

# 2022 Annual Report





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# To Governor Bill Lee, the Tennessee General Assembly, and our valued customers, partners, supporters



by Robert G. Rosenbaum, Ed.D., Chair  
Committee for Providing Competitive Integrated Employment  
for Individuals with Severe Disabilities



The Committee for Providing Competitive Integrated Employment for Individuals with Severe Disabilities has the distinct honor of reporting yet another tremendously successful year of operation. The

committee is charged with providing oversight to the Community Rehabilitation Agencies of Tennessee (CMRA), the central non-profit agency designated to implement T.C.A. 71-4-701 – 71-4-705. This statute encourages state and local governmental entities to purchase products and services produced by Tennesseans with disabilities when competitive standards are met in the areas of quality, availability, and price.

We are pleased to report during fiscal year 2022 that the program has once again experienced tremendous success; 315 Tennesseans were employed, many of whom would not have had a job if it were not for this statute. About \$11.9 million in gross revenue was generated by this program most of which provided wages to Tennesseans in competitive, gainful employment who otherwise may not be employed.

This Tennessee law has allowed our fellow citizens the opportunity to become competitively employed enabling the development of self-sufficiency that goes along with being a contributing member of our state and communities where they live rather than existing on tax dollars in the form of public assistance. In terms of services the program offers employment in the areas of grounds maintenance, janitorial services as well as operating car washes and providing vehicle inspections, commercial grease trap cleaning, and facility management of all rest areas

across the state of Tennessee. In addition to services, there are products produced by this program that are sold to state and local governmental entities such as drug testing kits, laboratory services, incontinent products, female hygiene products and uniforms.

Every citizen of our state benefits from this program; first and foremost by providing our citizens with disabilities the deserved opportunity to work alongside all Tennesseans in an integrated work environment. Others who benefit from of this statute include state purchasers of services and products as well as each taxpayer in Tennessee. The dedication of the committee, along with CMRA and its staff, and all the enthusiastic employees working within this program are to be commended for their hard work each and every day making this program a continued success for themselves and others who will be employed in the future.

Hopefully, as you carefully review this report, you will see what this program has accomplished for so many with no added cost to state and local governments. Year after year this program has been highly successful. You will be impressed and proud to be a member of a state administration and legislature that promotes employment first through government contracts.

This is a very unique program that is a 'win/win' for everyone involved. It is cost effective, saves tax dollars, and provides integrated employment opportunities nurturing self-sufficiency for our Tennessee family now and into the future. ❖





## **TDOT & CMRA**

### ***A Long Standing, Beneficial Partnership for Tennesseans with Disabilities***

by Reggie Parkerson,  
CMRA's TDOT Contracts Manager

I had the pleasure of joining the CMRA staff as TDOT Contracts Manager in the summer of 2019. It is a very rewarding experience managing the Tennessee Department of Transportation's (TDOT) contracts for its 19 Rest Area locations throughout the state and three of TDOT's Regional Complexes all of which are set aside for the employment of Tennesseans with disabilities.

#### **A 30 Years Partnership**

CMRA has been TDOT's contractor for the Rest Areas for about 30 years. It is truly a long-standing, beneficial partnership that has employed hundreds of people with disabilities during that time.

Over the past few years, I have had successful progress working in partnership with TDOT to upgrade the maintenance procedures and protocols for the operations of the Rest Area locations and to provide competitive wages and prevailing salaries for the Rest Area employees statewide.

It is a privilege working with TDOT to improve the competitive integration of Rest Area employees with disabilities providing the same wages, eligibility for benefits and opportunities for advancement as employees without disabilities. Providing prevailing wages and improving competitive integration has enhanced employee morale and it has fostered better working relationships between disabled and non-disabled employees at the Rest Area locations.

The management of the daily maintenance and operations at the Rest Areas has been a rewarding task with the assistance of TDOT and the support of CMRA's business partners sub-

contracted to provide the staffing and custodial services at each location.

The custodial services at all the Rest Areas are provided around the clock – 24 hours a day, seven days a week, 365 days a year.

In managing the TDOT Rest Area contracts, I have the privilege of traveling across the state each month to visit all 19 of them as I perform monthly inspections to report the current maintenance conditions and repairs needed at each location.

Working together with the TDOT personnel and the Rest Area employees throughout the state is a very worthwhile experience, and the partnerships have resulted in upgrading and improving the facilities and conditions for travelers visiting the TDOT Rest Area locations.

CMRA's subcontractors for the Rest Areas include ABM, Chattanooga & Nashville; Certified Maintenance Services, Chattanooga; Dawn of Hope, Johnson City; Easterseals Tennessee; Hilltoppers, Crossville; and Memphis Goodwill.

#### **TDOT Regional Buildings**

CMRA has been providing janitorial services at three of the four TDOT Regional Complexes for many years – just another example of the great partnership we have with TDOT. Janitorial services are provided at the regional complexes five days a week.

#### **Thank You, TDOT!**

Thank you TDOT for your continued willingness and commitment to employing Tennesseans with disabilities on a variety of the department's contracts.

Not only is CMRA grateful but the hundreds of employees with disabilities employed at the Rest Areas over the years are thankful as well! ❖

# Reggie's Roadtrip Across Tennessee

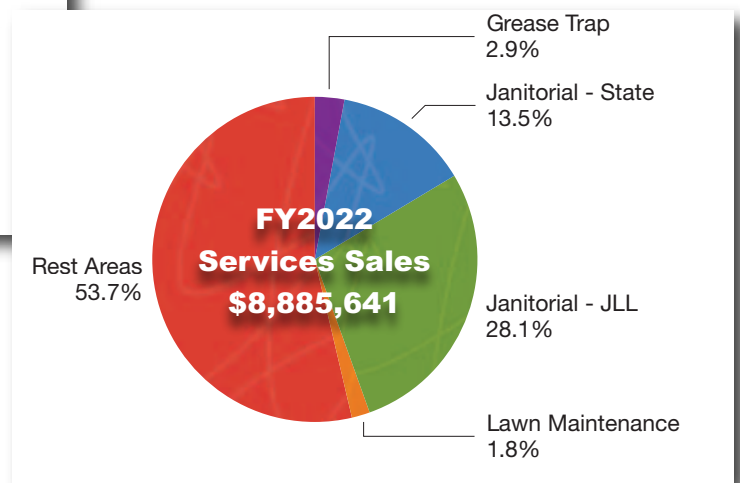
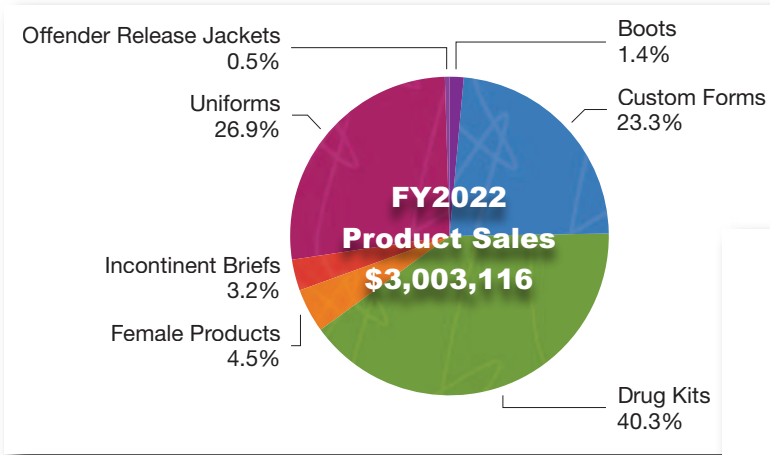


# Program Sales



**63% of the work hours on our government contracts are performed by Tennesseans with disabilities**

**Total FY2022 Sales \$11,888,757 • 25% Products & 75% Services Sales**



## CMRA's Business Partners

ABM, Chattanooga/Nashville  
 Alere Toxicology Service, Inc., Gretna, LA  
 Axis7 Enterprises, LLC, Nashville  
 Bates, Wolverine World Wide, Chicago  
 Certified Maintenance Serv., Chattanooga  
 Dawn of Hope, Inc., Johnson City  
 Easterseals Tennessee, Inc.  
 Excel Cleaning Services, Inc., Nashville  
 First Tactical, Modesto, CA  
 GH Solutions LLC, Mint Hill, NC  
 Goodwill Industries Knoxville, Inc.

Hilltoppers, Inc., Crossville  
 Liquid Environmental Solutions TN, LLC  
 Memphis Goodwill, Inc.  
 MHDS, Inc., Jackson  
 New Horizons Life Skills, Inc., Nashville  
 Progressive Directions, Inc., Clarksville  
 Stones of Faith, LLC, Murfreesboro  
 Taylor Communications, Inc., Murfreesboro  
 The Feichheimer Brothers, Cincinnati  
 TriStar Building Services, Inc., Nashville  
 Woodard Brothers Dist., LLC, Nashville

# Thank You to Our Customers!!!

Alvin C. York Institute  
Bledsoe Co. Correctional Complex  
Deberry Special Needs Facility  
Dogwood Elementary School  
Farmington Elementary School  
Forest Hill Elementary  
Hamblen County  
Houston High School  
JLL  
Mark Luttrell c Center  
Memphis Mental Health Institute  
Metro Nashville and Davidson County  
Metropolitan Action Commission  
Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools  
Middle TN Mental Health Center  
Military Department of Tennessee  
Moccasin Bend Mental Health Institute  
Morgan County Correctional Complex  
Motlow College  
Northeast Correctional Complex  
Northwest Correctional Complex  
Riverbend Maximum Security Facility  
Riverdale Elementary School  
Robertson County Juvenile Court  
Skills Development Services, Inc.  
Southeast Regional Office - TEMA  
TDOT- Transportation/Central Services  
Tennessee Rehabilitation Center  
Tennessee State Veterans' Homes Board  
The Baddour Center

TN Correction Academy  
TN Department of Childrens Services  
TN Department of Correction  
TN Department of Education  
TN Department of Field Services  
TN Department of General Services  
TN Department of Health  
TN Department of Human Services  
TN Dept Intellectual/Developmental Disabilities  
TN Department of Revenue  
TN Department of Safety  
TN Dept of Transportation - 19 Rest Areas  
TN Department of Safety-Planning & Research  
TN Dept of Transportation - Beautification  
TN Department of Transportation - Bldg C & E  
TN Department of Transportation - Gallatin  
TN Department of Transportation - Rest Areas  
TN Department of Transportation Region II  
TN Department of Transportation Region III  
TN Department of Transportation Region IV  
TN Dept of Environmental & Conservation  
TN Emergency Management Agency  
TN Prison for Women  
TN School for the Blind  
TN School for the Deaf  
Trousdale Turner Correctional Facility  
Turney Center Industrial Complexes  
University of TN- Knoxville  
West TN State Penitentiary  
Whiteville Correctional Facility



# CMRA's Role In Employing Tennesseans with Disabilities on Government Contracts

**W**hile CMRA is committed primarily to the employment of people with disabilities, a paycheck isn't the only benefit for employees. *Integration*, in the field of disability services, means providing opportunities for interaction with non-disabled people at work and in their communities.

In *Olmstead v. L.C.* (1999), the U.S. Supreme Court held that Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) prohibits unreasonable segregation of people with disabilities from those without disabilities. CMRA makes it a priority to work with its business partners to integrate all contracts as much as possible.

**CMRA's Roles & Responsibilities.** Community Rehabilitation Agencies of Tennessee (CMRA), is the designated Central Non-profit Agency (CNA) managing operations according to the program's statute. CMRA's staff of five works with both nonprofit and for-profit businesses to provide products and services to government purchasers, while ensuring that at least 50% of the labor hours are provided by employees with disabilities.

CMRA staff members seek contracting opportunities, negotiate with prospective partners, seek competitive bids from vendors, assist in staffing contracts, create certification proposals, and implement the contracts once certified by the state. In addition, CMRA inspects work sites, handles invoicing and payment distribution, ensures compliance with the program statute and all other applicable regulations and mediates any questions or differences between business partners and customers. As employment-related concerns and expectations for people with disabilities change, CMRA will continue to work with other agencies and advocates to help provide increased opportunities for employment and advancement.

**CMRA's Contracting Process.** Every certification proposal includes a detailed budget for review by the state Certification Committee ensuring that every product or service will meet the standards

## PRODUCTS & SERVICES

### Products

Uniforms

Offender Release Jackets

Custom Forms

Drug Test Kits & Laboratory Services

Incontinent Products

Feminine Hygiene Products

### Services

Janitorial Services

Groundskeeping Services

Fleet Vehicle Maintenance & Cleaning

Grease Trap Pumping

Rest Area Facility Management

Certification Committee then sends its recommendation to the state Procurement Commission before the contract is finalized. This can take longer than a conventional bid process, but it ensures that state government purchases will be competitively priced, which benefits everyone involved, including employees, purchasers, and ultimately Tennessee taxpayers.

**About the Program.** Since 1991, the state of Tennessee, and CMRA, as the designated central non-profit agency (CNA) selected to administer the program, have worked diligently to identify opportunities for workers with disabilities in local communities across the state.

Created by T.C.A. 71-4-701 - 71-4-705, the program seeks to employ Tennesseans with disabilities in providing goods and services to state and local government agencies. People with disabilities often face unemployment levels of 60 percent or more. Through this program, there are, at any given time, more than 315 people with and without disabilities employed on CMRA's government contracts. ❖



# Inspiring Stories from the Frontline



## Brandon

Brandon is a vital part of his team. As his "Hire my Strengths" Campaign sign shows, organization is his strong suit.

His team would argue that Brandon has so many more strengths. They would say he is a problem solver,

helps others and that he has team spirit, great leadership skills, and puts his co-workers first. Several of these skills Brandon developed working on the CMRA crew with Progressive Directions, Inc., Clarksville. When he began working, he would only do the task assigned and did not like any change in his schedule. Now, Brandon will complete his task and find a co-worker to assist or even find a new task to complete. His go-getter attitude is contagious.

Brandon was named Progressive Directions' 2022 Employee of the Year on December 16 at the organization's annual Christmas Party. Congratulations, Brandon!! ❖

## Dustin

*A Success Story and then some*



When Woodard Brothers Distributing began working with the CMRA seven years ago, we had no idea how many lives would be positively affected, mainly ours. We have been blessed to have employed over 100 individuals with disabilities in our company

over that amount of time. Our company slogan is "Working Together," which for us has many connotations. Over that time, one individual stands out over them all, Dustin ... Affectionately known as "Fish."

Dustin has worked with us on the CMRA contract to supply the state of Tennessee drug kits for over four years and has done it with a smile on his face and a focus unmatched at our company. He has not only worked for us, but he has also changed our culture. Dustin loves people and movies. He has a great sense of humor and is incredibly funny. He provides us with a hard day's work every day. He has not only done a great job for us but has become friends with our entire team... Heading up movie nights, adventures to sporting events and bringing joy to the offices during the holiday seasons.

We are truly blessed to have been able to call Dustin our employee and our friend. Unfortunately, Dustin has moved to Texas to live with his family for the time being, but we are working diligently to find him housing in Middle Tennessee to be able to bring him back to our family soon. We thought it very appropriate to honor Dustin in this manner this year. Thanks, Dustin, for making Woodard Brothers a better place to work, each day. Blessings to you, my brother. See you soon.

*Sincerely, Tom Woodard, Managing Partner Woodard Brothers Distributing, Nashville ❖*

## PROGRAM DEMOGRAPHICS

**CMRA has 151  
government contracts**

**Total Employees 315  
With disabilities - 199, 63% hours**

**Without - 116, 37% hours**

**Female - 102, 33%**

**Male - 215, 67%**

**Over 60 - 219, 69%**

**Under 60 - 96, 31%**

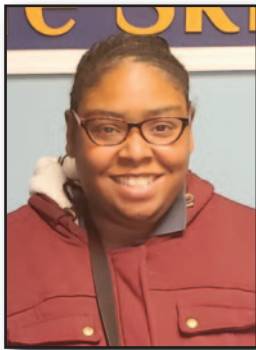
**African American - 93, 30%**

**Caucasian - 209, 66%**

**Hispanic - 11, 3%**

**Other - 2, 1%**

# Inspiring Stories from the Frontline



## Khandi

**K**handi likes to help with cleaning of the building and being around other people. Both make her feel good and earning a paycheck makes her very happy.

Khandi says she loves working for New Horizons Life Skills, Nashville, and being a part of the cleaning crew on various of New Horizons' contracts with CMRA. She learns from the other crew members. They have helped her tremendously since she began employment with New Horizon's on October 17 of this year.

She helps clean several state offices at various Franklin locations including the DMV, DHS, DCS and Probation & Paroles offices. She works seven hours a night, five days a week.

Khandi is an exceptional employee and does an outstanding job. ❖



## Leonard

**E**asterseals Tennessee supported member, Leonard who has been employed through a partnership with the CMRA employment program for the past four years. His career began with the Tennessee

National Guard in 2018 in the custodial department.

By working in an inclusive environment, Leonard has gained more than just a paycheck. This opportunity has increased Leonard's self-confidence and has helped him establish a path to greater independence. Leonard has achieved many of his goals such as using public transportation to commute to and from work. At work, he interacts with a variety of individuals who treat him with great respect and he has made some lasting friendships.

In addition, Leonard's work ethic is stellar. His supervisor notes that he is a team player and is always eager and willing to help others. Recently, a National Guard staff member wrote a recommen-

dation letter to Leonard's supervisor emphasizing Leonard's diligence and hard work. They also noted what a delight it is to work alongside Leonard. Consequently, leadership at Easterseals Tennessee awarded him with a prized "You Rock!" award.

Leonard's employment at the Tennessee National Guard has changed his life. He states "I like my job at the base and try to do it right. I show respect to my boss and the people around here. It is a good and safe place to work. I have fun working here with my friends." What an affirmation of the positive impact that supported employment has on an individual living with disabilities as well as the surrounding community. ❖



# Committee for Providing Competitive Integrated Employment for Individuals with Severe Disabilities



**Robert G. Rosenbaum, Ed.D.**  
Chair



**Gordon Boutwell**  
TN Department of Finance and Administration



**Karen Conway**  
TN Department of General Services



**Louis Galbreath**  
Representing Blind Industries



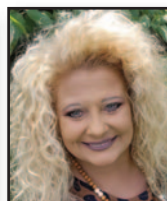
**Meghann Galland**  
TN Department of Human Service



**Alli Beth Harris**  
TN Department of Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities



**Mark Liverman**  
TN Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse



**Conya Mull**  
Representing the business community



**Doria Panvini**  
Representing the disability community

## CMRA Board of Directors



**Evelyn Robertson, Jr.**  
Chair



**Rep. Johnny Shaw**  
Vice Chair



**Jennifer Krahenbill**  
Secretary



**Tonya Copeland**  
Treasurer



**Parke Pepper**  
Board Member



## CMRA Staff, Legal Counsel & Consultant



**Robin Atwood**  
Executive Director



**John Bissell**  
Business Development Director



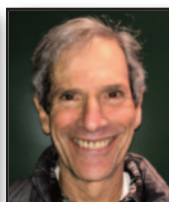
**Amanda Dean**  
Finance Director



**Reggie Parkerson**  
TDOT Contracts Manager



**Tara Lawson**  
Contracts Coordinator



**Bill Hubbard**  
Legal Counsel



**Robyn Smith**  
Consultant

