

Finger Lakes Fresh

<http://www.fingerlakesfresh.com/>

Finger Lakes Fresh is a division of Challenge Industries, Inc., a 501c(3) Non-Profit Corporation. Since 1968, Challenge has been providing training services and employment opportunities to individuals with disabilities and other employment barriers.

By purchasing our products, you support Challenge's vision of building partnerships by creating innovative career options and workforce solutions.

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www.aboutchallenge.org

Welcome

Welcome to the Challenge Website. Challenge, a nonprofit, vocational services organization, was founded in 1968 to offer employment and placement opportunities to individuals who face barriers to employment. Beginning with what used to be known as a sheltered workshop, Challenge has matured to be an agency that serves a very wide range of individuals whose abilities are successfully employed by a large number of businesses, agencies, and institutions in Tompkins County. Challenge has also used its entrepreneurial spirit to expand and add to its own small businesses that offer integrated employment opportunities.



A recent example of this spirit is our hydroponic greenhouse operating under the trade name, Finger Lakes Fresh. Produce is now shipped, year round, all over the northeast. There is a link to the Finger Lakes Fresh web site on this page. Challenge operates small businesses both to offer employment opportunities and to generate funds that help to support its work.

Our intention with this web site is to acquaint you with our wide array of vocational services for individuals who need assistance. In addition to Finger Lakes Fresh you can find information on Challenge business services at www.e-challenge.biz

While Challenge has grown, the fundamental mission has remained constant. It is our belief that every individual has the capacity to contribute to his community and as we contribute, we grow. Challenge is in the business of helping individuals to utilize their strengths.

Once again, welcome,

Patrick J. McKee, President

Participant Services

Challenge can provide the following services:

- Vocational assessments – standardized and situational
- Groups for Job Seekers
- On the job try-outs at local employers or at our enclaves
- Job development & job search skills & activities
 - choosing a job & a career path
 - master applications
 - resume development
 - mock interviewing
 - leads/connections to employers
 - assistance with application process
 - advocacy & assistance throughout interview process
 - help understanding employer/employee rights & responsibilities
 - advisement on generic work skills
 - facts & assistance with disclosure of disability to employers
 - benefits (SSI/SSD, TtW) advisement
 - assistance with issues surrounding employment (childcare, proper attire)
 - volunteer placements
 - problem-solving as needed
- Job Coaching/Training (once placement has been secured or in an ongoing job)
 - specific skill or task training
 - strategies specific to the individual learning style
 - assistance with employer's orientation
 - re-training or additional task training as needed
 - problem solving "soft skill" aspects of job
 - identifying & tapping into natural supports at the workplace
 - assistance with advancement opportunities
 - assistance identifying and requesting accommodations
 - problem-solving as needed

After initial placement & training, we can provide ongoing support to maintain your job, look for advancement opportunities, & continue career path for as long as needed.

For those individuals not prepared for individual community placement, the Work Center at Challenge offers more intensive daily support services along with greater flexibility in scheduling, work speed etc. Services include:

- Rehabilitation counseling
- Occupational Therapy
- Generic work skill building
- Daily peer group support
- Opportunities to try different types of work tasks
- Availability of daily advisement

All of the above is structured with the end goal of community integration and placement tailored to individual needs and desires.

Opportunities for all service recipients include placement at one of Challenge's enclaves for work experience, situational assessment, skill building, and temporary or ongoing employment. Current enclave or group work sites are: Ithaca College – all 3 dish rooms, Cornell Campus Life Custodial, Red Cross Call Center, and Challenge's Hydroponic Greenhouse.