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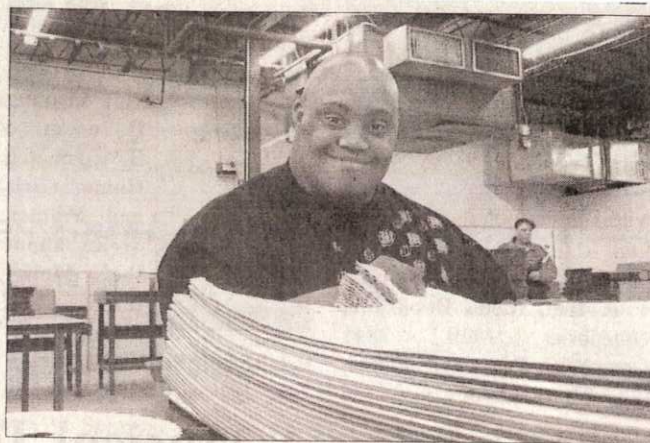
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Institute Combats Unemployment Among Disabled

Special to the Daily World

Longtime Bobby Dodd Institute (BDI) client, Troy Pullen, has worked at the agency in Atlanta for almost a decade, developing valuable work skills and close friendships. The work he does with BDI has become a central part of his life. In fact, during a recent vacation, Troy rose early one morning, got dressed and told his mother he wanted to work on his day off.

For Troy, who is one of the more than 30 million African Americans with a disability nationwide, having a workplace to go to each day is integral to his dignity, independ-



Troy Pullen, a BDI client, works on a contract for RockTenn on the Bobby Dodd Institute work floor.

ence and integration into society. "If he were not at BDI," says his mother, Mildred Glenn, "he would be at home

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doing absolutely, positively nothing. And that's a no-no."

Founded in 1960 in honor of former Georgia Tech football coach Bobby Dodd, the Institute helps to combat the high unemployment rate among the 49.7 million disabled individuals in America.

In Georgia, BDI each year helps more than 800 disabled and disadvantaged individuals become economically self-sufficient, independent and integrated into society. The agency provides vocational training, employment opportunities and placement services grounded in strength-based development to ensure a better

quality of life for the 1.5 million Georgians living with disabilities today. Approximately 80 percent of BDI's client base comes from the African-American community.

"Individuals with disabilities face a number of limitations and roadblocks," said Wayne McMillan, president and chief executive officer of BDI. "BDI's mission is to defy these expectations, providing creative programs of work and life-enhancing activities that bring value to life and build solid business relationships."

Troy spends roughly four hours a day working on a vari-

ety of collating and packaging jobs instead of sitting at home. Troy earns a piece rate for his work, which allows him to have some money in his pocket to do fun things with his mother. The rest of his work day is spent in BDI's Work and Progress program, an enrichment program that teaches people with severe disabilities about nutrition, fitness, and culture.

To hear more about Troy Pullen's story and for a sneak preview of videos highlighting the individuals involved with and influenced by BDI, visit <http://www.bobbydodd.org/BWC>.