

Beginning the Ascent





A Journey of Transformation: Our Path to Progress

As part of a new three-year strategic plan, Bestwork has approved an updated Mission and Vision, focused on expansion and transformation.



Our Mission

Bestwork empowers people who are blind or visually impaired by creating employment opportunities, providing training, and offering blindness and low vision services.

Our Vision

Bestwork is a leading advocate and innovative employer for people who are blind or visually impaired and is recognized as a Center of Excellence for blindness and low vision services.

Message from our President & CEO

When we mapped out our strategic journey four years ago, we set ambitious goals to elevate our mission and expand our impact. Today, as we reflect on Fiscal Year 2025, I am incredibly proud to say we have reached a pivotal milestone we call "The Ascent." This past year was defined by unprecedented growth as we scaled new heights, broke our own records, and transformed our vision into reality.

This year, we met or exceeded our Corporate Goals while successfully continuing to minimize Enterprise Risks associated with rapid scaling. Some notable achievements that highlight our upward trajectory include:

Financial Growth and Stability

We broke even for the second year in a row, attaining \$24 million in revenue—more than doubling our FY22 revenue of \$11.4 million.

Expanding Our Footprint

We fully occupied Suite 100 next door, which allowed us to eliminate off-site storage and move production out of corporate office spaces. Additionally, we opened two new satellite facilities in Roselle and Egg Harbor City, bringing our total to three thriving satellites.

Workforce and Partnerships

We are continuing to build fruitful recruiting pipeline partnerships with organizations like Easter Seals, ARC, local universities, and staffing agencies. We are also incredibly proud to announce that we hired our first two deaf-blind employees this year, furthering our commitment to an inclusive workplace.

Business Line Expansion

Our operations continue to diversify and grow:

- We added two new textile apparel sub-lines of business: the Navy Mock Turtle-Neck and Air Force Running Pants.
- Our Kitting-Packaging-Light Assembly (KPLA) division continues to grow with the award of additional military decorative medal sets.
- We were awarded the ACCSES NJ State-Use contract to perform Document Scanning and Digital Imaging (DS/DI) for NJ Transit.
- Our e-Commerce business is expanding, with additional commercial businesses buying through our Preferred Partner Program.

Fundraising and Advocacy

Our fundraising and grant programs are running strong, directly supporting our strategic initiatives and our Blindness & Low Vision Services Center (BLVSC). A major highlight was the successful execution of our first major fundraiser, Dining in the Dark, which raised more than \$73,000.

Message from our President & CEO Cont'd

Furthermore, we are maintaining a strong presence in Government Affairs with aggressive legislative advocacy efforts to champion employment for people who are blind or visually impaired at both the federal and state levels.

Achievements and Awards

Bestwork's impact and growth have been widely recognized this year. We proudly won our 4th NIB Growth Award, were named to the Philly 100 list for the second time and received the prestigious Arnold W. Rintzler Impact Award from InRoads to Opportunities for our unwavering advocacy and commitment to creating opportunities for individuals who are differently abled. These accolades are a testament to the hard work and dedication of our entire organization.

Building for the Future

As we look ahead, we have officially published our Strategic Plan for FY26-28. This plan perfectly aligns our vision to chart our course around three core pillars: Growth, Expansion, and Transformation. By focusing on these three pillars, we are ensuring that Bestwork is positioned not just for immediate success, but for long-term sustainability.

A Note of Thanks

Every successful ascent requires a dedicated team, and I am profoundly grateful for the passionate employees at Bestwork who drive our mission forward every single day. It is truly a privilege, and I am honored to sit on top of such a mountain of talent.

I also want to extend my sincere appreciation to our Board of Directors for their strategic guidance, steadfast commitment to our mission and belief in our vision, and continued trust and confidence in my leadership.

Most importantly, I want to thank YOU—our partners, advocates, and supporters. Your continued trust and investment make it possible for us to break new ground and create meaningful employment opportunities for individuals who are blind or visually impaired.

The Ascent continues, and I am incredibly energized by the vast opportunities that lie ahead. Thank you for walking alongside us on this remarkable journey.



Jon Katz
President & CEO
Bestwork Industries for the Blind



JON KATZ
President & CEO

Message from our Board Chair



JACK SHAW

Chairman of the Board

Four years ago, we established a blueprint for Bestwork's future when Jon Katz took the helm as President & CEO. Today, as we reflect on Fiscal Year 2025, it is clear that we have moved from laying the groundwork to fully embarking on "The Ascent." The transformation of this organization has been nothing short of extraordinary.

Jon and his dedicated team have cultivated an environment of outstanding success and stability. Fiscally, Bestwork is stronger than ever. The organization achieved a remarkable \$24 million in revenue—more than doubling our FY22 figures—and reached a break-even point for the second consecutive year. From a governance perspective, the Board is incredibly proud of the leadership team's rigorous approach to meeting corporate goals and actively minimizing enterprise risks with sound, actionable mitigation plans.

Our core mission of providing meaningful employment for people who are blind or visually impaired continues to reach new levels. This year, we proudly expanded our footprint by opening two additional satellite facilities in Roselle and Egg Harbor City, and we celebrated a beautiful milestone by welcoming our first two deaf-blind employees. We are consistently diversifying our portfolio, from securing the ACCSES NJ State-Use contract with NJ Transit to expanding our e-Commerce, Kitting/Packaging/Lite Assembly, and textile apparel lines.

Furthermore, Bestwork's community recognition and advocacy efforts have shown incredible momentum. Our government affairs footprint is aggressive and effective, amplifying our mission to influential leaders. The overwhelming community support was on full display during our inaugural Dining in the Dark event, which successfully raised over \$73,000. It is no surprise that this agency's hard work has been recognized with our 4th NIB Growth Award, a second appearance on the Philly 100 list, and the prestigious Arnold W. Rintzler Impact Award bestowed to us by InRoads to Opportunities.

To ensure this momentum continues, we recently published our Strategic Plan for FY26-28, aligning the CEO's vision around three vital pillars: Growth, Expansion, and Transformation.

With everything happening at Bestwork, our foundation is rock solid and our trajectory is pointed firmly upward. On behalf of the Board of Directors, I want to thank you for your continued support. We are incredibly excited about what lies ahead.

Jack Shaw

Chairman of the Board

Bestwork Leadership

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Alfred X. Zarroli



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President & CEO

Tom Black

SVP of Products & Business Services

Greg Pereira

Sr. Director of Finance & Accounting

Lauren Scarpa

Director of Communication & Marketing

Shannon Brown

Director of Workforce Development

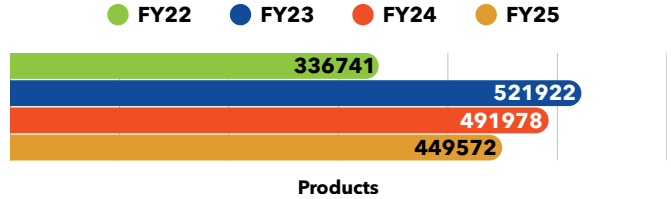
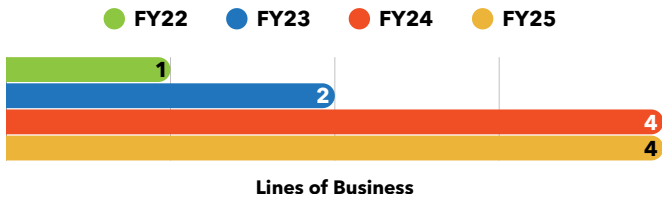
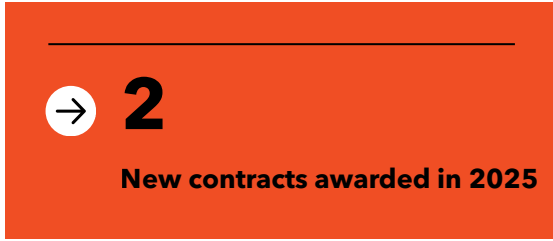
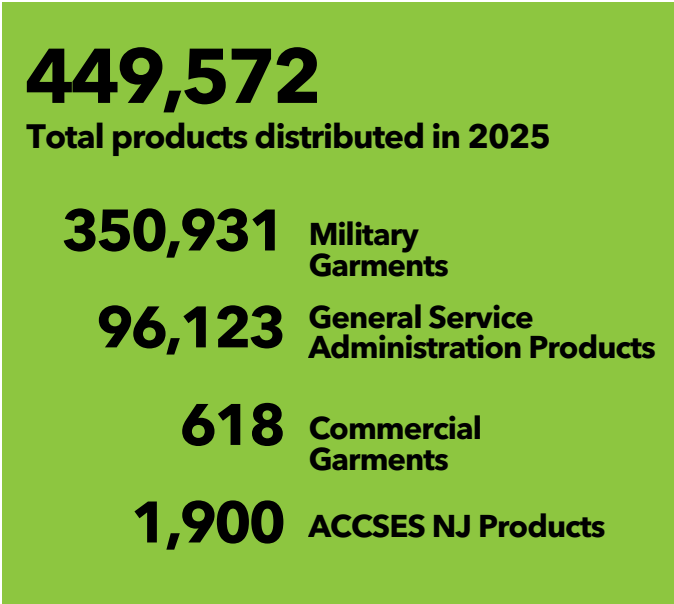
MaryAnn Ragone

Director of the Blindness & Low Vision Services Center

Bridgette Matison

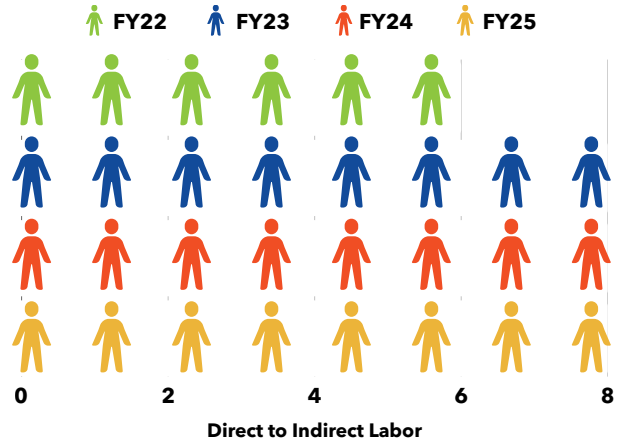
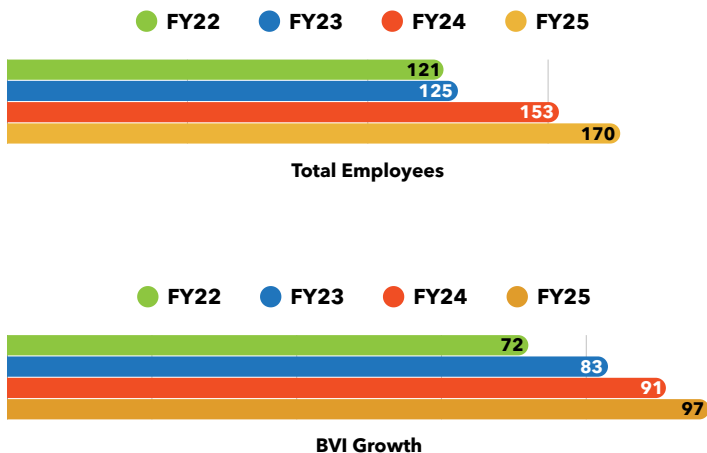
Executive Coordinator

Bestwork At a Glance



Upward Mobility & Blind Labor

Bestwork's main priority is to offer training and employment to the blind and visually impaired (BVI) community, with opportunities for upward mobility.



Employee of the Year



Charles Banks

Ask Chuck what work means to him, and he'll tell you plainly that it gives his family financial stability. That humility—paired with a deep sense of purpose—is precisely what makes him an exceptional representative of our mission. He measures his success not in accolades, but in the security he provides for his loved ones and the quality he brings to the products we deliver to our customers and the military.

At Bestwork Industries for the Blind, we believe excellence is measured not only by output and quality, but by the character, compassion, and resilience an individual brings to the mission. Few embody that standard more fully than Charles “Chuck” Banks—an employee whose life and work reflect unwavering determination, quiet leadership, and a profound commitment to service.

Born in New Jersey as one of seven children, Chuck faced challenges his siblings did not. He was born blind, with no official diagnosis to explain his vision loss. When his family moved to Philadelphia during his toddler years, his great-grandparents became anchors in his young life. His great-grandmother taught him to cook, clean, and live independently—skills he still uses and shares generously today. His great-grandfather nurtured his knack for working with his hands, building the confidence to master equipment and solve practical problems—traits that would become part of his professional identity.

Chuck attended the Overbrook School for the Blind, graduating in 1985. At Overbrook he found a community that recognized and celebrated his enthusiasm and tenacity. He forged lifelong friendships—relationships that endure today, with many of those classmates now colleagues in the vision rehabilitation and manufacturing community. After high school, Chuck worked in a series of cooking and cleaning roles, always eager to put in an honest day’s work and continuously build his skill set.

Pursuing further training, Chuck enrolled at the Center for the Blind & Visually Impaired in Chester, Pennsylvania—an experience that would change both his personal and professional life. He graduated in 2005 and began working at the Center the following year as a residential aide, then as a teacher’s assistant from 2006 to 2008. In those roles, Chuck taught daily living skills such as cooking and cleaning, supported braille instruction, and guided students in money management. He not only helped people learn to live independently—he modeled what confident, self-determined adulthood with blindness looks like. It was also at CBVI that Chuck met Joy, who would become his wife and life partner.

Employee of the Year Cont'd



When funding changes in 2008 ended his role at the Center, Chuck joined Bestwork's former Northeast Philadelphia operation. From 2008 to 2013, he excelled in sewing and packaging across a range of GSA and military items, including tool bags, helmet bands, safety vests, and work requiring grommet machines. When that location closed, he returned to the Center for five years, taking on packing and warehousing duties with their paper products division. Wherever he worked, Chuck brought the same steady reliability: he learns quickly, adapts readily, and takes pride in doing the job right.

In 2018, encouraged by a best friend from childhood who was already on our team, Chuck joined Bestwork's New Jersey facility in Cherry Hill as a sewing machine operator. He worked across multiple lines, military and non-military, demonstrating the cross-functional flexibility that makes him a go-to teammate on the floor. In 2020, Chuck contracted COVID-19 and stepped away to fully recover—a setback that might have discouraged a lesser spirit. True to form, he returned to Bestwork full-time in 2022 and has been with us ever since, contributing at the highest level.

Today, Chuck serves on our Black Navy Fleece line, a role he loves for reasons both personal and profound. As a young man, he dreamed of becoming a Navy SEAL, a path closed to him because of his vision. In his current work, he is still able to serve—just in a different capacity. The garments he helps produce support those who protect our nation, and he approaches each stitch with the care and precision that such responsibility deserves. Beyond his primary role, Chuck also lends his hands to the packing line and paper room when needed. He is dependable, detail-oriented, and consistently willing to step wherever the mission requires him most.

What distinguishes Chuck goes beyond technical skill. He is the colleague people seek out in difficult moments—the calm voice of reason who listens without judgment and offers hard-won perspective. Chuck mentors peers who have lost vision later in life, helping them navigate fear, frustration, and identity shifts that can come with sudden change. He knows how to break down a problem, whether it's how to measure ingredients without sight or how to rebuild a life after a diagnosis. His presence on the floor raises morale, and his example reinforces our culture of dignity and mutual support.

Chuck's dedication to family reflects the same steady values he brings to work. He and his wife, Joy, who also works at Bestwork, purchased the home where she grew up in May 2023 and have been renovating it together. Chuck is hands-on and loves to tinker; he takes pride in being able to fix almost anything. He is the father of two sons, ages 34 and 17, and his eldest is also visually impaired. Chuck's faith, community, and lifelong friendships remain important pillars, and he still loves to cook for family and friends—a skill that first gave him independence and now allows him to give back in the most personal way.



Dining in the Dark

Our inaugural Dining in the Dark was a huge success! A massive and heartfelt THANK YOU to every single person who joined us on October 2, 2025, at the Adventure Aquarium in Camden, NJ.

From the unique blindfolded dinner to the incredible energy of our emcee, Eagles Insider Dave Spadaro, a special visit from Schubert the penguin, and the fantastic tunes of Jimmy & the Parrots – it was a night full of connection and fun.

Most importantly, because of your generosity, we raised \$72,632! These funds are crucial for launching our new Blindness and Low Vision Services Center (BLVSC).

This achievement would not have been possible without our incredible sponsors. A huge thank you to: Archer & Greiner PC, Career Opportunity Development, Inc. (CODI), Paul Tropea with RBC Wealth Management, ACCSES NJ, Matthew Santillo with Ameriprise Financial, Eastern Atlantic States Regional Council of Carpenters (EASRCC), Falasca Mechanical, Holman, Steamfitters Local 475, TD Bank, and Wipfli.

Relive the memories and see our incredible sponsors by checking out the links below!

📸 Photo Gallery: <https://flic.kr/s/aHBqjCwQSz>

📖 Event Program: <http://bit.ly/3LcqOx9>



Launching the Blindness & Low Vision Services Center (BLVSC)

People experiencing vision loss or newly diagnosed with blindness deserve more than limited options – they deserve a dedicated, accessible place to turn. That is the vision behind Bestwork's Blindness & Low Vision Services Center (BLVSC), which is bringing critically needed services to South Jersey through four core offerings: free Adult Vision Screenings (with resources and referrals for comprehensive exams), an Assistive Technology Center where individuals work one-on-one with instructors to identify the devices best suited to their needs, a Low Vision Clinic staffed by licensed optometrists, and Vocational Rehabilitation Services covering independent living skills, orientation and mobility training, and business skills. Low vision care remains scarce in our region – many operating just one day per month with limited hours. Bestwork's Cherry Hill location provides a safe, accessible, and flexible alternative for the community we serve.

FY25 brought several major milestones for the BLVSC. In January 2025, Bestwork formalized a landmark partnership with Drexel University (formerly Salus). We also proudly welcomed MaryAnn Ragone as Director of the BLVSC, a pivotal hire who is leading the center's growth and day-to-day operations. Specialized equipment purchases are underway to fully activate our Assistive Technology Center and adult vision screening program. We also brought a volunteer coordinator on board with a group of additional volunteers helping with the adult vision screening program. If you are looking for a meaningful opportunity to make a direct difference in the lives of those living with vision loss in South Jersey, please contact us at BLVSC@bestworkindustries.org.



Pictured (left to right): Back row: Lauren Scarpa, Emily Vasile, MAT, TVI, MS, CLVT, VRT, Fabiana Perla, EdM, MS, COMS, Melissa Vitek, MaryAnn Ragone DeLambily, Jack Shaw, Gerard O'Sullivan, Ph.D.
Seated: Michael H. Mittelman, OD, MBA, MPH, FAAO, FACHE, Jon Katz

Employee Celebrations

Employee Appreciation Day Summer Picnic



In June, Bestwork celebrated its Annual Employee Appreciation Day Summer Picnic with a #BackToThe80s theme! With nearly 200 attendees, the day included a catered lunch, DJing and music by employees Terry and Josue, and an awesome Talent Show - 9 employees participated with talents in singing, rapping, poetry, and a drum solo! Congratulations to our winner, Ed Williams!



In addition to our employees, members of our Board and Advisory board attended, along with some special VIPs, including Grande Solutions Staffing. We were also extremely honored to have the Varsaci family join us and celebrate the legacy started by their family! Huge thanks to SSE Party Rentals, Dad's Deli & Catering, The Gourmet Vendor, and Mr. Softee for the wonderful food and service.

Holiday Party

We had an incredible time at our annual Holiday Party on December 12, 2025! The room was filled with cheer as our team (from all four locations), board members, and special guests gathered to celebrate a fantastic year. This year's party was extra special as we honored some outstanding partners and teams with our annual awards. A huge congratulations to our 2025 winners!

Belinda S. Moore Partner of the Year



TD Bank

Strategic Growth Awards



Inroads to Opportunities

CEO Cup / Production Line of the Year



Navy Flight Deck Jersey Line



Marc Concilio, Division Head at the Naval Air Warfare Center Aircraft Division (NAWCAD)
Lakehurst Procurement Department

Incentive Program

Bestwork's Employee Incentive Program rewards those who have excelled in their work duties and production goals. Each month, Bestwork celebrates our staff's achievements and crowns our Employee of the Month and Production Line of the Month. At the end of the year, we choose an Employee of the Year and CEO Cup / Production Line of the Year.

Employee of the Month



October
Rodney Watlington



November
Carla Branche



December
Quashonna Scott



January
Ruth Swain



February
Bobby Graham



March
John Westcott



April
Malcolm Talbert



May
Phillip Harrison



June
Alfonso Harrell



July
Denise Baylor



August
Joy Banks



September
Frank Lang

Production Line of the Month



October
Navy Flight
Deck Jersey



November
Navy Pants



December
Navy Flight
Deck Jersey



January
Packaging



February
Coast Guard
T Shirts



March
DSDI



April
Roselle Satellite



May
Army FREE
T Shirts



June
Navy Flight
Deck Jersey
CEO Cup



July
Air Force Pants



August
Montclair Satellite



September
Air Force Pants

Our Supporters

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

Individuals

Amy Bircher Bruyn

Shelby Baker*

Vinita Banthia

Denise Carey

Linda Carney*

Dorothy Daly

Harold T. Epps

Ann Marie Fantini

Ellyn & Jeff Gans**

James Howe*

John Hughes*

Jon Katz***

Jim Kehoe*

MaryAnn Ragone* & Bob DeLambily

Harris Rothfeld

Gardner Shaw

John Shaw*

Jennifer Shropshire

Pamela Shropshire

* *Board of Directors*

** *Advisory Board*

*** *Staff*



Organizations

Fund for the NJ Blind, Inc.

Google Ad Grants

Grande Solutions Staffing LLC

Laserplex Studios LLC

National Industries for the Blind (NIB)

NJMEP, Inc.

PayPal Giving Fund

Premier Mechanical Inc.

Supporters Cont'd



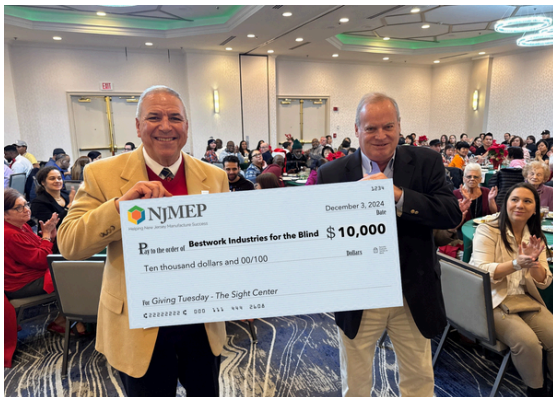
Lions Clubs

Haddonfield Lions Club
Hammonton Lions Club

Foundations

BNY Mellon Mid-Atlantic Charitable Trust
Carl & Anne Fravel Foundation
Dolfinger-McMahon Foundation
Fulton Forward Foundation
Harriet G. Fredericks Foundation
Helon A. Parkhill Foundation
Lillian Schenck Foundation
OceanFirst Foundation

PSEG Foundation
The Scholler Foundation
William G. Rohrer Charitable Foundation



Please note we endeavor to maintain complete and accurate records. If you notice an error or omission, please contact the Fundraising and Marketing Manager at 856-424-2510 x214

Lights! Camera! Action!



We are thrilled to participate and be recognized in the following news, publications, and broadcasts.



6abc Action News



m/Oppenheim TV Nonprofit News



All Access with Andy Garcia



NJMEP Manufacturing Matters Magazine



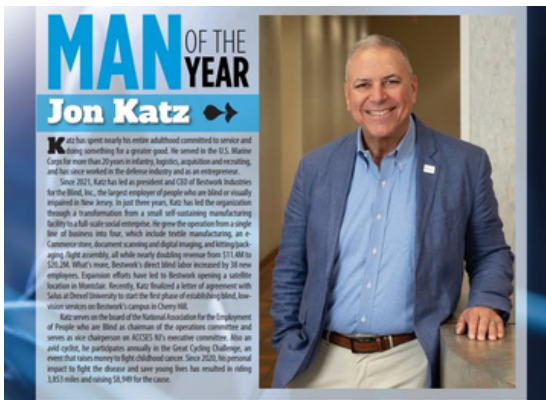
Coolest Thing Made in NJ Finalist



SJ Mag Media Nonprofit Roundtable

Awards & Accomplishments

We are proud to receive the following awards in FY25.



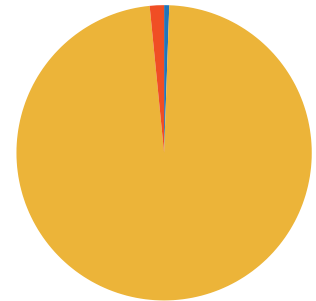
INROADS TO OPPORTUNITIES

Arnold W. Rintzler Impact Award

Financial Overview FY2024/2025

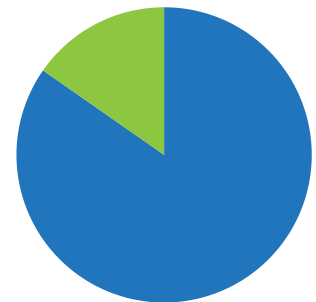
Support and Revenues

Grants and Donations	\$139,694	0.06%
Product Sales	\$24,436,840	97.9%
Investment Income	\$390,033	1.6%
Other Income	\$0	0%
Total	\$24,966,567	

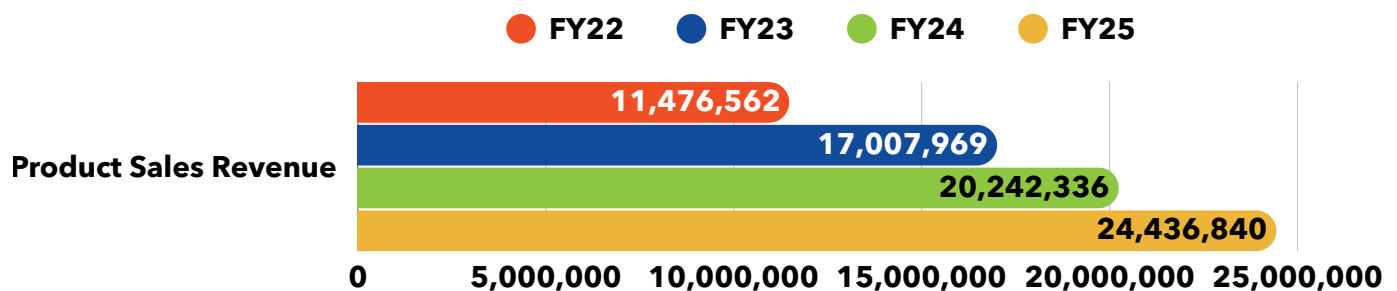


Expenses

Program Services	\$20,435,410	84.7%
Administrative/ General Operations	\$3,693,844	15.3%
Total	\$24,129,254	




Change in net assets \$837,313



Source: Consolidated Financial Statement FY 9/30/25 & 9/30/24



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