



CHANGE YOUR PURCHASE,
CHANGE THEIR FUTURE.

MYTHS AND REALITIES ABOUT HIRING PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

Patrick Bardsley
Co-Founder & CEO,
Spectrum Designs Foundation



THE JOURNEY

- Spectrum began in a 200 square foot barn, located in the backyard of a Long Island home - along with a single machine and 2 employees!
- The 501(c)(3) was co-founded in 2011 by a trio of trailblazers, including two parents of aging children with Autism who wanted more for their sons and other children who faced similar adversities.

The final result:

A business born out of necessity

- In the past five years, Spectrum has experienced a 30% growth average. With the addition of its second location in Pleasantville, they have no plans on stopping anytime soon!



IT ALL STARTED HERE!



SPECTRUM'S CO-FOUNDERS



FIRST PROCLAMATION!

THE WHY

People with disabilities represent 15% of the population and are the largest minority group in the world*.



Nearly 50% of 25-year-olds on the Autism Spectrum have never held a paying job, despite having the skill sets & expertise to excel in the workplace**.

**World Health Organization
**Autism Speaks*

****Autism Speaks
****NYSID*

Securing and sustaining employment continues to be the number one challenge facing adults on the Autism Spectrum in 2021***.

In some states, like New York, the disabled population is twice as likely to live below the poverty line — a poverty gap likely widened by the global pandemic****.

WHO WE ARE: DESIGNS

- A full-service custom apparel and promotional products business with a social mission: to help individuals with Autism lead full and productive lives through the world of work
- As a **nonprofit**, 100% of the proceeds go towards furthering the mission
- Since its inception, Spectrum has provided **80,000+ hours** of meaningful work for these individuals, with total wages adding up to **over \$1.5 million!**
- In the past five years, the 501(c)(3) has experienced a **30% growth average**, and with the addition of its second location in Pleasantville, has no plans on stopping anytime soon!



OUR SECOND LOCATION ALLOWS US TO
DOUBLE OUR PRODUCTION CAPABILITIES

WHO WE ARE: BAKES

- Founded in 2016, Bakes is a kitchen on a mission!
- Spectrum Bakes, part of the Spectrum Designs family, provides individuals with Autism an alternative employment option to producing customized apparel
- Made in small batches with naturally-sourced ingredients to ensure freshness, flavor, and quality
- Customized orders for any day, event, holiday, or special occasion



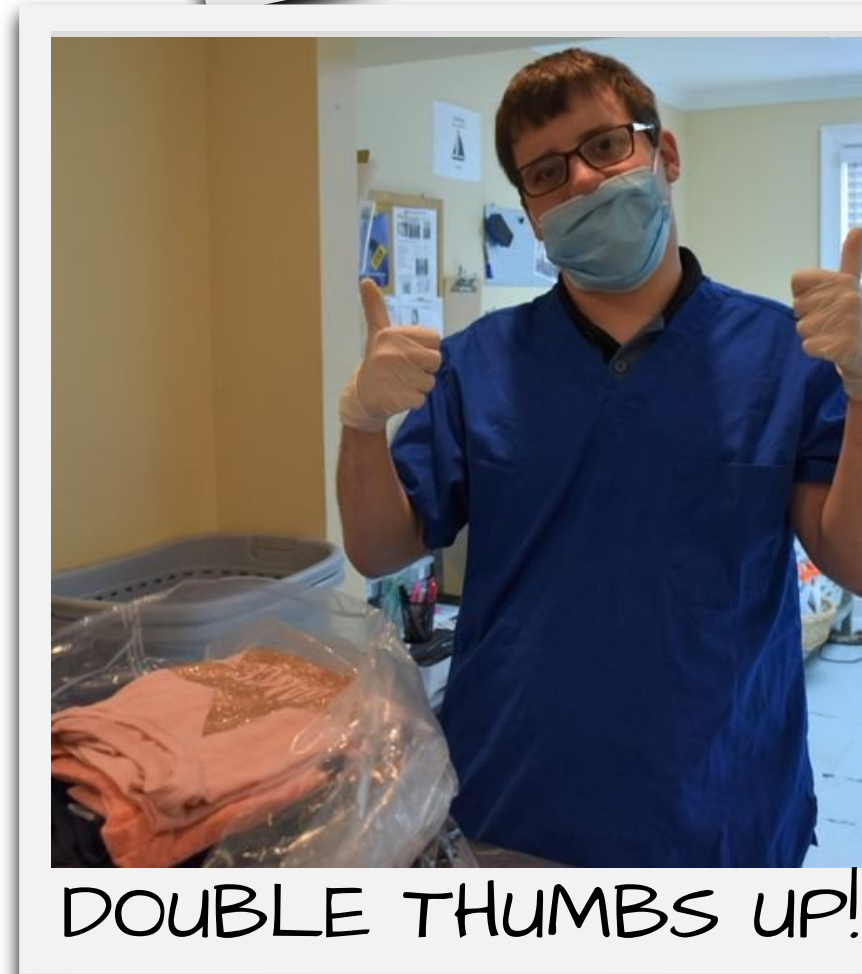
WHO WE ARE: SUDS

- One stop laundry and dry cleaning service with free pick-up and delivery within a 5-mile radius
- 100% of our clients are repeat customers. Our goal is to exceed expectations!



THE SPECTRUM DIFFERENCE

- More than half of the workforce is made up of employees with Autism
- Staff are paid at least minimum wage, turning trainees into taxpayers
- Rewards employees with pay raises and promotions
- Comprehensive and extensive training streamlines processes geared towards each individual
- Visual workplace creates a productive environment through designated signs, symbols, photos, and diagrams which help team members in an independent and effective manner
- Licensed social worker on-site every work day
- Collaboration with partner agency, The Nicholas Center, ensures that all trainees and employees have support in all areas – training, education, personal growth



OUR MISSION, VISION, AND CORE VALUES

PEOPLE

Our employees are the greatest resource of our organization

MISSION

To create meaningful and inclusive opportunities for people on the Autism Spectrum.

HEALTH

We commit to products, training, and operations that promote safety & emotional well-being, and minimize environmental impact

VISION

A world that sees only ability.

PROFESSIONALISM

Positive workplace practices are the foundation of our productive, efficient, and successful business.

INNOVATION

We adapt, innovate, and evolve to provide the best quality products and workplace



FEATURED CLIENTS

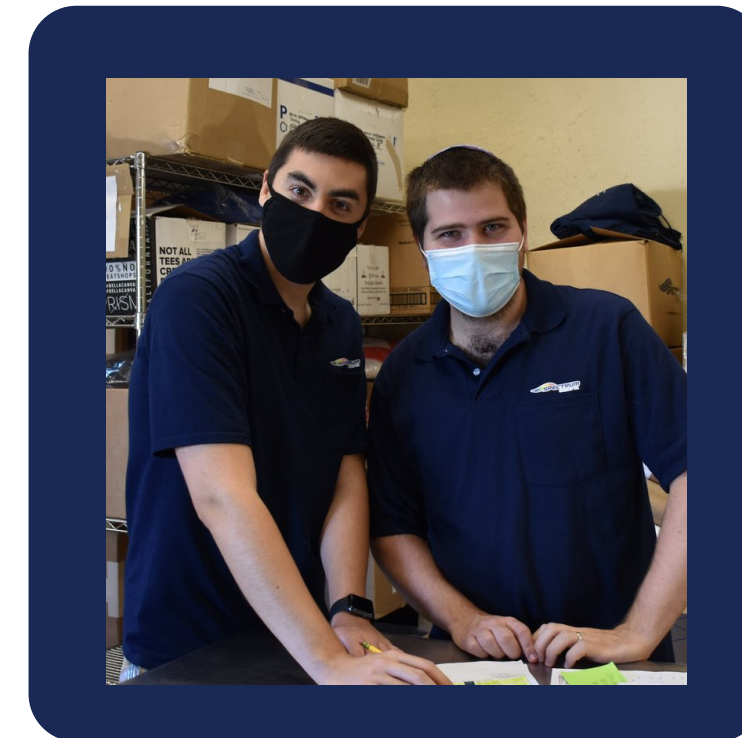


AWARDS & ACCOLADES

As a thriving nonprofit, Spectrum is proud to receive accreditation and accolades, particularly ones that highlight transparency and honesty.

Recent honors include:

- “Best Practice Charity” by the National Association of Nonprofit Organization & Executives
- “2020 Best Places to Work” by Long Island Business News
- 2021 Guidestar Platinum Seal of Transparency recipient
- “2021 Top-Rated Nonprofit” by Great Nonprofits
- 2021 “Nonprofit of the Year” by Long Island Business News



OUR COMMITMENT TO THE PLANET

- 8,400 square foot facility in Pleasantville is 100% **powered by renewable energy**
- **LED lights** installed at both facilities
- Only use **eco-friendly inks** in our printing process
- Apparel shipped in **compostable bags** (safe to wildlife, breaks down into compost, and aids in the growth of plants)
- Use only **soy-based cleaners** in both our facilities
- Certified by the Sustainable Forest Initiative, the milling of the paper for our **corrugated boxes** increases the number of trees on our planet... up to 1.7 million trees daily!
- Spectrum discloses **environmental impact data to CDP (Carbon Disclosure Project)**, joining 10,000+ other companies, states, and regions who support environmental action globally



MYTHS VERSUS REALITIES

Every single day, we aim to dispel the harmful myths, wrongful exclusion, unfavorable attitudes, and negative stereotypes surrounding individuals on the Autism Spectrum in the workplace.

“Employees with disabilities are considered unreliable and have a higher absentee rate than employees without disabilities.”

“On-the-job accommodations are not just an inconvenience (i.e. changing every physical structure), but are a considerable expense to the employer.”

“Those with disabilities will always need someone to help them with every task. Even with constant supervision, they may cause accidents and/or are prone to injuries.”

“Individuals with disabilities are often unable to meet performance standards and/or are not as constructive, and could bring down the production level of the entire team.”

MYTHS TO DISPEL

MYTH #1

Employees with disabilities are routinely absent from work, disrupting the workflow and production levels.

FACT

Studies by firms such as DuPont prove that employees with disabilities do **not** have a higher absentee rate.

In fact, they proved that this population...

- Has a *better* attendance rate than their counterparts
- These employees are highly reliable and dependable
- Welcome structure, routines, and patterns

MYTH #2

Employees with disabilities will get discouraged or inattentive with their job, and resign after a short period of time.

FACT

Regardless of ability, the best-qualified candidate will thrive with proper training, encouragement, and open communication.

At Spectrum, we...

- Facilitate continuous learning/upskilling through various training programs
- Offer professional guidance and "lend an ear" via a licensed on-staff social worker
- Require managers to hold monthly one-on-ones with their team members
- Have a 97% retention rate



JOE OPEN TO LEARNING NEW SKILLS!

MYTHS TO DISPEL

MYTH #3

Accommodating workers with disabilities can be very costly.

FACT

With thoughtful planning and insight, most accommodations are not expensive.

We have implemented a Visual Workplace that...

- Is cost-efficient, simple & easy to understand
- Benefits all team members regardless of ability
- Allows employees to become more independent and productive

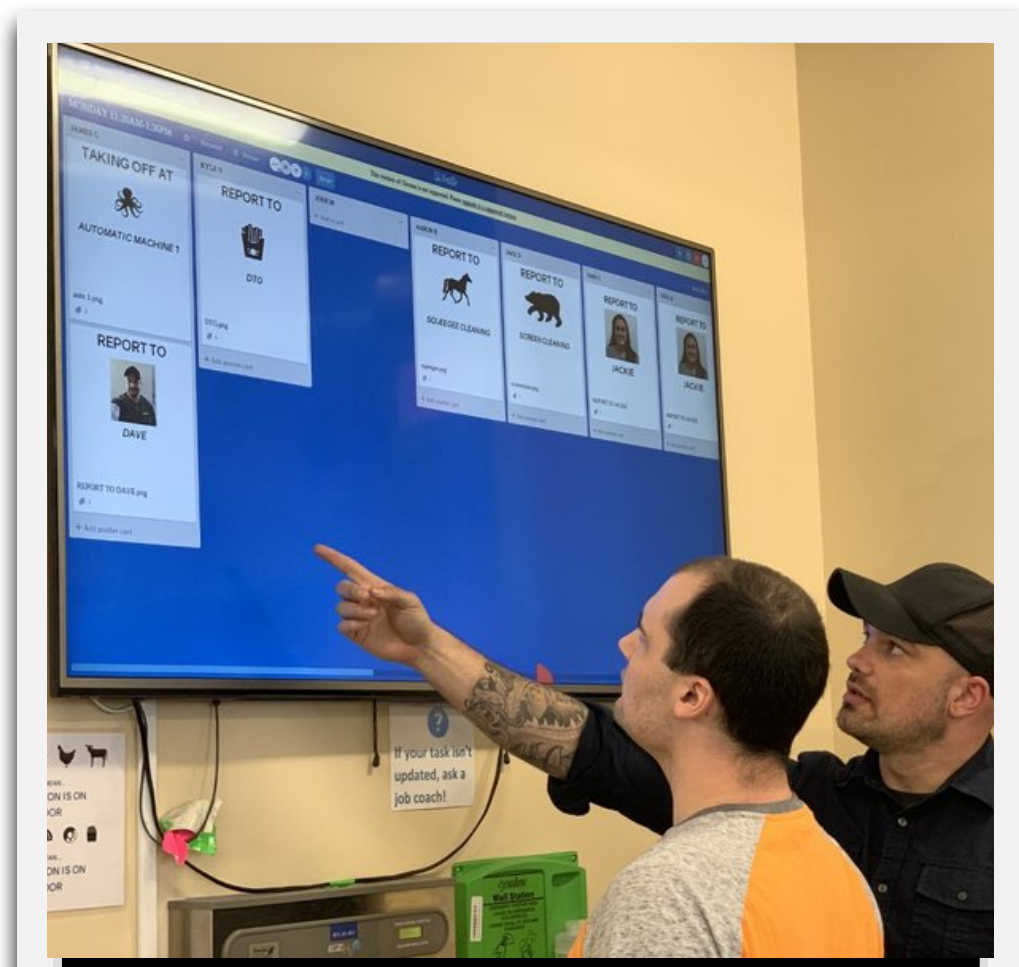
MYTH #4

Individuals with disabilities do not have the appropriate skills for a business setting.

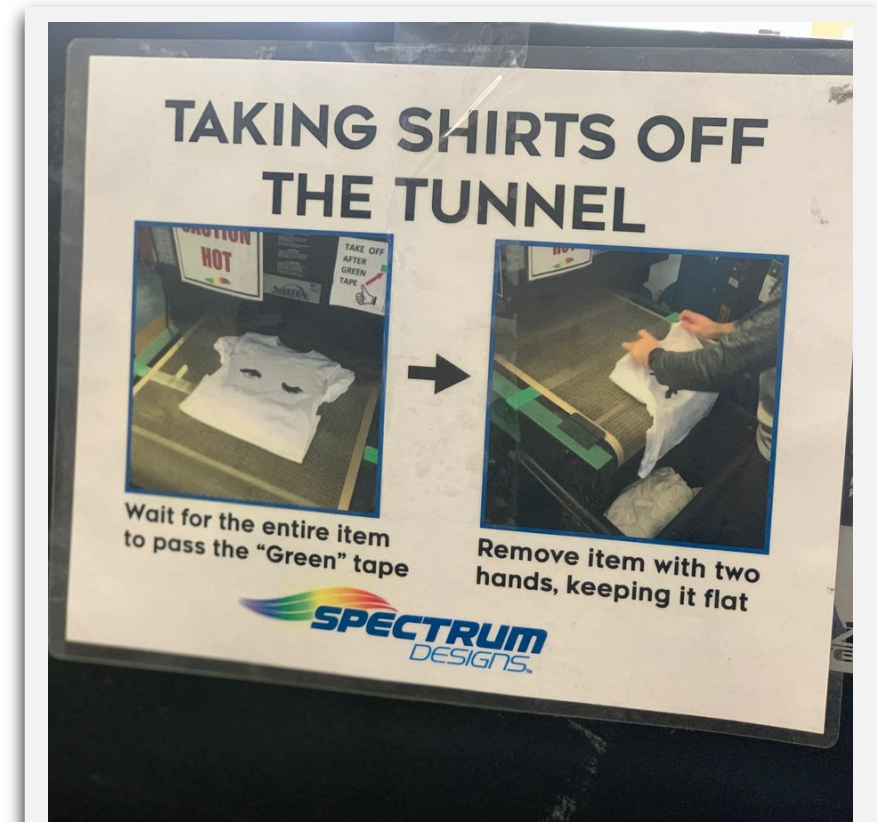
FACT

Like any other candidate, those on the Autism Spectrum bring their own skill set and strengths to the table!

- High levels of concentration and focused effort
- Logical thinking
- Are highly motivated
- Are honest, open communicators
- Attention to detail and accuracy
- Excellent memory



TEAMWORK + VISUALS



THE SIGNS ARE EVERYWHERE!

MYTHS TO DISPEL

MYTH #5

Employees with disabilities either need constant supervision and/or can be difficult to manage.

FACT

Like any employee at any organization, some need more "hand holding" than others.

Key takeaways...

- Determine what tasks they are capable of
- Set them up for success with proper training for the employee *and* their direct report
- Encourage everyone to ask questions
- Reiterate that mistakes are acceptable and take time to explain how errors can be avoided
- Ensure that everyone is accountable for their work/actions



FOCUS & CONCENTRATION!



EVAN'S GOT THIS!



A SMILE TO LIGHT UP THE DARKROOM!



OFFICIAL PROUD HANGTAGGER!

MYTHS TO DISPEL

MYTH #6

Colleagues may be uncomfortable working with those of differing abilities.

FACT

Everyone has special characteristics and traits!

Our neurodiverse workforce has positively impacted our culture in so many ways...

- Brings additional diversity and points of view into light
- Raises morale and inspires others
- Decreases turnover
- Has created a kinder, more patient, understanding, and open-minded workplace where everyone feels accepted, included, and heard!

MYTH #7

Hiring individuals with disabilities will adversely affect a business's bottom line.

FACT

Sharing our mission simply makes good business sense! This chain reaction has a positive effect on our clients and *their* customers too, all of whom become part of our mission.

An Accenture study showed that disability inclusion efforts greatly increased business performance:

- Revenue, 28% higher
- Economic profit margins, 30% higher
- Net income, 111% higher





**"THE WORLD NEEDS A NEURODIVERSE WORKFORCE
TO HELP TRY AND SOLVE SOME OF
THE BIG PROBLEMS OF OUR TIME."**

- SIR RICHARD BRANSON, 2021



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