

PROJETS PART
Marthe Bureau, Canada

What :

PROJETS PART are made up of three independent non profit corporations which administer a range of activities aimed at our clientele of people dealing with mental health problems, all of which is organized in a continuum of services.

The originality of our organization is found in our way of combining social development, economic development and durable job creation.

How:

Each of our corporations operates with precise objectives:

PROJETS PART (job preparation) offer academic training programs and job training programs in the food industry, both programs receiving official certification by the Quebec Education Ministry. We also have social and personal education programs as well as post program services, all offered by a team of social workers.

Through our social economy firm PART DU CHEF (job integration), and under the supervision of a team of chefs, our clientele can develop a real experience of the job

market by working in our food production company. This company produces more than 120 000 frozen meals every year intended primarily for elderly people experiencing a loss of autonomy and people who appreciate healthy foods. Our products (25 different varieties) are low in fat, low in salt and contain no additives.

We also offer catering services, a sandwich counter and a home delivery service in some Montreal districts. Our employees in training are among us for a period of 7 months and are trained for a variety of activities in the food industry. At the end of their training program, they are able to determine in which field they wish to pursue their career.

In 1998, after many months of reflection among the board of directors, consultation with the employees and surveys among our personnel in training, we decided to launch social economy firms in the food industry. Those firms, now together under the name PART ENTREPRISE (job creation) are intended for the creation of lasting job opportunity for the graduates of our training programs. We now operate 4 social economy firms in the Montreal region, all of which are in excellent financial health, allowing us to insure the stability and quality of the jobs created.

The conditions for success:

The first condition for success is surely the partnership established with various instances:

- Government (financial support for the realization of our training programs and for the salary of our personnel in training);

- Education network (for learning assessment and recognition as well as official certification of the training programs by the award of a sanctioned diploma);
- Private sector (work placement);
- Community resources (references and follow up).

The second condition is consultation with the natural environment of the people registered in our training programs (families, doctors, social workers). Consultation with these resources allows us to adequately meet the needs of our clientele.

Finally, a condition of success is a dynamic and implicated team, sharing in the mission and culture of the organization.

Why:

We strongly believe that people experiencing mental health problems can become active members of their community. The experience we have gathered over the years has confirmed that the alliance of training and practical experience, along with a personalized curriculum contribute to the development of strong empowerment. We can also testify as an employer to the quality of those people as employees in regard to their loyalty, enthusiasm, diligence, reliability and their sense of belonging.

To this day, our corporations employ 40 people full time and, of that number, 50% are people who have been trained through our programs.