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Getting the Disabled Back Into the Workforce

The combined efforts of the Brooklyn Bureau of Community Service, a multi-faceted social service agency, and RDS Delivery Service, a growing messenger service company, have in the last months resulted in the employment of 11 adults with disabilities.

At the Brooklyn Bureau, one of the borough's primary providers of comprehensive social support and job-readiness services to the disabled, adults with physical, developmental and emotional disabilities participate in a range of agency and industry-based vocational training programs which impart marketable skills and otherwise prepare men and women for entry to the workplace.

Once program participants are trained and equipped for mainstream employment, Brooklyn Bureau staff facilitate their placement into available positions of employment in

the private sector. In the last year, the Brooklyn Bureau has placed more than 150 disabled adults in dozens of New York City-based businesses in areas such as food service, retail, supermarket operations, shipping and receiving, stock work, messengering and clerical and mailroom operations.

In recent months, Larry Zogby, president of RDS Delivery Services, has demonstrated a remarkable willingness to provide opportunities for employment to adults trained at the Brooklyn Bureau. In all, 11 are employed by the company as messengers, and others are currently being considered for positions both as messengers and in administrative capacities.

"I have a developmentally disabled cousin who volunteered at a hospital and was then given a job there," said Zogby, "and

I saw the amazing ways her life improved. I wanted to give opportunities to others who don't get very many opportunities, and the truth is that by doing so my company has reaped benefits. The people I've hired from the Brooklyn Bureau and similar agencies are motivated, reliable, hard-working and take pride in the company. They've helped heighten morale and maximize efficiency."

"We are delighted at Mr. Zogby's very energetic and dedicated participation in our work," said Donna Santarsiero, Executive Director of the Brooklyn Bureau. "Our training and employment programs simply could not succeed without the partnership of the private sector, and Mr. Zogby and RDS exemplify the many New York City companies which have accepted disabled adults on their staffs and been highly satisfied with the results."