

Challenge Disability Resource Group



Challenge Disability Resource Group began as a day program for adults with moderate to severe developmental disabilities. It later shifted its focus from day programming to vocational training so adults with developmental disabilities could work for market wages in an integrated work environment. Challenge offers residential services, employment support and social enterprises. The social enterprises operate under the name Career Industries and include making core boxes for the mining sector, woodworking and foodservices (through Bridges Catering and The Ledge's cafeteria), alongside business services including mail assembly and giveaway package assembly for public campaigns such as promotion for smoking cessation and sexual health.

FAST FACTS

Location: Whitehorse, YT
Founded: 1976 under a different name, became CDRG in 2012
Sector: foodservices, business services
Annual Revenue (2018): \$3.5M
Parent Org: none
Website: www.challengedrg.org

FINDINGS

- The success of Challenge is indicative of the organization's integration within the community where it works - the significance of local support has been noted in a number of the cases presented in this project.
- Community reliance is further evidenced by Challenge's marketing strategy, which relies most heavily on word of mouth, including referrals from customers. In fact, many of the business opportunities come to Challenge directly.
- Finding a niche market, keeping an eye on possible opportunities and being flexible in adapting to unexpected requests can be highly rewarding - meeting the unique needs of the local mining industry provides Challenge with a stable customer and revenue stream.
- This case illustrates a social enterprise that sells to all three types of organizational partners (non-profits, businesses and government) - while some customers note the social value, they are primarily concerned with supporting local business and with the quality of goods and services.

Selling Social: Experiences of Social Enterprises with Social Procurement and Social Purchasing presents the findings of a three-year (2017-2020), pan-Canadian research project detailing experiences with social procurement and social purchasing from the perspective of social enterprises, as well as their organizational purchasers. These 19 profiles highlight the cases presented in the book and illustrate unique features that make them of interest to practitioners, scholars and students of the social economy.

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For further information:

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