



OPPORTUNITY
VILLAGE
60 YEARS OF IMPROVING LIVES

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Executive Summary

ABOUT OPPORTUNITY VILLAGE

Opportunity Village was founded in 1954 by a small group of local families seeking to improve the lives of their children with intellectual disabilities. Since then, Opportunity Village has grown to become Nevada's largest private, not-for-profit community rehabilitation program, serving 1,600 people daily and more than 3,000 people annually through vocational training, community job placement, advocacy and social-recreation programs.

More than just a charity, Opportunity Village operates four employment resource centers and one thrift store in southern Nevada. It also operates a vehicle donation program, trains and places hundreds of adults with disabilities in jobs throughout the community, and hosts some of the most popular special events in Las Vegas, including the annual Magical Forest and the Las Vegas Great Santa Run. Through diligence, commitment and continued community support, Opportunity Village has helped some of southern Nevada's most vulnerable citizens integrate into society, offering a paycheck, a feeling of achievement and a sense of independence.

Opportunity Village's resource centers serve hundreds of people with intellectual and related physical disabilities. Opportunity Village's detail-oriented OVIPs are adept at completing various large-quantity contracts for business and government customers throughout southern Nevada. A highly-trained, professional staff supervises and evaluates OVIPs as they progress through a development program. Each OVIP's capabilities are evaluated to ensure they are employed to the best of their ability and given an opportunity to succeed. Services provided at Opportunity Village resource centers include shredding and document destruction, mailing services, packaging and assembly of various products, sewing and manufacturing small items (e.g., coin bags or promotional buttons) and more. Also worth noting is that upon achieving a pre-determined level of proficiency, many OVIPs transition to outside employment. Opportunity Village OVIPs are gainfully employed throughout the community at places like McCarran International Airport, the Clark County Government Center and the Red Rock Canyon Visitor Center, performing janitorial, landscaping, bus cleaning, housekeeping, food preparation and many other services.

Opportunity Village is almost entirely self-funded. This is a reflection not only of the organization's credibility and track record of professionalism, but it also mirrors the community's ongoing commitment to helping those with intellectual disabilities. Opportunity Village has consistently strived to distance its OVIPs from the "can't do" stigma associated with disability, encouraging them to follow their dreams, whether they include community or facility-based employment, social recreation, music, art or just the chance to be independent.

The efforts of Opportunity Village, its contributors, OVIPs, paid staff and volunteers have been recognized locally and nationally. The organization has been awarded one or more "Best of Las Vegas" awards every year since 2000, and it has held claim to "Las Vegas' Best Community Organization" for more than 15 consecutive years.



Meet Carmel: The Social Butterfly Journey of Growth

Carmel's journey into adulthood reflects her personality. With her naturally vivacious and bubbly personality, she has been making great strides with Opportunity Village at her side.

Her first experience with Opportunity Village was as a high school student participating in the Job Discovery Program (JDP), where she was called a "social butterfly" for frequently making plans with her friends at JDP and sharing her ideas, stories and videos. After high school, she moved on to the Employment Resource Center at Opportunity Village's Oakey campus where she continued to learn job skills and make new friends while smiling along the way.

Her naturally warm and outgoing personality and positive attitude are positive attributes when working with others. She is now sharing her upbeat, friendly personality with travelers at McCarran International Airport in her job as a restroom attendant. She enjoys her job, the opportunity to meet new people, and takes pride in earning a paycheck.

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IMPACTS IN SUMMARY

- **Opportunity Village Reduces the Demand for Public Health and Human Services in Southern Nevada.** Opportunity Village provides services to southern Nevadans living with severe intellectual disabilities and their families. The majority of these programs are funded by the work-related activities of the individuals participating in the program and the charitable donations of local individuals and organizations. If, in the absence of Opportunity Village, state or local governments were required to provide similar services, the increased public cost would be at least \$34.6 million annually. These figures assume that Opportunity Village OVIPs could be absorbed by overcrowded, underfunded state programs, and that state service providers could provide a similar level of service within their existing framework.
- **Opportunity Village Reduces the Demand for Other State and Local Services.** In the last year alone, client demand for Opportunity Village services has increased 25 percent. In the absence of providing services and opportunities to those living with severe intellectual disabilities, it is likely that state and local governments would realize increased costs for homelessness, poverty, health care and criminal justice. While difficult to measure with any level of precision, it is reasonable to anticipate these costs would be measured in the tens of millions annually.
- **Opportunity Village Has a Positive Economic Impact on Southern Nevada.** Opportunity Village directly employs 409 staff and 1,975 OVIPs (a total of 2,384 positions). Including the direct, indirect and induced impacts of the organization's operations, 2,574 jobs are supported throughout southern Nevada. Opportunity Village also generates direct wages and salary payments totaling more than \$18.2 million annually. Of this total, \$14.4 million is paid to staff and \$3.9 million is earned by OVIPs. When the multiplier effect of this spending is considered, the organization supports roughly \$26.2 million in wage and salary payments to southern Nevada workers. Finally, Opportunity Village also has a positive impact on overall business activity. It is estimated that for every \$100 dollars in direct economic activity, Opportunity Village generates an additional \$80 in economic activity in other sectors of the economy; a combined (i.e., direct, indirect and induced) annual economic impact of \$54.4 million.
- **Opportunity Village Has Significant Societal Impacts.** Opportunity Village is a charitable, nonprofit organization that has touched the lives of tens of thousands of southern Nevadans living with severe intellectual disabilities during the past 60 years. It has brought the community together for a good and meaningful purpose and has made great strides toward not only reducing the stigma associated with intellectual disability but replacing it with a continuum of care, hope and community pride. Opportunity Village also provides a unique opportunity for those living with severe intellectual disabilities to attain marketable job skills, secure employment and increased independence and self-esteem. It is difficult, if not impossible, to put a value on this type of societal impact.



Meet Nick Learning through Job Discovery

Nick was a high school student when he first experienced what Opportunity Village offers: an opportunity to learn life and job skills. In high school, Nick had limited opportunities for hands-on vocational education, and unlike many of his classmates, he did not have a career plan. Job Discovery changed that.

He learned valuable job and life skills through this unique education program that connects high school students with moderate to severe intellectual and related disabilities to hands-on service learning opportunities at local not-for-profit organizations. Nick learned while volunteering at St. Rose San Martin Hospital for two-plus years.

Now Nick is employed at Trader Joe's, where he greets customers, stocks merchandise, helps customers with carry outs and much more. He is a sensitive, sincere young man who cares about others and loves to make customers feel welcome. Opportunity Village continues to encourage Nick by providing follow-along services with a job coach that visits him and his supervisors. Opportunity Village is committed to his success.



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