

IMPACT

meet

MIKE
MOTE

technology
& TRAINING

EMPOWERING
futures



letter from the editor

Dear Readers,

In this edition of IMPACT, we highlight the transformative power of technology and training in creating opportunities for individuals who are blind.

We hear from Mike Mote, Manager of Accessibility and Workforce Development, who shares his personal journey and passion for an accessible workplace. Jackie Perrea offers a heartfelt testimonial about overcoming vision loss and rebuilding her career, a testament to the life-changing impact of IFB's training programs.

These stories remind us that accessibility is not just about technology. It's about independence and creating a future without limits. Thank you for being part of this journey with us.

Warm regards,

A handwritten signature in dark ink that reads "Anastasia Powell".

Anastasia Powell

meet mike spotlight

— ***IFB Solutions Champions People Who Are Blind Through Technology and Training***

Digital accessibility ensures that individuals with disabilities can independently interact with digital platforms such as websites and mobile applications. However, many digital products remain inaccessible, leaving people with disabilities underserved.

At IFB Solutions, we recognize the challenges faced by our more than 300 employees who are blind. To bridge the accessibility gap, we provide specialized computer training programs designed to equip individuals with the skills needed to thrive both at work and in daily life.

Mike Mote, IFB Solutions' Manager of Accessibility and Workforce Development, plays a crucial role in ensuring workplace accessibility through assistive technology training. Since joining IFB Solutions in 2012, he has trained employees to utilize JAWS (Job Access With Speech) and other adaptive tools, making career advancement possible for individuals who are blind.

Training Includes

- Keyboard shortcuts for computer and website navigation
- Specialized instruction for software applications used in the workplace or daily life
- Strategies to retain information through repetition and practical exercises
- Confidence-building techniques to ensure successful outcomes

By providing employees with the tools and training needed to succeed, IFB Solutions fosters professional growth, independence, and upward mobility in the workplace.

Mike Mote works closely with Kim Shoffner, Manager of Programs, to ensure students are equipped with the skills needed to succeed. Kim shares:

"Watching students grow and become confident with their skills brings me joy. Knowing that what I do helps people achieve independence is incredibly rewarding."

One student, Steve Mercer, expressed his gratitude after completing JAWS training:

"I just wanted to reach out and say thank you for all the knowledge you have shared with me. As I study for my final, I am amazed by the keystrokes I've learned. Some feel natural now, others I rarely use, but thanks to this training, I can find them much faster. You all truly make a difference."

By equipping employees with the technology and skills needed for success, IFB Solutions is breaking down barriers and expanding job opportunities for people who are blind. With continued support from donors and partners, we will keep pushing forward—because accessibility isn't just an option; it's a necessity.



empowering F U T U R E S

Everyday IFB Solutions carries out its mission of empowering people who are blind or visually impaired through employment, training, and essential services. We continue to break down barriers by providing the training and technology needed for workplace success. Across every department, including at the highest level with our President and CEO, Dan Kelly, individuals who are blind or visually impaired play a vital role in our organization.

Our employees express their gratitude for the opportunities IFB and donor support has provided:



DEMARIOUS BOWENS

Finance Department

Working at IFB has given me the opportunity to build my career, from manufacturing to customer service, and now finance proving that blindness is not a limitation. Being part of a company that values upward mobility empowers me to grow professionally and contribute meaningfully everyday.



TONI FRASER

Low Vision Services

Having been turned down for many jobs throughout my career, I thank God and IFB for a chance to thrive with a career I love!

A NEW PATH TO **independence**

My Journey with IFB Solutions

Blindness stripped away my self-esteem, independence, career, and pride. I was left broken, constantly asking, “Why me?” I felt trapped, trying to figure out how to start over. My 19-year career as a Mental Health Counselor was over, and I felt like I had lost everything.

My name is Jackie Perrea. I was born with low vision due to Microphthalmia, but five years ago, my world changed completely. A seizure during a battle with COVID-19 took most of what little vision I had left. Fear of another seizure, an uncertain future, and losing everything I had worked for overwhelmed me.

But thanks to IFB Solutions, I found my way back to a fulfilling and independent life.

Two years ago, my husband and I moved from Florida to North Carolina so I could work. That decision changed everything. I started in IFB’s packing and assembly department, which helped me ease back into the workforce. At first, I lacked the skills to work as a person who is blind, no longer able to rely on magnification tools. But IFB provided the training and support I needed to regain my confidence.

IFB Solutions is dedicated to creating job opportunities for people who are blind or visually impaired, ensuring they can thrive both personally and professionally. The organization continuously



innovates, transforming roles into accessible positions.

After several months, I took advantage of IFB’s incredible training programs. This was a turning point.

Through IFB's resources, I

- Found a community of people who understood my struggles. At IFB, I could express my frustrations without judgment.
- Received computer training – I learned how to use JAWS, a screen reader that enables blind individuals to navigate computers independently. This training restored my digital independence, allowing me to shop online, pay bills, read restaurant menus, and stay connected with loved ones.



JACKIE PERREA

*I found
my way
back to a
fulfilling and
independent
life.*

The biggest and most courageous step for me was transitioning to IFB's Workforce Services team, its remote call center staffing division. With extensive JAWS training, I mastered hundreds of keystrokes and navigation tools, preparing me for my new career as a Clinical Interviewer. In this role, I connect licensed mental health counselors with opportunities to support military service members and their families.

Blindness didn't take away my ability to serve—IFB's training and career advancement opportunities helped me reshape how I do it. I will always be grateful for the second chance IFB Solutions has given me.

For those who support IFB Solutions, thank you. Your generosity creates life-changing training and employment opportunities, giving people like me dignity, purpose, and hope.

Scan to watch Jackie's story.





BRENT BURKHOLDER

Human Resources Department

I am grateful to work for a company like IFB where one's potential is limitless. I appreciate the unconditional support that is provided throughout the entire organization. I value this support as I can speak to possible job candidates firsthand about my positive experience at IFB.



MELISSA TUTTLE

Supply Chain Department

My role as the Supply Chain ERP Analyst is vital to the department and the organization as a whole. Working somewhere in which my success and growth is based on my capabilities and not my vision is something I am truly grateful for. I am proud to be part of a team who offers opportunity to so many.



DAVID MINTON

BSC Source

My journey with IFB Solutions has been incredibly rewarding. As a Customer Service Representative, I've had the opportunity to use my talents to contribute to the company's success, without my blindness being a barrier. I'm grateful to work for an organization that values and supports my contributions.



NAOMI VENABLE

Philanthropy Department

To work for a company so supportive of upward mobility means independence and possibility. Knowing a company will offer skill-building opportunities to advance in my career is amazing.

LET'S CONNECT

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