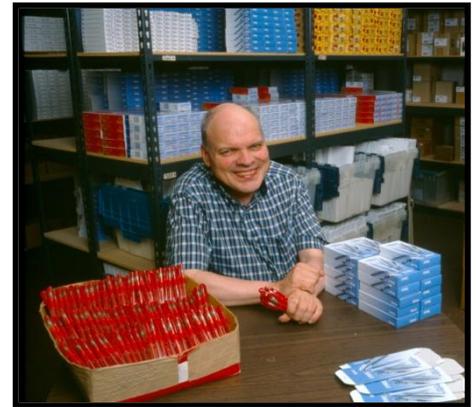




Another Story by Stride...

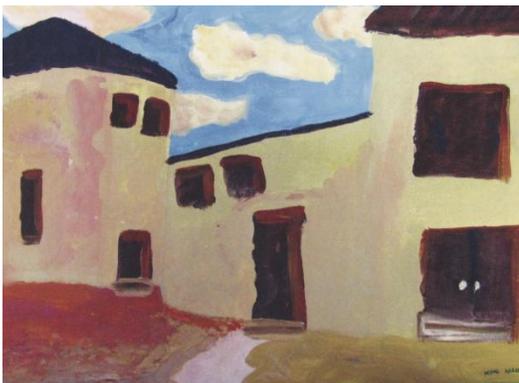
"PACKED BY PETER"



Stride, Inc. manufactures and distributes office products - BUT - Stride is not your average business! A small, woman-owned business, Stride's goal is to provide the consumer with exceptional office products alongside a mission to provide training and integrated employment of people with intellectual and developmental disabilities.



Peter, Stride's "Rain Man," is on the Autism Spectrum and has worked for Stride since the business started in 1981. Peter is a genius in math; he is an artist, and creates the most beautiful paintings and needlepoint imaginable, but he is completely non-verbal and cannot even cross the street by himself. He packages Stride products with pride and always comes in to work ready to go and ready to contribute. With a tremendous sense of humor, Peter will sometimes put one red pen in a single box after packing 100 dozen black pens. He will laugh for hours which will give the team leaders a clue to look through the pens. He is a valuable asset and is very much a part of the Stride family and will always have a place to work here.



Living in a group house, Peter has wonderful caretakers who provide amazing and loving opportunities for him to explore, travel and experience life. He is a happy man and appears to love the consistency working decades for the same company provides. It is these special relationships we have that make Stride a truly unique workplace and we are honored to have Peter as one of our colleagues.

Give Stride products a try. You won't be disappointed in Peter or our products.

P.S. Should you receive that one red pen, just think of it as Stride's "Peter Principle," and if you wish, you can call 1-800-752-6191 and we will happily trade it for a black one!





THE STRIDE STORY

*How one woman with a vision for
"Special People" built a business!*

Barbara Brennan had a child who was born with hydrocephalus, blind by the time he was two, his short but full life ended shortly before his eighth birthday. The outgrowth of this personal experience sent the Brennan clan in a different direction. Working with the developmentally disabled became a way of life.

In 1988 the Brennan's purchased RC Ink, a sheltered workshop making pens and renamed it Stride, Inc. (Stride). Early on, the decision was made to transition the business from a not-for-profit organization to a for-profit corporation. The Stride name worked because their disabled employees were making strides in their development and quest for independence.

Developmentally disabled people come from all walks of life and all types of heritage. No area of the population is immune. Often they become dependent on the government for support. They can be productive members of society and be taxpayers rather than tax burdens. In the years Stride has employed people with disabilities; over 200 have out grown the pen factory and are now employed in the community – fortified with high self esteem and skills learned at Stride.

Stride knows that working, mastering a task, gaining a skill, is the best builder of self-esteem in the world. Some workers will stay at Stride forever, but a task, a skill, a place where a person can succeed can always be found. Some may cut ties to federal help completely. Others need a combination of employment and aid. The important thing is having a job to go to each day.

Stride believes in the successful training and employment of the developmentally disabled; building self-esteem, a good work ethic and an employment history for disabled workers to enable them to compete in the community workforce.

Work hours are flexible to accommodate transportation and other unique needs of Stride's disabled workers. Through the years, business decisions were always made with Stride employees in mind. When Stride had to move, a new location was chosen on a bus route so the workers could get to work easily.

When the decision was made to become a for-profit corporation, Stride shifted the pen manufacturing business from a "government sheltered" set aside business to "head-to-head" competition with Avery, Uniball, Sanford, Pentel and the like. This decision has been successful with continual growth for Stride.

Stride, as a supplier of writing instruments to the federal government, was asked by GSA to provide them with a rollerball pen. Stride purchased the rollerball tips from Schneider Writing Instruments in Germany. The two companies formed a close and trusting relationship. In 1993, Stride and Schneider signed a partnership agreement in Germany for Stride to be Schneider's exclusive agent in the United States. More importantly, Schneider executives informed Stride that they believed in, and would never interfere with, the mission of employment of the disabled. In 2000, Stride partnered with the Davis Group in Canada to sell their QuickFit binders in the United States market. The Davis Group also believes in Stride's mission and has successfully added to Stride's product line.

As the importance for diversity suppliers came into the purchasing arena, Stride became certified as a small, woman-owned business (MWBE), employing disabled people. This has led to Stride's inclusion in major office product catalogues through their Diversity Programs.

Stride's growth and reputation has been a factor in their survival and success, as well as their embracing the "green" philosophy when manufacturing. Stride only chooses suppliers who also think green. Stride's philosophy is to supply customers with the highest quality products available at competitive prices, while employing their very valuable personnel.