On July 1, the TIBH Central Store hosted an open house, not only allowing customers a first-hand look at its product line, but also affording staff the chance to meet those backing the successful State Use Program.

“It’s important to educate customers about the program,” Lee Huston, San Antonio Lighthouse for the Blind, said.



“This program enables customers to buy what they need, all while giving back to people with disabilities.”

More than 100 customers from various state agencies and political subdivisions attended the open house.

Representatives, accounting for more than a dozen Community Rehabilitation Programs (CRPs), were able to personally thank their customers.

“The main reason we buy from TIBH is convenience,” Phyllis McKenzie, a Texas Commission on Environmental Quality executive assistant, said. “We come and pick up products and have them right away, with no waiting—and the products are exactly what we’re looking for.”



“This is a great program,” Charlotte Craig, Texas Medical Board, said. “It’s nice to see people being able to work who otherwise might not be provided the opportunity.”



Pat Engleman greets guests during the TIBH Central Store’s annual open house event.



More than 100 customers from various organizations attended the open house.



The staff was proud to give attendees a first-hand look at TIBH Central Store products.



Don’t forget to contact information@tibh.org for your free sample of a clam clip dispenser from the San Antonio Lighthouse.

Health & Human Services Commission Vendor Fair

The Texas Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC) Vendor Fair was held May 7, 2010, in Austin. This year's vendor fair featured nearly 20 CRPs offering products and services.

"It is important that we not only have the opportunity to meet with our customers, but also the direct line staff who actually uses what we have," Tereva Clawson, EXPANCO sales manager, said.

The vendor fair allows HHSC buyers to visit with TIBH's Community Rehabilitation Programs (CRPs) and see, firsthand, the items those programs and their employees with disabilities develop and distribute. It also enables CRPs to showcase and promote new products and services, with many hoping to maintain or expand current contracts or acquire future ventures.

"It gives us the opportunity to find products that would not have necessarily been on our radar had we just been shopping from the catalog," Regina Blye, a customer representing the Texas State Independent Living Council, said.

"As always, HHSC was a wonderful vendor fair host," Roxy VanLoo, TIBH State sales manager, said. "I thank them for their hospitality and support of the State Use/WorksWonders Program."

"This is the best way to reach our customers. We come to their neighborhood so they don't have to come to us. It makes sense."

--Lee Huston,
National Sales Manager,
San Antonio
Lighthouse for the Blind



The Lighthouse of Houston displays its products at the Vendor Fair.



An attendee flips through a catalog and discusses products.



The Vendor Fair allowed one-on-one buyer and CRP interaction.

A Message from President and CEO Fred M. Weber, Jr.

It is hard to believe that nearly a year has passed, but, with September

here, TIBH Industries, Inc. is once again ready to honor and celebrate our Artie Lee Hinds Award nominees, CRPs, customers and all 2010 Annual Dinner and Expo attendees. As previous years' participants might agree, these events produce a sense of togetherness and camaraderie, while truly fostering the "can-do" spirit triumphed by our partnerships. I want to thank everyone involved in the dinner and expo—from the CRPs and their nominees to the TIBH board, the Texas Council and our customers—for the dedication and support needed to create meaningful opportunities for Texans with disabilities. We look forward to seeing you all at these events.

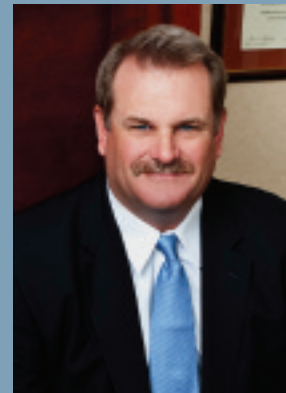
Beginning in May, our customers have been able to utilize the "punch out" system upgrade through Smart Buy. This development results from countless programming hours and features up-to-date information, pictures, thorough descriptions and a user-friendly search engine. Thank you all for your patience, and I would like to extend special recognition to TPASS and the Comptroller's Office for their time and commitment.

We hope that you have noticed our Texas State Use Spotlight mailers. With thousands of goods offered through the State Use WorksWonders Program, TIBH is highlighting some of the quality products and services available for purchase. We look forward to best meeting your contract needs.

Thanks again for your continued support.

Sincerely,

Fred M. Weber, Jr.





Non-Profit Org.
U.S. Postage
PAID
Austin, Texas
Permit No. 703

1011 East 53rd 1/2 Street
Austin, Texas 78751
Phone 512-451-8145
Fax 512-451-0824
www.tibh.org

Address Service Requested



MARK YOUR CALENDAR FOR THESE IMPORTANT DATES IN 2010

- **TCPD Pricing Subcommittee Meeting**
September 3, 2010
Austin, Texas
- **TCPD CRP Certification Subcommittee Meeting**
Quarterly Meeting
September 17, 2010
Austin, Texas
- **TCPD Quarterly Meeting**
September 17, 2010
Austin, Texas
- **3rd Annual TIBH Award Dinner**
September 27, 2010
Doubletree Hotel Austin
6505 IH 35 North
Austin, Texas
Please contact TIBH to attend.
- **22nd Annual TIBH Products & Services Expo**
September 28, 2010
Doubletree Hotel Austin
6505 IH 35 North
Austin, Texas
- **TCPD Pricing Subcommittee Meeting**
Quarterly Meeting
November 12, 2010
Austin, Texas
- **TCPD CRP Certification Subcommittee Meeting**
Quarterly Meeting
December 3, 2010
Austin, Texas
- **TCPD Quarterly Meeting**
December 3, 2010
Austin, Texas

View THE TIBH
ONLINE CATALOG AT
www.tibh.org