



## ENTERPRISE HISTORY

The idea for the social purpose business evolved from the desire to develop a product to support Deaf Initiatives as well as to create a work experience model for young adults who are deaf or hard of hearing. The goal was to identify something hands-on, visual and lending itself to a beginning-to-end process. Making and selling t-shirt theme quilts met these criteria. Both the product and processes seemed to be a match for producing income and developing a deaf friendly work environment.

Examples of this deaf friendly work environment include large open rooms, which are essential when using a visual language to communicate. Assistive technology for individuals that cannot hear have also been installed to help facilitate communication between the deaf and hearing.

At KTQ there is an environment where deaf women can use their skills towards meaningful employment, while earning a real wage and work together to produce a high quality product. At KTQ, communication is not a barrier for sharing ideas and creating something beautiful together. Many times, deaf workers face a lonely work environment due to communication difficulties between them and their hearing co-workers. Fortunately, that is not the case at KTQ, where everyone knows sign language!

KTQ brings new life to any customers' personal collection of t-shirts. Customers provide a collection of their t-shirts, which are transformed into a quilt to commemorate such events as high school and college graduation, sporting events, rock concerts, travel, anniversaries, retirement and other occasions. The one-of-a-kind quilts come in several sizes and we offer many different fabric selections. Our motto at KTQ is "You make the memories, we make the quilt."

Workers are also exposed to a small manufacturing and sales business where they participate in product development; assemble work stations, gain exposure and experience in inventory control, operation of tools and equipment, data entry/computer skills, customer relations and building maintenance.

KTQ also created an opportunity for deaf and hard of hearing high school students to work in a deaf friendly work environment where they can practice work skills that will be transferable to other work experiences in the future. The focus is on job readiness skills, such as time management, setting and achieving goals, staying independently on task and following directions. The work setting provides an environment conducive to communication, motivation and linguistic/cultural sensitivity.

KTQ was started in 1998 with one production assistant, one seamstress and one sewing machine. In 2001, the staff grew to four employees and in 2007 there were eight employees producing the quilts using three sewing machines.

To date, more than 3600 quilts have been made. We employ 17 deaf adults, 3 deaf high school students and 4 hearing staff. We have 5 sewing machines going at all times.

The organization initiated the quilt business to provide meaningful employment to those who have limited access to the job market. It is a source of great satisfaction that the employees have good jobs and that business is successful and thriving, and that they create many beautiful quilts and countless happy customers.

UPON RECEIVING YOUR OWN HANDCRAFTED QUILT, YOU WILL DISCOVER  
IT HOLDS A LIFETIME OF MEMORIES AND WILL TRULY BECOME A  
TREASURED KEEPSAKE!



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