



801 Friendship Drive, Harrisonburg, VA 22802

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**Friendship Industries, Inc. Celebrates 50 Years of Work
with Flag Ceremony, Commendation, Free Residential Shredding, and
Special Retirement**

To mark 50 years of providing persons with disabilities employment opportunities in commercial businesses, Friendship Industries is having a week of special events featuring two events: a flag ceremony including a 20 x 30 foot flag and a picnic honoring a 50-year employee. Both events will be held at Friendship Industries at 801 Friendship Drive, Harrisonburg.

The Flag Ceremony starts at 11:00am on Tuesday, October 7, and is open to the public. Friendship Industries' Chairman, Brian Shull, will provide the welcome. Delegate Tony Wilt and Congressman Goodlatte's Aide, Eric Bagwell, will both make brief presentations. A plaque of flag project donors will be unveiled. The Harrisonburg High School's JR ROTC color guard will unfurl a 20 x 30 foot American flag on an 80- foot pole. Afterwards, free residential shredding and facility tours are being offered to those in attendance. Regarding the significance of creating a flag park, George Homan, President and CEO of Friendship Industries, stated; "Placing an American flag on-site symbolizes Friendship Industries' diversity, partnerships, and hard work in the last 50 years and a pledge for 50 more."

The picnic at 4:00pm on Thursday, October 9, is for current and former employees of Friendship Industries as well as those in our Supported Employment service. The Pilot Club of Harrisonburg, a long-time community partner, will serve an outdoor picnic. A program starting at 4:00 will honor employee, Donnie Callison, who is retiring after 50 years. Mr. Callison was one of the original eight employees of Friendship Industries in 1964. Mr. Callison and his sister, Beverley Callison-Smith will be available for interviews.

Friendship Industries is a not-for-profit business with a social mission to generate employment opportunities for persons with disabilities. (We might call that a social enterprise today.) Our tag line, We Work, embodies our businesses and our Mission. From its start in 1964, Friendship Industries has used a business model to provide sustainability and jobs for their new venture. In fact, one of the first customers for those 8 young men was repairing boxes for a local Coca-Cola bottling plant.

The success of that model is seen in the increased impact Friendship Industries has in the community. In 2014, the budget is over \$5 million, serving over 130 persons with disabilities with employment options, and contributing over \$3.6 million to the community, in wages, taxes, contract services, job training and employment services. Friendship Industries now services contracts for industries ranging from the US Air Force to Fortune 500 food companies as well as our local business community while providing employment opportunities for persons with disabilities. These events provide an opportunity for the public to see that Friendship Industries is poised to grow with and serve our community even better for the future.