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Projects Nationwide
OCTOBER 2026

THE EMPOWERMENT CONNECTION

LEADERSHIP EMPOWERMENT GROUP | SPECIAL PROGRAMS

Celebrating Value and Talent

Golden Ice Cream Shows What Inclusion Looks Like in Action

October is National Disability Employment Awareness Month (NDEAM), a time to recognize the value, talent, and contributions people with disabilities bring to our workplaces and communities. This year's theme, "Celebrating Value and Talent," has special meaning for Leadership Empowerment Group as we celebrate one of our valued employer partners.

Golden Ice Cream of McAllen has been named the 2026 Lex Frieden Small Employer Award recipient by the Texas Governor's Committee on People with Disabilities. The award recognizes employers committed to creating meaningful employment opportunities and inclusive workplaces for people with disabilities.

At Golden Ice Cream, inclusion is part of the workplace culture. Employees with disabilities contribute in customer service, production, and other areas of the business. Individualized supports—including job coaching, flexible scheduling, visual supports, and responsibilities matched to individual strengths—help employees develop their skills, confidence, and independence.

Golden Ice Cream's commitment also demonstrates something L.E.G. sees every day: successful employment is a partnership.

Through its collaboration with L.E.G., Golden Ice Cream has welcomed employment consultants into the workplace to provide individualized coaching and support. Consultants work alongside employees as they learn job responsibilities, strengthen customer service and communication skills, build confidence, and work toward greater independence.

Success looks different for every individual. Sometimes it begins with learning a new task. Other times, it starts with building enough trust to feel comfortable asking questions, accepting guidance, and discovering what they are capable of accomplishing.

That is what makes this recognition especially meaningful during NDEAM. Inclusion isn't about focusing on limitations. It's about recognizing the value and talent already there—and creating opportunities for that talent to grow.

Leadership Empowerment Group proudly congratulates Golden Ice Cream and owner Sonia Marroquin on receiving the 2026 Lex Frieden Small Employer Award!



TWC-Approved Vocational Adjustment Training (VAT)

- Entering the World of Work
- Disability Disclosure Training
- Skills to Pay the Bills (Soft Skills Curriculum)
- Money Smart (Financial Literacy Training)
- Soft Skills for Work Success
- Explore the "You" in Work
- Public Transportation Training
- Specialized VAT Services (Conflict Resolution, Stress Management, Hygiene and more)

Other Services Include:

- Career Exploration
- Workplace Readiness
- Employment Services
- Employment Coaching

MEET THE TEAM



Erika Herevia
Specialized Employment
Consultant

At LEG, our employment consultants work alongside individuals and employers to help create successful employment experiences. Erika Herevia has worked closely with Golden Ice Cream, providing individualized coaching to employees with disabilities as they strengthen job responsibilities, customer service skills, confidence, and independence.

Golden Ice Cream owner Sonia Marroquin shares, "Erika has a way of developing relationships that makes them feel safe and comfortable. They become more willing and open to letting her show them and guide them. Even with individuals who may be hesitant at first, Erika has a way of building trust, helping them feel comfortable, and making a difference."

Why Erika is passionate about VR:
"I believe in meeting people where they are and walking with them toward where they want to be."



What If Your Business Opened the Next Door?

Every successful employment story begins with an opportunity. Leadership Empowerment Group works alongside employers and individuals with disabilities to create meaningful employment experiences that support both the employee and the workplace.

Our employment consultants provide individualized coaching to help employees strengthen workplace skills, customer service, confidence, and independence while supporting employers in building successful, inclusive teams.

You don't have to know exactly where to begin. Sometimes it starts with simply being willing to open the door.

Interested in becoming an LEG employment partner?
Email us at info@leadershipempowermentgroup.com

October is National Disability Employment Awareness Month

National Disability Employment Awareness Month recognizes the skills, talents, perspectives, and contributions people with disabilities bring to workplaces and communities across the country. It is also an opportunity to recognize the importance of creating workplaces where individuals of all abilities have opportunities to learn, contribute, grow, and succeed. At Leadership Empowerment Group, we believe meaningful employment can build confidence, independence, and purpose. By focusing on each individual's strengths and abilities, we can help create workplaces where everyone has the opportunity to make an impact.