

opportunity service transformation empowerment sustainability



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WHAT'S INSIDE:



As a refugee, Saada was struggling to find a job and continue to learn the English language.

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Changing women's lives and providing opportunities through community partnerships.

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No more turning away chronically unemployed women desperate to create new lives.

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where a woman earns her future

Beanstalk

THE NEWSLETTER OF WOMEN'S BEAN PROJECT

SUMMER 2016 ISSUE

NEW!

Men's and Women's Tees & Hoodies



Thanks to WBP supporter, Brannon McPherson for sporting our new tee while camping in Colorado with his three children (pictured L-to-R): Andrew, Margot and Spencer.

Bean Profile

Name: Bryce Kelley, WBP board member and bean supplier with Kelley Bean Company

How did you get involved with WBP? I joined as a board member in the Fall of 2015, but my involvement with WBP stretches back nearly 15 years through my family's company, Kelley Bean Company. Our company provides the American grown beans that go into the Bean Project's products. WBP was one of my first customers!

What was your first impression of WBP? Opportunity. I saw a social enterprise model with an extremely successful track record with an incredible management team in place. Who doesn't want to be a part of a vehicle for change like that!?

What has surprised you most about working with the Bean Project? The women's stories. The odds that these women must overcome in a system that often works against them is nothing short of incredible.

What would you tell someone who is thinking about getting involved with organizations like WBP?

I was raised in a family who has always elevated the importance of giving back. It's not about how much money or time you have, but instead about the pure act of getting involved. I feel it's everyone's responsibility to be a good community citizen.



Corporate Partner Opportunities = +IMPACT

Women's Bean Project is launching a new corporate partnership program. We know that most companies and their employees aspire to make a difference in our community and we'd like to help.

This new program is customized to meet your company's needs and corporate social responsibility goals. Want to engage your employees as volunteers? Conduct a workplace giving program? Find a place for your corporate giving?

We can help!

For more information, please contact Luanne Hill, Development Manager, at 303.292.1919 ext. 113 or email luanneh@womensbeanproject.com.

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I am Women's Bean Project



When we hired Saada in the summer of 2014, she had only been in the United States for a short period of time. She came to the US as a refugee from Ethiopia and Women's Bean Project was her first employment experience in her new country.

During our intake process, Joyce, our life skills coach, noted that she seemed shy yet very determined and focused. Saada was taking English classes at Emily Griffith five nights a week after work. Her long-term job goal was to work in a hospital as a nurse's aide. She was exceptionally clear from day one about the steps she needed to take to make her dream job a reality.

She knew that this would only begin to happen once she could speak, understand and write English.

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CHANGING WOMEN'S LIVES We've hit the Summit!

Thanks to you, our generous supporters and tireless table captains, Women's Bean Project raised over \$200,000 at Ready, Set, Grow 2016!

These funds will provide program activities such as life skills training, budgeting, computer literacy, planning and organizing, 1-1 mentoring and job placement services. These program components are what sets Women's Bean Project apart from other transitional employment programs.

Each of our graduates has worked very hard to prepare and plan for her future, and our donors have provided the support needed to create the program activities and a safe and accepting environment in which she can flourish. Thanks to your support, all of our graduates secured jobs in the community prior to graduating Women's Bean Project.

In the coming months, we look forward to keeping new and longtime supporters apprised of our work and the women's successes.

Thank you for being a part of the work of changing women's lives.

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During Saada's time at the Bean Project, the program staff worked closely with her mentor to connect her to an affordable ESL program.

As a result, Saada successfully enrolled as a full-time ESL student at Colorado Heights University upon graduating from Women's Bean Project in April 2015.

“After moving to Colorado in 2013 from Ethiopia, it was very hard to find a job. I didn't know English so it made it harder. I heard about the Bean Project and am very happy they hired me. They provided many resources for me. I would recommend the program. It was great!”

~Saada, 2014-15 Graduate

A year later, she shared the wonderful news that she had successfully graduated and found employment as a part-time personal care provider as a result of her improved English skills!

Saada is now on her way toward achieving her career goal in the health care field.

Women's Bean Project is glad to be a part of Saada's personal and professional growth along the way!



A Word from Our CEO

No more turning away women

After 13 years at the helm of Women's Bean Project, I can honestly say we are in the midst of one of the most exciting times for our organization. I'm happy to share with you some highlights:

- In March we won an award from the Colorado Manufacturing Association and COBiz Magazine for the most ethically produced product.
- Our average one-year job retention has reached 89%. When compared to the published average of 53% retention by our peer programs, our results are getting national attention.
- We are proud to have been chosen to be a part of a national social enterprise portfolio and a subgrantee of the Social Innovation Fund program, which will provide 5 years of funding and technical assistance to invest in our business to increase sales and help us create more jobs.

I'm enormously proud of the women and our team, including the staff and volunteers, who have helped us realize these achievements. And after we say Yay and do our happy dance, we still know it's not enough. Why? Because despite all we have achieved, we are still turning women away.

The women we are turning away might be able to subsist without us, but they won't have a chance to flourish. They are underutilized assets in our community, with huge potential to contribute, but precious little hope that anyone will give them the chance.

Imagine becoming dependent and trapped in an environment that saps rather than builds dignity. Imagine feeling disempowered to make any kind of positive, long-term change. Imagine living a life with no feeling of self-efficacy.

Now, imagine finding a way to overcome all of those limitations through employment. That's the power of Women's Bean Project. We help women help themselves.

And we know it works. We get to see transformation every day. With the experience and skills women learn at the Bean Project they are able to get and keep employment, support their families and serve as role models.

And because we know it works, we have to do more.

And so, I've drawn a line in the sand. We are no longer going to turn away women who need us. We will grow our business so that we can hire every woman looking for a second chance.

We are putting a stake in the ground and saying, No More. No more turning away chronically unemployed women desperate to create new lives. No more hiring one out of five qualified applicants. No more turning our backs on women who want to earn their futures.

Then, when we hire all of these women we will ensure that our services are so effective and far reaching that she is the last in her family to need us. We owe that to the women.

How will we do this? With your help. I will look forward to sharing more ways for you to get engaged in the coming months. But first, thank you for your generous support of Women's Bean Project!

Warmly,

From the Kitchen

Caribbean Shrimp & Black Bean Salad

Thanks to our friends at Kelley Bean Company for this perfect summertime salad recipe.



- 1 lb. cooked, peeled & de-veined medium shrimp
- 1 15 oz. can black beans, drained & rinsed (could also use 1 13 oz. bag of WBP Marian's Black Beans)
- 1 small green bell pepper, cut into short, thin strips
- 1/2 cup thinly sliced celery
- 1/3 cup very thinly sliced small red onion rings
- 1 cup cherry tomato halves or plum tomato quarters
- 2 tbsp chopped fresh cilantro
- 2 tbsp vegetable oil
- 2 tbsp honey
- 2 tbsp lime juice & 1 tsp zest
- 1/2 tsp salt
- 2/3 cup Picante sauce
- Lettuce or Spinach leaves

In a large bowl, combine shrimp, beans, bell pepper, celery and onion. In a small bowl, combine Picante sauce, cilantro, oil, honey, lime zest and juice and salt, mix well. Pour over shrimp mixture; toss lightly to coat. Cover and chill at least 2 hrs, tossing occasionally.

Line serving platter with lettuce, spoon salad onto lettuce and garnish with tomatoes. Serve with additional Picante sauce.

Makes 6 servings. Calories: 232, Carbohydrate: 23 grams, Protein: 20 grams, Fat: 7 grams.

Partnerships Changing Lives

On May 23rd, we hired our first group of program participants. Over the next 6-9 months, we will work with the women and connect them to a wide variety of basic needs resources, life skills coaching and job readiness skill-building through our transitional employment program.



We are thankful to have had many of our community partners visit to present opportunities related to housing, food, medical and mental health services, financial literacy and conflict resolution already during the women's program tenure:



We are also happy to announce a new partnership with the University of Denver. Thanks to this new partnership, each new group of women will receive free specialized training on workplace safety and cutting edge information on blue cleaning custodial techniques led by Aramark staff experts. This training has been designed to prepare our participants for potential job openings within the University of Denver's custodial department.



engage with us socially



The mission of Women's Bean Project is to change women's lives by providing stepping stones to self-sufficiency through social enterprise.



5 our guiding principles

OPPORTUNITY.

We help women help themselves. We provide opportunities for our participants to discover their talents and develop skills to join the workforce and build a better life.

SERVICE.

We strive to "do well by doing good." We are a social enterprise that believes it is a basic human right to live a stable, healthy life. We serve our supporters, partners, participants and communities by delivering quality products with innovation and efficiency.

TRANSFORMATION.

Our efforts transform more than the individual woman. The seeds of hope in one woman weave threads of success that expand to families and communities with a reach that touches individuals worldwide. From program participants and vendors to customers, donors and volunteers, their transformations make a difference.

EMPOWERMENT.

Using the tools we provide, women are empowered to change their lives. Our supporters are empowered with the knowledge that they have contributed, not only to the self-worth and self-sufficiency of disadvantaged women, but also to the broad-reaching benefits our communities reap.

SUSTAINABILITY.

Instead of a one-time handout, women acquire the tools needed to sustain themselves and their families for a lifetime. We believe in nurturing economic sustainability for our program participants and partners, being ever-mindful of our impact on the environment.