

HISTORY

In June 2008, a group of concerned parents and professionals joined to incorporate the Sunflower Bakery in order to provide a new and unique option for on-the-job training. In May 2009, Sunflower Bakery received 501(c)(3), non-profit status. The pilot program began in June using donated kitchen space at the Beth Shalom Congregation and Talmud Torah in Potomac, Maryland. After receiving certification from the Va'ad of Greater Washington in February 2010, Sunflower Bakery began baking operations in its own kitchen. Having this dedicated space, Sunflower is working toward expanding operations that include recruitment, curriculum, product development, job training, marketing, and product delivery. To date, we are serving nine trainees who are making significant achievements in learning bakery and job skills.



LEADERSHIP

Laurie Wexler, co-founder, has 18 years of experience in program delivery and fundraising for non-profit organizations. She also has served as a director of local and national organizations.

Sara Portman Milner, LCSW-C, co-founder, brings 38 years of experience as a director of programs in multiple aspects of community life that have included individuals with a wide range of disabilities and ages.

Dina Leener enhances bakery operations with over thirty years of leadership and community service for philanthropic programs in the Washington metropolitan area.

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The Sunflower Bakery is a 501(c)(3) non-profit, non-sectarian organization. Charitable deductions for cash and in-kind donations are allowed to the extent provided by law.

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WHERE CARING IS OUR MAIN INGREDIENT



Sunflower Bakery brings together members of our community who have developmental and other disabilities with a professional pastry chef and dedicated volunteers to learn on-the-job skills in a commercial kitchen.



SUNFLOWER BAKERY

CARING IS OUR MAIN INGREDIENT

Sunflower Bakery is an exciting new program that provides skills training with actual work experience. Our mission is to prepare individuals with developmental and other disabilities for gainful employment through on-the-job training in the baking industry.

WE'VE ONLY JUST BEGUN

These are challenging times for many, but those challenges are even greater for individuals with special needs. Their under/unemployment rate has been estimated to reach an astonishing 70%!

Sunflower has already begun to provide training critical for achieving workplace success. Our trainees are producing high quality, kosher pareve baked goods for businesses, organizations, and individuals in the Washington, DC metropolitan area.

We are working to secure additional funding to expand our program to accommodate a waiting list of applicants. Sunflower Bakery is recognized as a valuable on-the-job training program by leading members of the community.

Please contact us for information on the program and for ordering our baked goods. Visit our website for additional information.

*"The work is purposeful. I like being part of a team effort and seeing others enjoying what I create."
Jeff, 42-Year-Old Trainee*



Pastry Chef Robyn Zimmerman guides trainees as they measure, pour, sift, and stir. While only premium ingredients are used at Sunflower Bakery, the love and caring that go into each product really make all the difference!



INTERESTED IN JOINING OUR TEAM?

TRAINEES

Interested individuals should contact Sunflower Bakery by email to request an application. Applicants need to complete and return the form via mail or email. Trainees will be required to commit to baking 2 days a week. An interview will be scheduled to determine abilities, availability, and long-term interest in baking and food preparation. Stipends will be awarded monthly to trainees who regularly attend and work on our program toward completion of curriculum. (See Training Methodology.)

VOLUNTEERS

Contact the Sunflower Bakery by email to request an application. After completing, return the form via mail or email. A meeting will be scheduled to discuss the best program match.

TRAINING METHODOLOGY

The curriculum was developed, in conjunction with a professional pastry chef, by professionals in the areas of employment and vocational and life skills training for people with disabilities. Participants are trained in every facet of the baking process. This includes mastering, at an individual level, topics that include appropriate work behavior, team work, safety and sanitation, preparation and baking skills, along with equipment usage, cleanup, product development, and presentation.

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