ANNUAL REPORT FY 2021

Determined and Able: Bestwork’s Essential Workforce
MESSAGE FROM THE BOARD CHAIR AND PRESIDENT & CEO

Bestwork provides training and employment opportunities for individuals who are blind and visually impaired. To summarize this last year succinctly, it was all about endurance and persistence. As an organization that was deemed “essential,” we worked through the COVID-19 pandemic by accommodating and adjusting the way we operated. This resilience and agility enabled Bestwork to meet deadlines.

In addition, Belinda Moore, Bestwork’s President & CEO for more than 30 years, retired. The agency launched a national search to find her successor. In July of 2021, Jon Katz was appointed to lead the organization into the next phase of its evolution.

Jon joins Bestwork with an extensive background in entrepreneurial leadership. With a focus on Department of Defense/Federal Civilian Markets, Jon led the business development, channel sales, and military resale division as Vice President of Business Development at National Industries for the Blind (NIB).

With new leadership comes a new vision: Growth and Diversification with the goal of broadening employment opportunities for people who are blind or visually impaired. The agency will remain invested in its core competencies for manufacturing textiles and apparel, but will also aggressively seek out customers interested in engaging Bestwork for non-textile products and knowledge-based services.

We’re thankful to have endured last year, and we’re looking forward to the future and to sharing our progress in the year ahead.

John D. Shaw  
CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD

Jon Katz  
PRESIDENT & CEO

MISSION

Bestwork Industries for the Blind, Inc. is a private not-for-profit corporation dedicated to improving the quality of life for people who are blind by providing training and employment opportunities in a supportive work environment.
OPERATIONAL OVERHAUL

Managing protocols during a pandemic

Bestwork operates under the US AbilityOne® Program, which means we manufacture and provide multiple products to support the needs of Federal and State Agencies. As an integral member of the Department of Defense’s textile and apparel industrial base, Bestwork was deemed essential during the pandemic and continued to manufacture and ship products to support their customer’s needs throughout the pandemic.

Adjusting quickly to accommodate CDC regulations, the agency instituted protocols that included a complete facility reconfiguration:

• Stations were reset to ensure social distancing could be maintained in all work and break areas.
• PPE was provided for staff.
• Cleaning, sanitation, and disinfecting efforts were heightened.

Accommodations were also made to have registered nurses on-site daily to provide temperature checks, contact tracing, and COVID testing. These measures helped ensure the health and safety of our workforce.
WORKFORCE RESPONSE

While Bestwork was working to make sure employees remained safe, our employees were working to ensure we reached production goals.

Our team fully embraces the fact that they have a purpose and that their contributions make a difference to our military. To accommodate the needs of our customers when employee counts varied, our production team creatively strategized ways to manage production while prioritizing the deadlines.

Employees were cross-trained. Those that sew learned how to do new apparel configurations, which allowed us to keep forging ahead on work. Those in packing or distribution were able to interchange as needed. Administrative and management staff pitched in. From packing to sewing—where there was a need, it was filled.

The result: products were completed, shipped, and received on time.
2021 SNAPSHOT

2 NEW CONTRACTS AWARDED
Bestwork won two contracts in 2021.

106 EMPLOYEES
In fiscal year 2021, Bestwork’s workforce grew from 101 employees to 106.

380,470 TOTAL PRODUCTS DISTRIBUTED

231,661 Military Garments
111,323 General Service Administration Products
30,550 Commercial Garments
6,936 ACCSES NJ Products

RIGHT
Bestwork employees have the ability to cross train in various areas. Warren Walker, pictured here, currently works in packing, but he’s also a trained sewing operator.
Belinda Moore Retires, and Board Appoints Jon Katz as New President & CEO

Belinda Moore led Bestwork Industries for the Blind as President & CEO since 1991. In 2021, after 30 amazing years, she announced plans for retirement. After an intensive search, the Board of Directors appointed Jon Katz as the new President & CEO. Jon assumed the role on July 12, 2021.

Jon Katz comes to Bestwork from National Industries for the Blind (NIB), the nation’s largest employment resource for people who are blind, where he was Vice President of Business Development. Jon led the addition of more than 2,000 Blind Work Years and an increase in over 15% in channel sales.

“Jon’s program knowledge in growing employment opportunities for people who are blind and his management experience will be significant factors in successfully assuming his new role.” said Kevin Lynch, President and CEO of NIB. “We are fortunate Jon has chosen to lead one of our associated agencies and look forward to working with him to fulfill our missions.”

While at NIB, Jon provided Advisory & Administrative Assistance Services to Georgia Industries for the Blind, inspiring a transformation of that organization. Jon’s work at NIB enabled him to gain insight into the more than 100 associated nonprofit agencies based in 39 states at more than 250 locations.

As a Veteran and Commissioned Officer in the United States Marine Corps, Jon is a passionate advocate of Bestwork’s mission and activities. “I pledge my commitment to the Bestwork mission of being a ‘Best in Class’ rehabilitation enterprise and improving the quality of life for
people who are blind by providing training and employment opportunities in a supportive work environment."

He is eager to lead Bestwork into new market spaces with new lines of business that are replicable, scalable, readily adaptable, and accessible for people who are blind, including but not limited to the AbilityOne® Program.

Jack Shaw, Chairman of Bestwork’s Board of Directors, expressed his enthusiasm for leading the Board and working in partnership with Jon. “We welcome Jon and are poised to support him in taking Bestwork into the next period of its history.”

And what a history it’s been. Under the leadership of Belinda Moore, Bestwork became a successful, mission-based social enterprise that received national awards for employment growth. Bestwork’s operations grew from a 10,000 square foot facility with 18 employees to a 50,000 square foot training and employment facility with 106 blind and sighted employees from South Jersey and Philadelphia.

“As we enter our fifth decade of service, we poignantly bid farewell to Belinda who has been the President & CEO for three of those decades,” says Jack Shaw. “She led Bestwork through good times and difficult times without ever taking her eye off the goal—creating jobs for people who are blind or visually impaired. Most recently, she led us through the pandemic—one of the greatest crises we have ever faced—with steadiness and creativity.”

Belinda stands out to her colleagues at the national level as an active and valued contributor to the network of agencies that participate in the AbilityOne® Program. “Belinda’s dedication and commitment to our mission of creating employment opportunities for people who are blind has been truly remarkable,” said Kevin Lynch. “In addition to being a champion in the community, Belinda’s made immeasurable contributions to our mission nationally while serving on several boards, including NIB’s Board of Directors. We wish her all the best as she starts the next chapter of her life.”

“Belinda’s dedication and commitment to our mission of creating employment opportunities for people who are blind has been truly remarkable.

—KEVIN LYNCH
Bestwork celebrates 40 years of service to people who are blind and visually impaired!

1981
Bestwork Industries for the Blind, Inc. was founded by Jim Varsaci, a native of Camden who lost his sight in WWII. After the war, Jim adjusted to life without sight with the help of the New Jersey Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired (NJCBVI). He not only learned skills to live independently, but he became the manager of a NJCBVI workshop offering skills training and employment opportunities to roughly 25 other people who were visually impaired. When state funding ran out in 1981, Jim refused to let that be the end. He marshaled community support, sought assistance from the NJCBVI, and forged a dynamic affiliation with NIB. His perseverance paid off and the nonprofit, Bestwork Industries for the Blind, Inc. was established in a 10,000 square foot facility in Westmont, NJ. Jim passed away seven years later in 1988.

1991
Belinda Moore was named Bestwork’s new President and CEO. Under her direction, a new management team solidified what Jim had originated and grew it dramatically.
1993
Bestwork was awarded the first service contract through NIB in 1993.

1999
A new 25,000 square foot facility was purchased in Runnemede, NJ, in order to increase production capacity. More jobs followed and Bestwork became a valued service provider to our military, state, and federal government.

2013
Bestwork relocated to a 50,000 square foot facility in Cherry Hill, NJ. The new space afforded the company the opportunity to nearly double its workforce and pursue a wider variety of contracts.

2021
Jon Katz assumes the role of President & CEO. Jon’s vision to grow and diversify Bestwork’s competencies will lead to many more opportunities for people who are blind and visually impaired.

September 14, 2021: Bestwork celebrates 40th Anniversary!
2021 HIGHLIGHT

Bestwork employee Warren Walker named Employee of the Year for 2021!

Warren came to work at Bestwork Industries for the Blind in 2002 after unexpectedly losing his vision. He began as a sewing operator, but found his finger dexterity limited, so he transitioned into a packing role, where he’s confident and sure. Through the years, Warren’s worked on various packing lines, including the Navy Black Fleece and the Extended Cold Weather Clothing System (ECWCS) line. He takes great pride in tagging and packaging military garments.

Warren became the person Bestwork staff and his colleagues could depend on, often listening and providing helpful guidance or words of wisdom. He rose among the plant staff as the ‘voice of the people,’ volunteering to serve on the Employee Relations and Safety Committees, and was appointed chair of the Quality Work Environment (QWE), a position he’s held with great pride since 2018.

“I enjoy what I do, I value the people I work with, and I’m thankful for my job,” said Warren.

His dedication came full circle when in 2021, Warren was selected as Bestwork’s Employee of the Year. This accolade was special because he was chosen by his peers. Warren...
accepted his award from President & CEO Jon Katz, surrounded by cheers and applause. Clearly emotional, he addressed his colleagues, “I want to thank everyone for this award - it means so much to me,” he said.

Outside of work, Warren is a family man. He enjoys the warmer months where he can spend time with his family outdoors being active. He loves going to the shore, especially when he can go fishing and crabbing with his brother. Warren also loves flea market shopping, often visiting popular markets like Cowtown, Berlin, and Columbus located in South Jersey.

Get Warren talking about his grandkids and he really lights up. Sadly, the Walker family faced tremendous heartbreak in 2021. Warren’s only daughter passed away from COVID, leaving behind three precious daughters, who will now be raised by Warren and his wife. He’s focused on providing for them and their care, and enjoys spending as much quality time with them, as possible.

Reflecting on his life, Warren does not regret anything that’s happened. It hasn’t been easy, but it’s made him the person he is – kind, caring, and resilient.

“I enjoy what I do, I value the people I work with, and I’m thankful for my job.”

—WARREN WALKER
Bestwork has a dedicated community of partners. Thank you for your continued support.

**Individuals**
- Joyce Albrecht
- George Altshuller
- W. Preston Brawn
- Emil Dupuy
- Ann Marie Fantini
- Stanley Filimon
- Daniel Galasso
- Tereze Gegaj
- Donald and Marianne Green
- VS Hatcher
- Richard Hofmann
- James and Janis Howe
- John L. and Sidney Anne Hughes
- Sandy and Scott Hughes
- Brian Katz
- Kenneth Landgraf
- Suzanne Martina
- Susan Moorman
- Gregory Pereira
- Isabel and Warren Pross
- Delbert and Constance Rife
- Kenneth Saunders
- Sue Ann and John D. Shaw
- Jennifer Shropshire
- Pamela K. Shropshire
- Alan and Amy Stedman
- John and Cynthia Vena
- Loretta and Edward Wrobel
- Alfred Zarroli

* Board of Directors

* Advisory Board

Please note we endeavor to maintain complete and accurate records. If you notice an error or omission please contact the Director of Communication and Marketing at 856-424-2510 x 219

**RIGHT**
Sewing operator Ruth Swan works on the Black Fleece line, constructing garments for the Navy.
Organizations

AmazonSmile
ATCO Lions International Club
Berlin Lions Club
Brigantine Lions Charitable Foundation
CAF America
Gloucester Township Lions Club
Golden Eagle Cleaning Services
Haddonfield Lions Foundation
Hammonton Lions Club
Lions Club of Stafford
Mantua Lions Club
Neptune Township Lions Club
Network for Good United Way of Greater Philadelphia and Southern New Jersey

Foundations

Albert B. Millett Memorial Fund
Carl & Anne Fravel Foundation
Dolfinger-Mcmahon Foundation
Fund for the NJ Blind, Inc.
Harriet G. Fredericks Foundation
Helen A. Parkhill–The PNC Charitable Trusts Grant
Lillian Schenck Foundation
National Industries for the Blind (NIB)
Rae S. Uber Trust
The Blackbaud Giving Fund-Donation
The Jewish Community Foundation
The Scholler Foundation
The William G. Rohrer Foundation
The WSFS Community Foundation (formerly The Beneficial Foundation)

RIGHT
Bestwork employee Wilfredo Martinez prepares to add grommets to a mesh laundry bag.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS, 2020-2021

John D. Shaw, Chairman
Joyce Albrecht, Vice-Chairman
Kenneth Saunders, Secretary
Alfred X. Zarroli

ADVISORY BOARD

Craig Bickel
Jeffrey R. Gans, Esq.
John L. Hughes, Jr.

Sandra Hughes
Warren L. Pross
James R. Howe

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FINANCIAL OVERVIEW FISCAL YEAR 2020/2021

Support and Revenues

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Amount</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<td>Grants and Donations</td>
<td>$105,847</td>
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<tr>
<td>Product Sales</td>
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<td>Interest Income</td>
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<td>Other Income</td>
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Expenses

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<td>Program Services</td>
<td>$10,194,328</td>
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<td>Administrative/General Operations</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
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Change in Net Assets: $529,152