

The World Needs Everyone

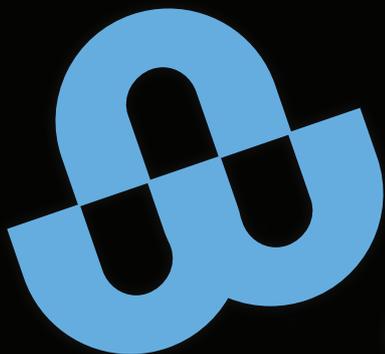
Join the **Revolution**

What's the Revolution?
PAGE 2

**Great Expectations
in Early Education**
PAGE 3

**Doing Good
with Value Village**
PAGE 4

**Inclusive Employment:
Serious Business**
PAGE 5



Northwest Center

People of all abilities

Celebrating 50 Years



Join the Revolution

By Tom Everill, President & CEO, Northwest Center

It started 50 years ago – a revolution by angry parents whose children with developmental disabilities were turned away from public schools and written off as unable to learn or contribute.

The mothers and fathers who founded Northwest Center believed in their children, like all parents do. Refusing to accept the prevailing paradigm of segregation, they challenged society – and changed it. They hired their own teachers. As their children grew, they formed businesses to employ them. They stormed Olympia and changed the law in 1971, requiring public schools to provide education to all. The concept of equal opportunity seems so basic, but what a profound Revolution these mothers and fathers launched – one that continues today.

At Northwest Center, we believe the only way society can reach its potential is for everyone to participate fully in classrooms, businesses and the community. Inclusion is not a compromise or a way to give back. When people of all abilities learn, work and play together, we all become stronger and more successful. People with autism, Down syndrome or cerebral palsy are valuable not in spite of their differences, but because of them. Their unique way of experiencing the world evokes qualities in everyone around them that otherwise would be lost.

This is the Revolution: the world needs everyone.

For 50 years, Northwest Center has modeled the principle of inclusion. At our Early Learning Centers, typically developing children and children with special needs share the same classrooms, curriculum and high expectations. We provide comprehensive Early Intervention to hundreds of families annually. Each year, we place hundreds of outstanding employees in jobs with local companies, while employing over 400 people with disabilities in our own companies. Our competitive businesses range from electronics manufacturing to commercial laundry to packaging and distribution for global brands.

Northwest Center has evolved from a “center” for people with disabilities to a center of excellence that helps the community embrace inclusion and reap its benefits. We’re shifting the conversation from disability, with its assumptions of limit and constraint, to inclusion, with its promise of growth and contribution.

As you read the remarkable stories that follow, consider two things. The first is the power of inclusion to transform everyone, not just the person with the disability. The second is that, for every story of transformation, thousands more wait to happen.

Northwest Center serves more than 1,000 families a year, but the unmet need is staggering. In Washington state, 15,000 people with special needs languish on waiting lists, while another 46,000 have given up – over 60,000 people whose potential is wasted! Funding for Early Intervention therapy remains static while the need is exploding. The unemployment rate for people with developmental disabilities hovers near 80 percent.

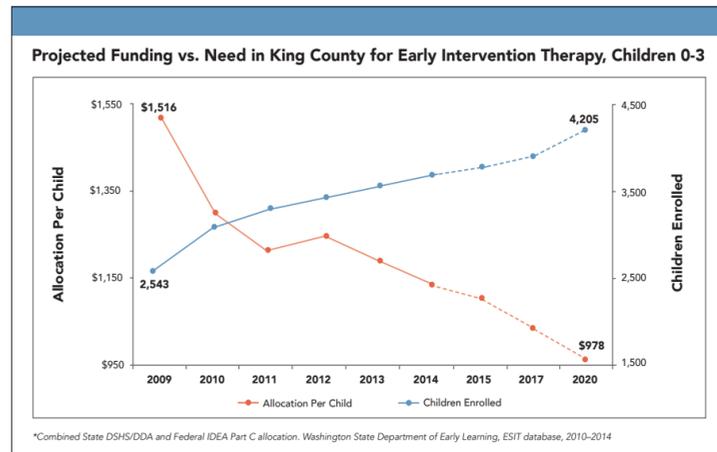
Now more than ever, it makes sense for all of us to invest in people with developmental disabilities, including them fully while providing the support they need. This is a matter of enlightened self-interest: there is not a single human resource we can afford to waste.

This is the Revolution: the world needs everyone.

Northwest Center is working toward a future where inclusion simply *is*. We’re expanding disability employment with national initiatives with major global companies. We’re working to make inclusive Early Learning available to tens of thousands of families across the region who have children with special needs.

But we cannot expand the Revolution without your support. Please Join the Revolution by visiting www.nwcenter.org and investing generously in human value.

The world needs everyone, and Northwest Center needs you.



Onna Defies the Odds

Onna’s parents have a nickname for her: “Dancing Iron Baby.”

“She’d been through so much as a baby, but her little feet were always dancing,” explains her mother Marija. “She was always moving along, pushing.”

When Onna was born with Down syndrome, Marija remembers, “The experience is initially very negative. You’re told, ‘I’m so sorry. Your child has this diagnosis.’ Your expectations are not very high.”

A social worker helped change that. “She said, ‘Let’s talk about the abilities of this beautiful girl you have.’”

Northwest Center Kids, where

Onna attends Early Learning, also puts the emphasis on ability.

“It felt like the place for us right away,” Marija says. “At the time, Onna couldn’t pull herself into a stand without support. But in the first half hour at Northwest Center Kids, she was doing it over and over, because she was watching the other kids.”

Marija says the inclusive model plays a huge part in Onna’s progress. “Onna plays alongside children that don’t have disabilities. Both sides learn valuable lessons,” she says.

“The teachers apply therapy throughout the day,” she continues. “We all work together. They are so excited about Onna’s progress.”

The Dancing Iron Baby is still pushing forward. “She is healthy, walking, running, jumping. She is talking, uses sign language. We have very high expectations now,” Marija says.

“Our children live in one world; they share it,” she continues. “Why wait until they’re older to talk about how to make life better for adults and individuals with special needs, when you can just include the children from the beginning?”



Northwest Center Kids offers Early Intervention with a comprehensive approach involving the family in the child’s natural setting, where they learn and play. Inclusive Early Learning is offered in two locations downtown and Greenwood for children from 6 weeks to 12 years.

50 YEARS OF REVOLUTION

1960

When their kids are rejected by public schools, Seattle parents of children with developmental disabilities form their own in loaned rooms at churches and community centers. Fred Fontana, a parent on the board of the Boeing Employee Good Neighbors Fund, proposes that five “basement schools” merge to qualify for a \$20,000 grant. A steering committee plans a school that includes a workshop for job and life skills.



1965

The committee secures two Naval Supply Depot buildings at Pier 91 in Interbay, where Northwest Center is dedicated on August 28, 1965. A key is presented to eight-year-old student Debra to officially open the doors. She’s shown here with Senator Henry M. Jackson and Rear Admiral W. E. Ferrell.



The Big Blue Truck™ hits the road as Northwest Center partners with Value Village. The new thrift store buys donated clothing to help fund education programs.



1970

Governor Dan Evans signs House Bill 90, “Education for All,” into law in 1971. He is shown with the team who wrote and got the law passed in just two years: founders Janet Taggart, Katie Dolan, Cecile Lindquist and Evelyn Chapman, and law student William Dussault (law student George Breck not pictured). Education for All mandates that public schools in Washington state educate children with disabilities, and includes a provision that schools that do not comply will lose a portion of their funding.



Katie Dolan, pictured, and Janet Taggart found The Troubleshooters to help families negotiate Social Security and other benefits for their children with disabilities. The Troubleshooters inspires federal legislation to establish Protection & Advocacy agencies in every state.



Northwest Center & Value Village: A Partnership for Good



In 1967, just two years after our founding, Northwest Center entered into a partnership with Value Village. We collect clothing and household donations with The Big Blue Truck™ and The Big Blue Bin,™ Value Village buys that merchandise to sell in its stores, and the revenue funds our education and employment programs. This innovative “social business” model was decades ahead of its time. Today, the partnership is stronger than ever.

William Ellison opened the first Value Village store in Renton, WA in 1966. When he approached Northwest Center in 1967, former Northwest Center CEO Jim McClurg recalls, “The finance committee was a bit suspicious – what he was offering sounded too good to be true. They invited Bill to make a presentation to the full board, who liked the way it sounded. It was probably one of the most important things we ever decided.”

Northwest Center CEO Tom Everill agrees. “Bill Ellison’s offer changed the course of our history,”

he says. “Our partnership with Value Village has given Northwest Center a sustainable source of funding that lets us design innovative programs for the community. Northwest Center has grown into a force for social change and human value.”

The partnership also benefits the greater community, says Value Village CEO Ken Alterman. “By purchasing goods from nonprofits, we fill our shelves with locally sourced goods; we pay nonprofits that directly impact members of that community; and we provide a marketplace for shoppers looking for a great value,” he says.

Northwest Center exists to promote inclusion, with the conviction that society will only reach its full potential when people of all abilities participate fully in classrooms, businesses and community. For years, Value Village has hired employees through Northwest Center: first workers who had the guidance of an on-site Northwest Center job coach, now individuals who work as part of the store team. One such employee is Brian, who worked at the Crown Hill Value Village for six years.

When his family moved from Seattle, Brian told Northwest Center that he wanted to work for Value Village again. Now he’s a Community Donation Center Ambassador at the Totem Lake location.

“Community support isn’t about a reputational boost or strategic opportunity,” Alterman says. “It’s a fundamental product of how we choose to operate.” Every Value Village store employs nearly 50 people who receive comprehensive benefits and career advancement opportunities, he says. “But most valuable is the cycle of good we create. The more merchandise Northwest Center brings to Value Village, the more the community donates and shops, the greater good we can accomplish together.”

“Community support is a fundamental product of how we operate.” – Ken Alterman, Value Village CEO

Value Village is such a perfect fit with Northwest Center’s mission, we named an award for Bill Ellison. Each year at our Golden Hearts Luncheon, we present the William O. Ellison Award to a community member or company whose accomplishments embody the inclusive spirit. It’s the spirit Ellison fostered with Northwest Center 48 years ago – one that shows no sign of waning today.



Brian, Community Donation Center Ambassador at Value Village Totem Lake

Value Village
Good deeds. Great deals.



Sibling Success at Northwest Center Kids

By Anouk, Northwest Center Mom

I’m a mother of two children at Northwest Center Kids. Our son was diagnosed at 18 months old with autism. Our daughter was born prematurely and diagnosed with Prader Willi Syndrome.

When our daughter was one, she wasn’t able to sit up by herself and was fed through a tube. The kids in her classroom who were typically developing, the teachers, everything contributed to her development and success. She started walking at three and a half. She’s doing amazing.

Our son was still crawling at 18 months and wouldn’t make any eye contact or respond to his name. Now he can play with other kids and have fun. They accept him as an equal.

We’re so grateful to Northwest Center. It’s our family.

Being in this program has been such a positive influence in our lives. I’m so grateful to Northwest Center and people who support Northwest Center. It’s our family.



ON THE COVER

Nora has been part of the Northwest Center family since she was an infant, receiving Early Intervention therapy and attending Early Learning at Northwest Center Kids. Her mother Marti, now a Northwest Center board member, says, “Typical kids and kids with disabilities learn from each other. That was a revolutionary concept for me. It was also important for us to see adults with disabilities working. We saw that Nora could be a contributing, valued part of the community.” Today, Nora is 11 years old and thriving.



50 YEARS, continued

1975

Members of the Education for All team pay their own way to Washington, D.C. to work on the federal law inspired by and named for the state law they created. The Education for All Handicapped Children Act is enacted in 1975.



1980

Northwest Center Special Industries, a workshop where people with disabilities gain job skills and employment, acquires one of its first commercial contracts to make wooden soffits for a local homebuilder. With a federal grant, Northwest Center develops a fully integrated education and therapy model that combines children with disabilities with those developing typically. The 1982 photo at right ran in the Seattle Post-Intelligencer with this caption: “Tom Larson, special education teacher in the Northwest Center for the Retarded preschool, plays his guitar and sings folk songs to the infants and toddlers of this model integrated program.”



1985

Northwest Center acquires more contracts with local businesses:

- Manufacturing commercial airplane components for Boeing
- Assembly and packaging for Nintendo, Seattle’s Best Coffee and Nordstrom
- Assembling EKG patches for Quinton Instruments
- And packaging software for a Bellevue start-up called Microsoft



Northwest Center adds Early Intervention for children birth to age 3. This pioneering program includes therapy that takes place in the child’s home or other familiar places, rather than a clinical setting.



1990

Northwest Center officially becomes a “social enterprise” in 1994, acquiring its first wholly-owned business, American Data Guard (ADG), a secure document shredding company. ADG employs people of all abilities and generates program revenue through 2014.



Lawrence has the Right Tools for the Job



You could call him MacGyver. Like the early '90s TV character, Lawrence makes tools from household objects like empty soup cans and AA batteries. But instead of thwarting secret plots against the U.S. Government, he solves business problems at Electronetics, LLC.

"He's pretty incredible," says Scott Patterson, Lawrence's supervisor and Electronetics plant manager.

Patterson brought Lawrence in for a working interview to get a feel for his skills assembling the off-grid power transformers, high frequency magnetics and custom inductors Electronetics

creates for the medical and aerospace industry. The company is part of Northwest Center's Social Enterprise model: a business wholly-owned by Northwest Center that generates revenue for education and employment programs and employs an inclusive workforce.

Lawrence quickly proved the wisdom of such diversity – while he has a developmental disability, he also has a laser focus on detail and a knack for ingenious solutions. "He could do everything we showed him in five minutes," Patterson says.

Lawrence told the team how, in fourth grade, he made battery-powered Christmas lights, and then

went on to make LED lights, switches and job tools. Most interesting to his interviewers was the scientific way he recorded his work.

"He documented the process and results, taking pictures and making drawings of each step," says Patterson.

"I just don't want to waste stuff," Lawrence says. "I plan it out to make sure it will work."

Electronics now employs Lawrence to wind and terminate toroid transformers and prep them for shipment. The second day on the job, Lawrence came in with his own invention: a small machine that makes it simpler to twist wires through transformers onto pins in preparation for soldering.

"He was using a tool he had made at home," Patterson marvels. "A little electric motor with a device to grab onto the wire. It was amazing."

Lawrence is matter-of-fact about it. "Tools are required if you want to be able to get something more advanced done for yourself," he says. "Once you figure out how to make a tool that makes things better, it makes work not difficult anymore."

He's already looking ahead to his future. "I'm quite good at this and I know I want to move from assembly to engineering," he says. "I want to modify products to make them better. I want to be the one who designs and develops them."

"The only challenge we face is keeping up with his pace," Patterson says. "But that's a good challenge to have."



Angelica Shines at Brown & Brown

The employees at Brown & Brown of WA, Inc., Seattle Division, would like you to throw out any preconceived notions about working with people who have a developmental disability.

Account Executive Suzie Darst has worked for more than a year with a colleague hired through Northwest Center: Angelica, an IT associate who manages the Brown & Brown Facebook page and helps organize benefits packages and mailings.

"It's really time-consuming and she got the hang of it quick," Darst says.

During the interview process, Angelica mocked up a Facebook page with no input from the Brown & Brown team. "We were terribly impressed," says Team Resource Manager Tracy Johnson. "She figured out what Brown & Brown was about."

Angelica's hard work and positive attitude get rave reviews.

"Angelica comes in every day with

a smile, with a laugh, so happy to be here," says Darst. "

"Huge morale booster," Kelly Agan, account manager, agrees.

And about those preconceived notions: Brown & Brown addressed those before Angelica even interviewed, with sessions for employees to ask questions and talk to Northwest Center's Director of Employment Services Wally Tablit. His advice? Treat employees with disabilities like anyone else.

"She's integrated so nicely into the team," Johnson says. "Angelica says she feels so good knowing what she's doing is helping the team and making a difference. And it really is."

"I definitely got my dream job already," Angelica adds.

As if on cue, Agan shares an all-staff email that Angelica has just sent. It reads: "Hello Everybody, If you want me to assist you with any project don't hesitate to let me know :) HAPPY THURSDAY!"

Northwest Center Employment Services

Employing people with disabilities is good business. Northwest Center provides employment services to adults with disabilities in King County and Spokane County. We place people where their skills are the best match for the job, work with your staff and provide as much job coaching as your new hire needs.

50 YEARS, continued

1990

A second Social Enterprise, Puget Sound Laundry Services, is soon founded. To secure the contract to provide linen service to McChord Air Force Base, the facility is renovated, equipped and open for business in four months. Senator Slade Gorton is shown cutting the ribbon in 1994.



1995

The Big Blue Truck™ is joined by The Big Blue Bin™ in 1996. Donation bins at businesses across the region are convenient places to drop clothing and shoes for Northwest Center to sell to Value Village for program revenue.



2000

Northwest Center adds to its family of wholly-owned businesses with Electronetics and Argus Janitorial & Building Services.



2005

With the acquisition of Nova Services, Northwest Center expands employment training, staffing and thrift operations to the Spokane area.

2010

In partnership with King County and the City of Seattle, Northwest Center Kids opens an early childhood education center in the Chinook building downtown, providing inclusive learning and play to children 6 weeks to 5 years.



2015

Northwest Center celebrates its 50th anniversary as the largest community service organization in the Pacific Northwest, reaching more than 1,000 families annually and serving children and adults of all abilities.



Read more at nwcenter.org/timeline

The Northwest Center Family of Businesses

Following the Social Enterprise model, Northwest Center owns businesses where we employ people of all abilities working side by side, with proceeds funding our programs and administrative costs.



NORTHWEST CENTER
Assembly & Packaging

Assembly, packaging, warehousing, shipping and distribution



Northwest Center
Commercial Landscaping

Landscaping for customers throughout Seattle



ARGUS

Commercial janitorial and building services in Seattle and Spokane



ELECTRONETICS

Custom magnetics for aerospace, medical, defense, audio and telecommunications



NORTHWEST CENTER

Janitorial, landscape and building maintenance, ship provisioning, mail room and reception services



The Big Blue Truck™

Clothing donations sold to Value Village to support our programs; auto donations also accepted



PUGET SOUND LAUNDRY SERVICES

Commercial laundry service including dry cleaning with green technology

"It didn't take huge amounts of money. It didn't take paid lobbyists. It took citizens who cared."

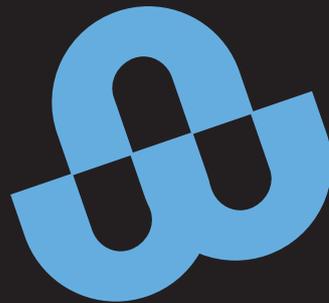
– Former Washington Governor Dan Evans

A Tribute to Our Founders

In a very real way, our founders changed laws and lives across the city, the state and eventually the entire United States. The staff, board and parents of Northwest Center will always be profoundly grateful for their extraordinary accomplishments.

Nadean & Robert* Bass
Evelyn & John* Chapman
Millie & Edward DeGroot*
Katie & Duane Dolan*
Ruby & Herb Ellison*
Kathryn Gilly*
Kay Herndon
Mary & Joe Hiramatsu*
Cecile & Reese Lindquist
Myrtle & Bob McNary*
Ruth & Elvino Naccarato
Doreen Peake
Sally & Robert Puff
Janet & Phillip* Taggart

*Deceased



Join the Revolution: Get Involved



The Seattle Mariners NWC Day at Safeco Field

JULY 26, 2015

Purchase tickets:

mariners.com/nwcenter

Promo code: NWCenter



The Bill Krueger Celebrity Golf Classic

JULY 27, 2015

Details:

nwcentergiving.org/events



The Golden Hearts Luncheon

OCTOBER 6, 2015

Register online for this
celebration at:

nwcentergiving.org/events

50 YEARS. 50 STORIES WORTH SHARING.

Read them: nwcenter.org/50stories Share them: [#StoriesWorthSharing](https://twitter.com/StoriesWorthSharing)

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