

meet steven



For many youth, getting that first job is often an uphill climb. Steven Wabik has always had an affinity for computers. After graduating high school, Steven spent time at home taking online computer certification courses, fixing computers for friends and family, and even sampling products and beta testing for software companies. But after several years and many frustrating attempts, he was still having difficulty getting a job in the IT field. Then Steven became a participant in TransCen’s Generation Work program. This program is a partnership with the Hispanic Business Foundation, the local Workforce investment Board and the Hispanic Chamber of Commerce.

This program focuses on connecting local small businesses in search of expanding their workforce with talented youth with disabilities. Throughout the initial intake, Steven talked about his interest in computers, and he impressed the staff with his skills and knowledge in the area. Working with Steven, TransCen began searching for Information Technology (IT) employment options. This led to a connection with Carmen Ortiz Larsen, President and Owner of Aquas, Inc. in Bethesda, MD.

Ms. Larsen and her company have over 20 years of experience as business process improvement analysts and facilitators in the areas of health care, agriculture, transit and transportation, public utilities, energy conservation, and infrastructure inspection systems. Steven was interviewed at Aquas for a summer internship and was accepted. During the internship, Steven not only showed his interest in technology, but demonstrated outstanding skills using computers. After completing the eight-week internship, he was offered ongoing part-time employment as a Junior Technician. His responsibilities include installing and formatting computer programs, and updating and repairing computers. In addition, through Aquas, Steven is studying for an advanced IT certification.

When talking with Ms. Larsen about Steven, she speaks of how knowledgeable he is and how quickly he learns. She also talks about how having Steven in the office has helped the other employees to grow as a team. For Steven, this first work experience is the launching point for his career in the IT industry and he hopes to continue taking coursework that will support his advancement in the field.

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We are proud to submit the TransCen Annual Report for 2013, the organization’s 27th year. As in recent years, we continue to expand the breadth and scope of our work to promote employment and community participation of people with disabilities.

This report summarizes the many ongoing and new projects that represent TransCen’s important niche in advancing employment and community participation of people with disabilities. We continue to engage in a comprehensive range of activities that include direct employment service, consultation and training, and research. We are especially proud that our work represents the endeavor to translate emerging federal policy and contemporary research into effective service at the grassroots level.

We look forward to working with our many partners as we pursue quality and leading edge undertakings that lead to expanded opportunities for people with disabilities to achieve inclusive and productive lives.

Oliver Moss, Chair



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since 1986 Our work has been driven by the belief that there is a job for everyone who wants one, regardless of the nature of one’s disability, need for support and accommodation, other barriers to employment, or economic and other life circumstances.

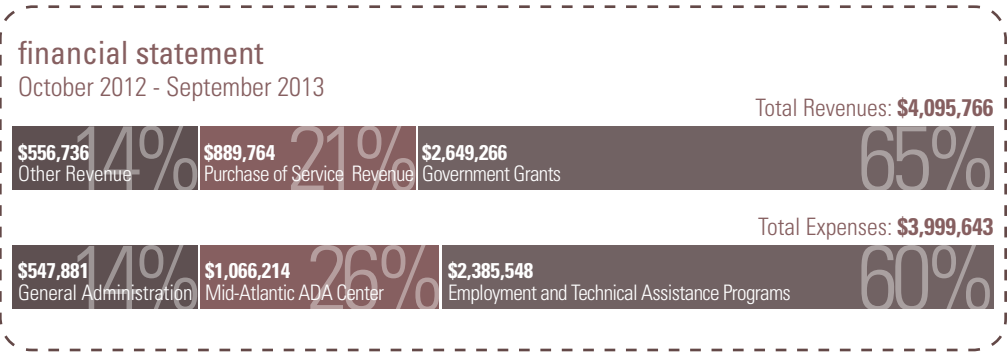
TransCen, Inc. is a non-profit 501(c) 3 organization dedicated to advancing career development, employment success, and community participation for people with disabilities and other barriers to employment. We do this through direct services, training, consultation, and research on a local, state, national and international level.

Our dynamic staff provide training and technical assistance covering a wide range of topics in the fields of secondary and post-secondary education and employment, ADA compliance, and career and workforce development.

Since its inception, TransCen has created over 90 local, state, and national programs, helped over 20,000 youth, adults and veterans become employed, trained over 126,450 individuals, received 22 awards, authored over 100 publications, and conducted business in 50 states and 10 countries.

TransCen will continue to be a learning organization that...

- links resources and leadership with results
- alters practices to better serve those around us
- translates knowledge from research into everyday practice
- contributes to policy development and practice in America and abroad
- works at the grassroots level and applies what we learn to national and global audiences



2013 highlights

Direct Service Programs

WorkLink, TransCen’s San Francisco-based employment service, annually provides direct support for over 60 job seekers with disabilities. The goal of WorkLink is twofold: to “operationalize” best practice and to assist individuals to find great jobs. WorkLink seeks to implement state-of-the-art services and develop effective tools and strategies that can then be shared with the field. Because of the success of this program, the staff is now sharing effective strategies with state agencies, school districts and service providers throughout the nation and abroad.

Youth Employment Service (YES) serves youth with disabilities attending Montgomery County (Maryland) Public Schools who are in their final year of school and for whom need additional assistance in finding and attaining employment. In partnership with the Workforce Investment Board the YES program conducts career exploration workshops in which over 250 youth participate each year. After being exposed to many different employment fields, over 30 youth participate in YES to obtain assistance in finding ongoing employment in chosen fields.

Add Us In, funded by the U.S. Department of Labor’s Office of Disability Employment Policy, is a partnership between TransCen, the Hispanic Business Foundation of Maryland, the Hispanic Chamber of Commerce of Montgomery County, and the Montgomery County Workforce Investment Board. The program has connected with over 100 small businesses, has facilitated 45 internships and/or direct hires for individuals with disabilities, and has served 75 youth since the launch of the project last year. (www.dol.gov/odep/Addusin).

Montgomery County (Maryland) Public Intern Project was established in 2007 to create flexible and customized work opportunities for individuals with significant disabilities to fulfill the work requirements of County departments. All County departments have had the opportunity to work with a customized employment career specialist from TransCen to identify and create part-time position descriptions based on the department’s need. Over 75 individuals have benefited from County employment through their participation in the program.

Training, Consultation and Technical Assistance

Our dynamic staff provides training, consultation and technical assistance covering a wide ranges of topic in the field of secondary education, school-to-work transition, employment, ADA compliance, and career and workforce development. We deliver these services to various federal, state, and local government entities, school districts, professional and advocacy organizations, employment service entities, and private businesses. In addition, we operate – or are affiliated partners – in distinct training and technical assistance initiatives listed here.

Mid Atlantic ADA Center (www.adainfo.org) is a TransCen program that has provided, since 1997, information, guidance and training on the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) to businesses, government entities, individuals with disabilities, architects and others in the Mid-Atlantic region (DC, DE, MD, PA, VA, WV). It also manages the ADA Leadership Network, designed to build the capacity of the regions’ trainers on the ADA. As an additional initiative, the Center hosts the national ADA and Hospitality website (www.ADAhospitality.org) and regularly provides training on ADA regulations governing accessible lodging.

National Collaborative on Workforce and Disability/Youth (NCWD/Y) assists state and local workforce development systems to better serve all youth, including youth with disabilities and other disconnected youth. TransCen is a partner in NCWD/Y which is led by the Institute for Educational Leadership in Washington, D.C.

Training and Technical Assistance Center for Partnerships for Employment Systems Change is a project of the Administration on Developmental Disabilities, led by the Institute for Community Inclusion, University of Massachusetts Boston to facilitate a comprehensive assessment of policy and that support and impede systems change efforts to promote integrated employment for individuals with intellectual/developmental disabilities. TransCen is a partner in the provision of technical assistance to states.

Research

Center on Transition to Employment for Youth with Disabilities The purpose of the Center is to identify, research, and widely disseminate evidence-based practices that contribute to successful employment for youth with disabilities making the transition from school to adult employment. TransCen operates the Center with partner Virginia Commonwealth University. (www.transitiontoemployment.org).

Youth Transition Demonstration National Evaluation is a project of the Social Security Administration to develop and study promising strategies to improve economic self-sufficiency of youth on Supplemental Security Income (SSI). Mathematica Policy Research in leading the study, with TransCen providing intensive technical assistance to the six national implementation sites.

Maryland PROMISE is designed to improve the education and employment outcomes of child Supplemental Security Income (SSI) recipients and their families. Maryland Department of Disabilities, along with TransCen and Way Station, Inc. is leading this five-year model demonstration and research project, one of six awarded nationally.

Featured Publications

TransCen staff documented a great deal of the organization’s work this year through numerous academic and trade publications. A full list of these publications can be found on our website: www.transcen.org, under the ‘publications’ tab.