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NEWSPAPER FOR GEORG FISCHER EMPLOYEES >>>>>>>>>>>>>
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GEORG FISCHER

A special partnership

GF Signet works together with an organization that offers occupational prospects to people with disabilities.

For Amy Franco, working at Georg Fischer Signet, located in El Monte, California, is something special – even if she is "only" filling boxes. The 25-year-old Californian is not your typical employee of the GF Piping Systems company, which specializes in flow and measurement systems. Amy sufferers from dyslexia (a reading disability) and works as a client at Lincoln Training Center on site at GF Signet. Lincoln Training Center in El Monte is a rehabilitation organization that helps some 500 people with physical or mental disabilities to acquire job skills and find work. Twelve of them, like Amy, work at GF Signet. The company has partnered with the rehabilitation center for more than 15 years.

WORK AND SELF-ESTEEM

"Right now we employ four teams from Lincoln Training Center," says Joe Longoria, Production Operations Manager at GF Signet. Each team consists of three disabled people and one supervisor. The assigned tasks and the type of work vary. Two teams print instruction manuals and pack accessories and pH sensors. Another team processes delivery slips and scans in the bar codes of deliveries ready for dispatch. The fourth team is responsible for cleaning the premises after working hours. "It's unbelievable how fast and thorough they are," says Joe Longoria.

Amy Franco really enjoys working at GF Signet. "The work is a fantastic opportunity for me to show what I am capable of," she days. She also greatly appreciates the contact that she has with the rest of the staff. "They really give me the feeling of being welcome. I like that."

Being a part of team and having one's own job is also very important for people with disabilities. Rosemary Garza, who is Vice President Vocational Services at Lincoln Training Center, explains: "Being in the workforce helps people become more independent and not just be passive consumers."

MAIL FROM WASHINGTON

The cooperation benefits GF Signet as well. "The people from Lincoln Training Center do a really great job and they're absolutely competitive and flexible," says Joe Longoria. And Rosemary Garza agrees with the sentiment: "We're highly competitive and effectively help our partners lower their costs." It's therefore a win-win situation for both partners.

Lincoln Training Center currently works together with about 50 companies, across a very wide range of sectors, from industrial enterprises like GF Signet to retail chains. As Rosemary Garza tells us, "Signet is a very special partner because of the long standing cooperation."

Sheltered rehabilitation workshops are not common in the in United States. "Seventy-five percent of the disabled people in this county have no job," says Garza regretfully, Lincoln Training Center is therefore constantly looking for new partners. GF Signet helps be acting as a testimonial. "This year we had visits from two companies that wanted to take a closer look at Lincoln Training Center," says Joe Longoria. "They've also become Lincoln's customer in the meantime."

Rosemary Garza is grateful for the support: "The commitment of GF is wonderful example." Even the White House recently took notice. In March the Center received a letter from Joe Biden, Vice President of the USA, in which he also expressly thanked GF Signet for its outstanding partnership with Lincoln Training Center.