



ANNUAL  
REPORT 2013

SPECTRUM DESIGNS FOUNDATION

A business with a social mission...

**"To help individuals with autism lead meaningful lives through productive work"**

Because of you...



In 2013, over **7000** hours of meaningful and productive work were created for people living with autism.





Spectrum Designs applies business principles and practices to achieve **social good**. **Reinvesting** financial returns into the community, furthering their social purpose and **creating employment** and **purpose** for marginalized communities.

## SPECTRUM DESIGNS

### Small Operation with a Large Impact

For all your Customized Apparel needs...



Screen Printing



Embroidery



Direct to Garment  
Digital Printing

Operating in a **1,500** square foot facility, Spectrum employs 18 people, **12** of whom have autism.



With your **help** Spectrum can **GROW** to additional locations, **EXPAND** its production potential and **INCREASE** its capacity for an ever-growing population of underestimated individuals.



# STELLA SPANAKOS

Co-Founder, Executive Director  
President of the Board

My son Nicholas is my eldest, middle and youngest child. I stopped teaching to stay home and work with him and his team of therapists. At some point I told my husband we had to accept the fact that Nicholas would never speak, go to college, get married, or take over his business. We needed to carve out another path for Nicholas as he entered young adulthood.

We knew Nicholas was capable of working but his behaviors interfered with his ability to stay on task, which led to Nicholas' termination from many vocational job sites. I used to have nightmares of my CSE Chairperson saying, "my job is to get him ready to transition to adult services in 2013".

In preparing for Nicholas' transition I visited many programs but always came home feeling very depressed from what I saw. I discussed with my husband creating a business or something Nicholas could do given the proper environment and supports. We talked about cashing in our retirement fund to create a future for Nicholas because we as his parents could not fail this child.

The Lord had other plans for my husband and tragically, he passed on June 7th, 2010. I could not disappoint my husband's memory or that beautiful son we created. Call me crazy but I sold his business and inventory, sat down with a friend (who has a son with autism), and created a business they could be successful at: custom imprinting. My friend became my co-founder and business partner, and a young man who has been part of my family, dedicated to the field of autism and shares the vision of Spectrum Designs became the other co-founder and business partner.

Nicholas' transition was successful because during the last two years of high school Nicholas received vocational training at Spectrum Designs. Nicholas knew what he was transitioning to; his day has meaning and purpose. Now, Nicholas works part-time at spectrum designs where he is safe, has friends and opportunity to socialize, is constantly learning new skills, and it's ok to have a difficult day with behaviors.

*Many have said that a tour around Spectrum Designs is truly an "experience and education", "one must see it to truly understand the daily magic that goes on here".*

Please feel free to visit us anytime and be inspired by the essence of the human spirit and the stuff miracles are made of. What happens here is nothing short of miraculous.

We are humbled and appreciate the generous financial and moral support from all who support Spectrum's vision and purpose. Thank you for your confidence as we continue our journey to advocate and improve the lives of many who are affected with autism.



Stella Spanakos



Our **Major** supporters of **2013**,  
We simply would not be here without you...



SHAWN  
&  
ROBERT  
GLADSTONE

Michael W. McCarthy  
Foundation



# SPECTRUM'S 2013 IMPACT



PREPARING OUR TEENS EARLY ON  
FOR LIFE AFTER HIGH SCHOOL  
(AGES 15-18)



In 2013, Spectrum served as a resource to **7** Long Island school districts, offering **10** high school students with autism over **2500** hours of authentic “on- the- job- training” experience.



“Stevie started the job training program at Spectrum Designs just over a year ago. The awesome team at Spectrum Designs has helped Stevie gain confidence and self-worth.”

All our gratitude and love,  
Stevie, Mack, Diane and Steve Olmsted

**FACT**

- \* Autism now affects **1 in 68** children
- \* Autism prevalence is **growing**
- \* Autism is the **fastest-growing** serious developmental disability in the U.S.A
- \* There is **NO** medical **test** or **cure** for autism

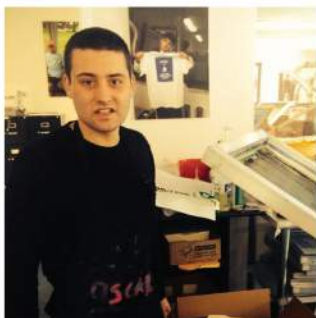




GUIDING THEM FROM SCHOOL TO WORK  
(Ages 18-21)



In 2013, Spectrum served as a place of transition from high-school to the workforce for **5** young men with autism from **5** different towns across Nassau County, Long Island.



"Our son, Gregory, looks forward to working at Spectrum and he has flourished. You can see the genuine pride in his actions as he creates tee shirts and creatively wraps and packages them. It is set up so that he may work independently with some guidance, as needed. It is our hope and dream that Spectrum may continue and expand the work that they are doing so that Gregory and others like him may be gainfully and purposefully employed."

Amy & John Beyer

\*As early as age **14**, the law requires **transition planning** from the school environment to the post-school world.

\* An estimated **500,000** teens and young adults with autism will enter adulthood in the next decade.

\* Young adults with autism have the **lowest rates** of participation in **employment**.

**FACT**



OFFERING GAINFUL EMPLOYMENT  
(Ages 22 and up)



In 2013, Spectrum Designs employed over a dozen young adults with autism and compensated them with over **4000** hours of gainful wages.



"We are so grateful that Spectrum exists. Joe looks forward to going to work every day, he has a real sense of pride in his job and a feeling of belonging there. Thank you for creating such a wonderful environment where he can be successful and productive."

Wendy and Fred Penzel

**FACT**

- \* It is estimated that **90%** of people with autism are unemployed.
- \* **Lack fair employment** in integrated settings and competitive wages.
- \* Have **limited options** and find it challenging to have individualized choices as to where they can work.



# PATRICK BARDSLEY

Co-Founder, Program Director  
Vice-President of the Board

2013 was a breakthrough year for Spectrum Designs. On April 1st, the first shirt was printed at our new location and we did not look back. Our movement meant tripling our production space, tripling our production capacity and most importantly, more than tripling the number of people we could open our doors to at Spectrum Designs.

Following two hugely successful fundraisers and record sales, Spectrum added embroidery to its offerings with the purchase of two brand new embroidery machines in September. We ended 2013 with 12 employees with autism working over 80 hours a week and 10 high school students enrolled and working in our pre-vocational program.

Viewing 2013 through the lens of hindsight, I'm guilty of under playing the hours of work performed by skilled and passionate professionals that made this whole thing tick. We are told the rates of traditional employment amongst the disabled population are exceptionally low, peaking at around ten percent, and unfortunately the statistics do not lie. However, we can't be discouraged. We must simply adjust the mold and with it our perspective. Training and employing people with autism is something that begins with raised expectations but only works because of the numerous adaptations made by skilled staff and co-workers every single day. That is the essence of what Spectrum Designs is and does every day; a company that adapts its methods to allow for productivity and success across a wide range (or 'spectrum') of abilities.

First and foremost we know that Spectrum Designs, as an apparel printing business, must be just that; a business. Good business practices are paramount to our growth and success. Pricing has to be competitive, quality exemplary and turnaround time as short as possible. Coupling these core practices with a compelling social mission gives people no reason NOT to order from you. It is my hope that we demonstrate this to more and more happy customers in the coming years ahead.



*P. Bardsley*



# 2013 FINANCIALS

## REVENUES:



## EXPENSES:



# A QUICK PEEK INTO SPECTRUM **2014** FINANCIALS

\*YTD as of October 2014\*

## REVENUE

### TOTAL REVENUE & SUPPORT



### Special Events Donations and Contributions



### Product Sales



### Grants



# WHY WE DONATE TO SPECTRUM DESIGNS

Spectrum Designs Foundation has been nothing short of a Godsend for our family. They have provided employment for our son Andrew and many other young adults with autism and other special needs. When our son comes home from working at Spectrum, he has a sense of pride about him when we ask him about the time he spent at work. It's priceless!

So many families, like ours are facing a time in our lives of seeking not just employment for our special needs young adults, but a place where we can be sure they are safe and they're enjoying themselves. Spectrum Designs is that place. We are so happy to support them in any way we can so they can continue to expand and grow!

Best Wishes for a  
Bright Future,  
Loren & Wayne King



As the aging autism population into adulthood is upon us, we face a growing need for viable employment opportunities. While only scratching the surface, the Spectrum program is already providing this much needed service to the autism community.

It is run by passionate and competent directors and staff and has the potential to grow and become a model for other programs. It is without hesitation that we would offer our total support of their mission and efforts.

Men on the Move  
Moving Company and  
Self Storage



# NICOLE SUGRUE

Co-Founder, Development Director  
Secretary & Treasurer of the Board

2013 started with two very clear objectives; to grow as a business and increase the number of lives we impact. We are delighted to report, that with your help, we have accomplished both! The task of developing a strategic growth plan for a social enterprise that is original and "still a work in progress" presents many challenges.

Spectrum Designs operates with a firm belief that our societal impact and financial stability are congruent goals; in that we must generate funds for future growth while advancing our social mission.

We began the year with a very ambitious Expansion Campaign, securing generous grants and donations from the North Shore Autism Circle, The Gladstone Family and Men on the Move. This was followed by a successful "St. Patrick's Day" event, hosted by Loren and Wayne King and sponsored by The Michael McCarthy Foundation.

At the end of the first quarter, gifts made to Spectrum resulted in \$100,000 of equipment in our brand new location. More importantly, Spectrum could offer employment or vocational training to an additional fifteen young adults with autism.

In recognition of Spectrum's accomplishment, the Doug Flutie Jr. Foundation awarded a grant of \$20,000 to support employees in the work environment that require assistance to achieve their full potential.

Spectrum entered the second quarter focused on our annual summer fundraiser, "Night in White". The evening honored Amy and John Beyer of Men on the Move, and generated over \$115,000 in support of Spectrum Designs. This evening was instrumental in gaining the support of new donors and patrons.

The focus of the third and fourth quarters was on marketing and branding our company logo and products, and the new federal and state initiatives to support equal opportunity in integrated work settings. Spectrum created and attached informative hangtags on all our products shipped and increased our use of social media. These efforts yielded an increase in Facebook followers from 150 to 1500, increasing our database by thirty percent. From our marketing efforts, Spectrum identified the need to expand into the embroidery business; and a strong year of fundraising allowed Spectrum to purchase embroidery equipment and expand.

Spectrum's objectives for 2014 are not too different from the previous year. We are focused on becoming more efficient, creative, and sustainable. We look to create innovative programs to expand our revenue sources, to increase our customer base, and to continue to develop programs to meet the needs of the growing population of people with developmental disabilities.

Because of your support, we have come a long way in such a short amount of time. It is our hope that these accomplishments make you proud of what you have contributed to and will inspire you to continue to support us on this exciting journey.



Nicole Sugrue





FACEBOOK



LINKEDIN



INSTAGRAM



TWITTER

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