



**Towards Employment**

**2015 Annual Report**



# TE Spotlight

## In 2015, we stepped into the spotlight.

Our driving force remains our mission. We empower individuals to achieve and maintain self-sufficiency through employment.

In 2015, we served over 2,000 people with career pathway services - placing 475 people in full-time employment with over 300 employers. While the Ohio minimum wage was \$8.10/hour, the average starting wage for a TE graduate was \$10.21/hour, up 10¢ per hour from 2014. We provided 1,491 supportive services (transportation, child care and tools/uniforms) in 2015 and opened 1,245 legal cases - clearing criminal warrants, resolving child support cases, preventing evictions/foreclosures and resolving credit issues.

We committed to opening a social enterprise. In 2015, we announced that in early 2016, Bloom Artisan Bakery and Café, a for-profit benefit corporation wholly owned by Towards Employment, will provide training and jobs for TE grads. Two locations will open in 2016, at Public Square and Cleveland State University. Bloom's motto, "Creating jobs is our secret ingredient," underscores the triple bottom line of the business. While customers get fresh, hand-crafted food, Towards Employment graduates get a second chance, eventual profits from Bloom will support TE overall programming, and our community learns more about building career pathways.

We completed the research phase of a national demonstration program called WorkAdvance. So far, this rigorously evaluated program has helped over 391 individuals secure employment at average starting wage of \$10.74 an hour; and 147 people secured wage increases, with an average increase of over \$2.74 an hour. During the research phase over 476 unique businesses have hired WorkAdvance participants. As individuals enter and advance along career pathways in manufacturing and health care, WorkAdvance is poised to offer ground-breaking evidence for the workforce field. Stay tuned in 2016 for the evaluation results.

And in 2015, we launched TalentNEO, an initiative that is helping to solve difficult workforce challenges in our region – employers looking for qualified talent and unemployed or underemployed job seekers looking for better opportunities. TalentNEO's approach focuses on skills - which are often a better predictor of success rather than traditional job requirements such as education or experience. As a result, employers can tap into a wider pool for top talent, job seekers have increased opportunities and the region as a whole benefits. TalentNEO is led by Towards Employment in

Cuyahoga County and ConxusNEO in Summit County and is implemented by a wide network of community partners.

Board commitment has made much of this possible. In particular, Ellen Wisbar, who stepped down from leadership this year, has provided a steadfast guiding hand over the past six years as our Board Treasurer and President. We are also grateful for the dedicated service of Michael Lonsway and Tom Bennett who each completed their full term (9 years) in 2015. We thank them for their service and welcome Mike onto the board of Bloom Bakery.

We thank all our donors who invested in career pathways. Read Michael and Teonna's story (on page 3) and see your impact. And then let's all work even harder to get more people on the pathway to good jobs. One career pathway changes a life, supports a family and transforms a community.

[That's worth a spotlight!](#)

Jill Rizika  
Executive Director

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# 2015 TE IMPACT



**475 PEOPLE**

found good jobs. 300 of whom  
had criminal records.

*Two were Michael and Teonna -  
see their story in the side bar.*

**91% JOB RETENTION**

at 30 days.  
73% at 180 days.

**130 PEOPLE**

received  
credentialed  
training.



**\$10.20 AN HOUR**

was the  
average starting wage  
for TE participants.

**129 ADVANCEMENTS**

with an average  
increase wage of  
\$12.62 hourly.

**300 EMPLOYERS**

hired from  
Towards Employment.



**1491 SUPPORTIVE SERVICES**

to help individuals transition  
into employment.

**1245 LEGAL SERVICES**

to help participants navigate  
credit and debt issues, bankruptcy,  
and much more.

## SPOTLIGHT ON MICHAEL & TEONNA

Cleveland Metroparks  
US Post Office

Before they enrolled in Towards Employment's job readiness programming, this husband and wife were struggling to make ends meet. They were sure they could succeed in better jobs, but were fearful of looking for new opportunities because of past criminal convictions.

Michael worked from 4pm to midnight, leaving for work just as his kids were getting home from school. Teonna was working between three and five 12 hour shifts a week but because she was frequently on call as an STNA supervisor, her schedule was constantly changing. These schedules limited how often, and how reliably, they could be home for their nine year old son and 13 year old daughter.

Michael came to Towards Employment first, and learned to interview and deal with the dreaded "conviction question." As soon as his classes ended, Michael began working with a TE job coach. By the time autumn arrived, Michael had a job with the Cleveland Metroparks with regular hours. Today he is home every day for homework and makes twice his starting wage with full benefits. Teonna was so inspired by his success that she enrolled at TE, even though she had to cut her hours at work to do so. She is now working for the United States Postal Service, with regular hours and paid sick days. Now Michael and Teonna can be there when their children need them.

**"Ms. Dove,  
Ms. Shepard  
and Towards  
Employment  
helped us think  
positively about the  
future. Being able  
to provide for our  
family is dignifying."**

A Towards Employment Social Venture

# BLOOM

ARTISAN BAKERY & CAFÉ

Join the Bloom Team.  
We are Hiring.

Provide transitional and full-time employment opportunities to Towards Employment graduates.

Provide unrestricted revenue to Towards Employment for continued programming and growth.

Provide greater awareness for Towards Employment's mission.

## Nonprofits go the business route

Mission-based concerns aim for solutions rather than making money

MAURICE FLEDERER  
mflederer@ohio.com

Six years ago, social-impact adviser and investor Bill Leamon was convinced that the best way for a nonprofit organization to diversify its revenue stream was to start a business. But after working with so many nonprofits, he's changed his mind.

A social-enterprise business is a mission-based business started with a primary goal of solving a problem, improving communities, or creating opportunities for others. Conventional businesses generally focus on generating profits first and foremost. And operators of successful and commercial enterprises — understand that taking calculated risks is the only way to grow. Leamon now believes that if a nonprofit leader wants to create a social enterprise, they must first



Jill Ritzke, executive director of Towards Employment, stands with Logan Pahey, general manager of Bloom Artisan Bakery & Café. Bloom Bakery, started by the nonprofit Towards Employment group, is scheduled to open in early 2016 in downtown Cleveland.

ask themselves and, more importantly, their board of directors, this question: "How much money are we willing to lose and for how long?"

"We came into the social-en-

terprise space with a traditional business mindset. We believed the answer to becoming financially self-sustainable was to start a business. We were a bit naïve in our thinking and would try to

talk nine out of 10 nonprofits into doing just that," said Leamon. The managing director of The Business of Good Foundation, a founding partner of SEA Change, a social-enterprise accelerator

"Now we probably talk nine out of 10 nonprofits from going down that path, recognizing that many organizations don't have the capacity, capability or commitment required to succeed."

In the past six years, three of the 30 nonprofits and social-enterprise businesses he's worked with or funded in Northeast Ohio have gotten traction. They are Edwin's Restaurant and Leadership Institute, Chateau Hough, an urban vineyard and winery, and Bloom Artisan Bakery & Café, which is expected to open in early 2016.

Leamon is also optimistic about growth at Hot Chicken Takeover in Columbus, another social-enterprise business funded by SEA Change. And businesses such as Central Kitchen and Metro Metal Works, run by Lutheran Metropolitan Ministries, and Coenacopia (Nature's Bin) prove it can be done, he said.

Bloom Bakery, started by the nonprofit Towards Employment group, is expected to open in the Huntington Building at 200 Public Square in the first quarter of 2016. So far, the bakery has borrowed \$535,000. With 50 percent of its funding in loans, it's a different model from a typical nonprofit program, backed by philanthropy and grants.

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Bloom's  
Triple  
Bottom  
Line



In 2015 we built a business plan for a new social enterprise, called Bloom Bakery and Café. In November 2015, this press release was shared.

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CLEVELAND, OH – November 4, 2015 – Towards Employment, a non-profit organization dedicated to empowering individuals to achieve and maintain self-sufficiency through employment, recently unveiled plans for a new social venture, Bloom Artisan Bakery & Café.

Scheduled to launch in early 2016, Bloom Bakery will be an artisan bakery and café selling premium breads, pastries and café meals, and will provide training and jobs for those facing barriers to employment. Initial locations are slated to open at 200 Public Square and 1938 Euclid Avenue on the Cleveland State University campus. Baking and retail staff at both operations will be Towards Employment graduates.

“We have found ‘learn and earn’ opportunities are needed as an effective workplace introduction for many Towards Employment students, especially those with the most challenging barriers to employment like a criminal background,” said Towards Employment Executive Director Jill Rizika. “With our board’s endorsement, we agreed to identify a social enterprise that could provide rigorous on-the-job training, work experience and income for these students. Bloom Bakery is the best opportunity to meet these goals.”

In addition to its social mission, Bloom Bakery is committed to offering food that will meet the highest standard of excellence, thanks to guidance from artisan bakery specialist Maurice Chaplais. Bloom Bakery will utilize Chaplais’ top-of-the-line baking techniques, which harness the unique science of slow baking, including a three-day yeast fermentation process that produces unparalleled flavor.

“Bloom Bakery will distinguish itself by taking the time to perfect the art of baking,” said Chaplais, an internationally renowned bread consultant and teacher who fine-tuned his art of baking at his acclaimed Flour Bag bakeries in the United Kingdom and Florida. “The effort to incorporate locally sourced ingredients and create delicious handcrafted treats demonstrates Bloom Bakery’s dedication to great taste and customer satisfaction. With this high level of preliminary attention to detail and commitment to the craft of baking, Bloom Bakery is primed to stand apart based on the quality of its food alone.”

The project received financial backing from a number of local organizations that believe in the business and its mission, including The Cleveland Foundation and the Business of Good Foundation. Profits earned from Bloom Bakery will be reinvested back into the business, expanding opportunities for people to earn a wage, develop lifelong employment skills, transition into a full-time career, and create positions for the next class of job readiness graduates from Towards Employment.

“Bloom Bakery is in the business of changing lives,” said Bloom General Manager Logan Fahey. “Our great mission and great product go hand-in-hand. Whether that means providing someone with a job that will help support a family, or simply creating a space where people can gather to eat delicious food and support an important social venture together, we want to generate a ripple effect of progress and positive change throughout the entire community.”

In baking, bloom is the golden brown color of the crust of well-baked bread. It also represents the ultimate goal Bloom Bakery has for its employees – to blossom and to thrive. Bloom Bakery will offer the requisite caliber of training and experience to ultimately create a “bloom” on employees’ resumes – a recognizable symbol that they have met the exacting standards of production and customer service required in the baking industry.

Bloom Bakery’s slogan, “Creating Jobs Is Our Secret Ingredient,” is emblematic of Towards Employment’s career pathway approach. Graduates from Towards Employment’s job readiness training programs will find a home at Bloom Bakery – the next step on their path to success. Towards Employment Board Chair Brian Lamb, an attorney with Thompson Hine, adds: “Towards Employment prides itself on offering the right career pathway services at the right time. Bloom Bakery is the right social enterprise at the right time.”

# 2015 Recognition

## Randy Samsel, TE board member, honored as Nonprofit Executive of the Year December, 2015

The Medical Mutual Pillar Awards have honored greatness in the name of outstanding community service for 18 years. Randy, founder and president of e-Search, Inc., has served on TE's board of directors since 2012 and currently serves on the executive committee. He was recognized for his leadership of the board's social enterprise committee that was dedicated to getting a triple-bottom-line business started.

## Anne E. Casey Foundation supports GenerationWork in Cleveland December, 2015

TE was chosen to lead the Generation Work initiative in Cleveland, one of five cities awarded to increase job opportunities for young adults. TE will work with Cuyahoga County, Ohio Means Jobs | Cleveland-Cuyahoga County, and the Fund for our Economic Future to help young adults from low-income families get and keep well-paying jobs.

## TE honored with WIRE-Net Mission Builder Award May, 2015

TE was one of four businesses recognized by WIRE-Net for having a positive impact on regional manufacturing growth. WIRE-Net has been an important partner in the TE led, collaborative workforce initiative, WorkAdvance.

## Named a Top Workplace by the Plain Dealer for two consecutive years June 2015 & 2014

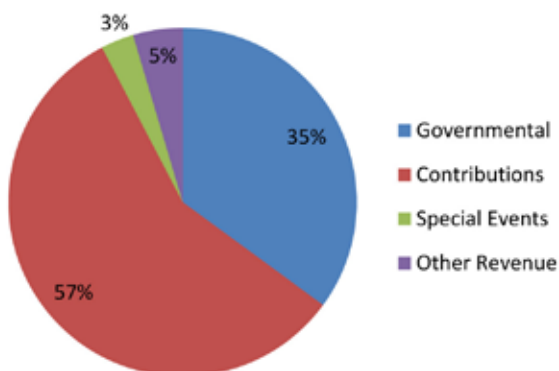
Towards Employment was honored to be named a Top Workplace by the Plain Dealer and cleveland.com in both 2014 and 2015.



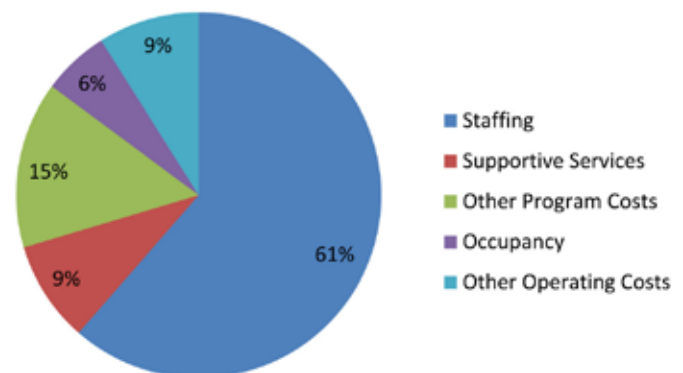
# 2015 Financials

	2013	2014	2015
<b>SOURCES OF REVENUE</b>			
Governmental Contributions	\$1,363,276	\$ 973,169	\$1,740,743
Foundations & Corporations	\$1,482,201	\$1,683,299	\$2,578,771
United Way Services	\$ 141,444	\$ 150,999	\$ 147,980
Individual Contributions	\$ 125,586	\$ 165,659	\$ 116,807
Cy Pres	\$ 25,000	-	
Special Events (NET)	\$ 152,137	\$ 131,337	\$ 151,406
Earned Income	\$ 68,750	\$ 38,351	\$ 161,003
Interest/Investment Income	\$ 148,728	\$ 24,759	\$ 22,570
Other	\$ 11,664	\$ 12,809	\$ 44,486
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$3,518,786</b>	<b>\$3,180,382</b>	<b>\$4,963,766</b>
<b>USES OF REVENUE</b>			
Staffing	\$2,131,434	\$2,190,546	\$2,574,214
Supportive Services	\$ 525,567	\$ 218,770	\$ 374,928
Other Program Costs	\$ 535,828	\$ 254,396	\$ 619,294
Occupancy	\$ 222,372	\$ 293,433	\$ 246,951
Fundraising Expense	\$ 46,393	\$ 31,600	\$ 71,201
Other Operating Costs	\$ 169,075	\$ 77,265	\$ 304,227
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$3,630,669</b>	<b>\$3,066,010</b>	<b>\$4,190,815</b>
Change in Net Assets	\$ (111,883)	\$ 114,372	\$ 772,951
Beginning Net Assets	\$ 1,818,840	\$ 1,706,957	\$ 1,821,329
Ending Net Assets	\$ 1,706,957	\$ 1,821,329	\$ 2,594,280

**2015 Sources of Revenue**



**2015 Uses of Revenue**



# 2015 Donors

## \$250,000 or more

Cleveland Foundation  
Fund for Our Economic Future  
W.K. Kellogg Foundation

## \$100,000-\$249,999

Deaconess Community Foundation  
JPMorgan Chase Foundation  
United Way of Greater Cleveland

## \$50,000-\$99,999

The George Gund Foundation  
KeyBank Foundation  
The Harry and Jeanette Weinberg  
Foundation, Inc.

## \$20,000-\$49,999

Business of Good Foundation  
Eva L. and Joseph M. Bruening  
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Generation Foundation  
Harold C. Schott Foundation  
Nordson Corporation  
Reinberger Foundation  
Saint Lukes Foundation  
The Thomas H. White Foundation

## \$10,000-\$19,999

Abington Foundation  
Anonymous  
Callahan Foundation  
Cleveland Clinic  
Cuyahoga County Council,  
Veterans Service Fund  
Eaton Corporation Charitable Fund  
Forest City Enterprises  
The Higley Fund  
The Zoann Little Dusenbury Fund

## \$5,000-\$9,999

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## \$2,500-\$4,999

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Cleveland Metroparks  
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Board member Mark Witham at 2015 Annual Event - Take the Stage

# 2015 Board of Directors

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Payroll  
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Cliffs Natural Resources

Jill Rizika  
Executive Director  
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Doug Benjamin  
VP, Financial Reporting &  
Assistant Controller  
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Talent Attraction  
Global Cleveland

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and Regulatory Affairs  
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Operations  
Key Bank

Ellen L. Wisbar  
Certified Public Accountant  
CBIZ



*Board member Michael Lonsway  
at 2015 Annual Event - Take the Stage*

# Associate & Advisory Boards

## ASSOCIATE BOARD

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Burges & Burges Strategists

### **Vice President**

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CBIZ Retirement Plan Services

### **Treasurer**

Shannon Coleman  
The Sherwin-Williams Company

Madeline Dennis  
Tucker Ellis LLP

Anna Meyer  
New Growth Group LLC

Jessica Whale  
Global Cleveland

2015 was the inaugural year for TEYP - this young professional associate board will increase awareness and understanding of TE's mission and will build participation and support of our programs and services.

## EMPLOYER ADVISORY BOARD

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Pat Barrett, Marriott Hotels International  
Robin Doerschuk, Alliance Solutions Group  
Aaron Gogolin, Rustbelt Reclamation  
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# 2015 Volunteers

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Gail Sell  
Lori Smith  
Serena Steele  
Brad Steinberg  
Jeremy Taylor  
Ginny Tredway  
Karen Troy  
Tailyn Walborn  
David Wilson  
... and the Cleveland  
GiveCamp Team

## WHAT IS CLEVELAND GIVECAMP?

GiveCamp is a weekend-long event where software developers, designers, database administrators, project managers and creative professionals donate their time to create software and web-based applications for non-profit organizations. The event takes place on the shores of Lake Erie.

GiveCamp is entirely volunteer-driven and some of the volunteers take the "camp" part of GiveCamp literally, pitching tents and staying all weekend. Great meals are provided and there are many opportunities to network with professionals from around the region. Overall, it's a great opportunity for people to work together, develop new friendships, and do something important for the community.

Towards Employment was a part of GiveCamp 2015 and the result was our flexible, user-friendly NEW website.



# 2015 Staff

Jill Rizika  
Executive Director

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## DIRECTORS

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Chelsea Mills  
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