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**ANTHESIS ANNOUNCES THE BLOOM SOCIAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP INITIATIVE**

Ontario, CA - Anthesis is proud to announce the launch of the BLOOM Social Entrepreneurship Initiative, a cluster system of programs created to bring high-value products and services into the community. Since a group of parents started Anthesis in 1966, the organization has innovated to support independent and inclusive lives for adults with developmental disabilities through employment and community integration.

“The talent of our workforce never ceases to inspire me,” said Director of Employment Programs Terri Perkins, “Some of the workers we’ve placed have been employed at the same site for 25 years. Bloom will show that what our participants produce is of great value in the community”.

The first program to launch in the Bloom ecosystem is “Craft-Abilities”, a participant-driven enterprise in which community members create, sell, and profit from the products they produce. The Craft-Abilities enterprise will provide resources and instructors for participants to create high-quality hand-crafted goods, including materials, licensing, and permitting costs. Products will be sold at the Anthesis Thrift Store, at local farmers’ markets, craft fairs, businesses, and an online store.

Recent estimates in the United States show that about one in six children 3-17, or about 17% of the population, has a developmental disability ([Cogswell ME, et al., 2022](#)). November of 2022 marks a moment of triumph for Anthesis with 95% of participants returning to in-person services, as the organization reports a 24% increase in referrals (for adults to Anthesis programs).

“Some would say we are transforming our services as a result of policy changes, but to me, the reality is that we have been striving for more equitable innovation in the workplace for over 50 years. The old workshop paradigm has become a diversified and integrated model. In the past, our work was centered at a workshop; today our participants, and their products and services, are distributed increasingly throughout the community — We are a bridge between social responsibility and the needs of the marketplace.” said Anthesis CEO Shawn Prokopec.

Through the production of crafts and other products, participants develop vocational, social, and team skills, leading to richer, more integrated, and independent lives. The Bloom Social Entrepreneurship programs will provide differentiated avenues for training in high-demand fields, such as retail and the service industry. Anthesis is working with regional business leaders to form lasting partnerships that will create outlets for new and old products, and new job placements. In Bloom, participants drive their own success and develop skills that will serve them in many facets of life.

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