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BOSMA ENTERPRISES CELEBRATES GRAND OPENING OF NEW HEADQUARTERS

New building will allow the nonprofit organization to expand its mission of eradicating high unemployment among Hoosiers who are blind or visually impaired

INDIANAPOLIS—Today, Bosma Enterprises is celebrating the grand opening of its new state-of-the-art headquarters at 6270 Corporate Drive on the city’s northwest side. The newly renovated, 170,000-square-foot facility will allow the nonprofit organization to expand its business lines and create more jobs for Hoosiers who are blind or visually impaired—a group that currently faces a 62 percent unemployment rate in Indiana and 70 percent nationally.

“Today is a watershed moment in the century-old history of our organization. This new facility is the first step toward our goal of becoming the best in the world at what we do—helping Hoosiers who are blind or visually impaired gain the life skills they need to remain independent, and the job skills they need to stay self-sufficient,” said Lou Money maker, CEO, Bosma Enterprises. “Through the pioneering use of technology and innovative design, our Corporate Drive headquarters will stand as a national center of excellence and will help us create meaningful job opportunities for hundreds of Hoosiers each year.”

More than half of Bosma’s 208 employees—at all levels of the organization—are blind or visually impaired, making it the state’s largest employer of this group of individuals.

The new building will house all of Bosma’s disposable medical products packaging and logistics operations, which includes exam and surgical glove packaging and surgical kitting operations, and altogether employ more than 70 people. Through an AbilityOne contract with the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), Bosma packages more than 2,200 cases of gloves per day, and last year shipped more than 480 million exam gloves to VA hospitals throughout the country.

The new building also nearly doubles Bosma’s warehousing capacity. The 100,000 square foot warehouse uses three new wire-guided turret trucks, which can be operated by someone who is visually impaired, creating new job opportunities.

A key feature of the new building is its use of innovative wayfinding technology that will allow Bosma’s employees and clients to better navigate their new surroundings. Bosma is one of the first organizations in the U.S. to use the navigation software BlindSquare, a mobile app that uses strategically-placed beacons to help people who are blind navigate unfamiliar territory by providing audio queues. Bosma has installed the Bluetooth beacons throughout

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the new facility to direct users to key locations such as restrooms, food service areas and meeting rooms. The organization hopes to serve as a resource to other organizations looking to adopt BlindSquare or other similar technology in the future.

“Advancements in mobile technology is making it easier for someone who is blind or visually impaired to navigate the world,” said Mendi Evans, assistive technology specialist, Bosma Enterprises. “I think technology has really leveled the playing field, and allows individuals who are blind or visually impaired to not only be hired, but be equally successful in the workplace.”

Bosma consulted with its own experts to ensure mobility was top-of-mind with every facet of the new building’s interior design. For example, color and contrast are used on the walls and flooring to help people who have some usable vision navigate the space. Various areas of the facility are also marked by changes in flooring texture, providing tangible wayfinding markers.

In addition to the packaging and warehousing areas, the new building will include a computer training lab, a bistro that will offer food service to employees and guests, while also providing employment and valuable cross-training opportunities, and Bosma’s retail store, which is nearly 400 percent bigger, offers tools and aids such as Braille and talking watches, canes and textured labelers.

The new building will also allow Bosma to serve more people through its employment and rehabilitation programs, which help nearly 1,000 Hoosiers every year relearn basic life skills to adapt to life without sight. With help from a \$750,000 grant from the United Way of Central Indiana, Bosma is currently renovating 13,500 square feet of office space at 7225 Woodland Drive, which will add 50 percent more space and allow the organization to increase staffing and reduce the six-month waiting period for its services.

“Right now, there are nearly 160,000 Hoosiers coping with vision loss. That’s more than the populations of Fishers and Carmel combined,” Moneymaker said. “Now consider that 62 percent of those people are unemployed. That’s a hard number to grasp—and much harder to accept. But that’s the reality for thousands of Hoosiers living without vision. We cannot accept that losing one’s sight means giving up opportunities for meaningful work, which is why Bosma Enterprises is on a mission to not only create opportunities, but secure complete equality for people who are blind or visually impaired.”

About Bosma Enterprises

Bosma Enterprises is a nonprofit organization that’s been helping Hoosiers who are blind or visually impaired for more than 100 years. Our experienced staff (more than half of whom are blind) offers personalized programs ranging from counseling, to job placement, to training for daily living skills—helping adults gain the life skills they need to remain



independent, and the job skills they need to stay self-sufficient. To learn more about how you can help our mission, or how our mission can help you, visit Bosma.org.

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