



**City of Winston-Salem ARPA Transformational Grant Creates Measurable Impact for People who are Blind at IFB Solutions**



# Creating jobs for people who are blind.

- IFB Solutions is the **largest employer of people who are blind**
- IFB Solutions applied for ARPA Transformational Grant Program funding with the aim of **creating or sustaining 127 meaningful and challenging jobs** for people who are blind and sighted in our community
- IFB Solutions received a grant for \$300,000 against a total training program cost of \$1mm+
- These **advanced textile manufacturing jobs** are at IFB Solutions corporate headquarters, located off North Point Boulevard in Winston-Salem, NC



# Advanced Textile Products for US Military

- Most of the new and sustained jobs support contracts to produce the **Fuel Handler's Suit (FHS)**, the **Intermediate Weather Outer Layer (IWOL) Jacket** and **Extreme Weather Outer Layer (EWOL) Jacket**
- Employees currently supporting these lines are new trainees or were retrained from other textile contracts that have since ended
  - FHS = 15 (full line in production Feb. 2024)
  - IWOL = 31
  - EWOL = 25
- March – October '23 = 127+ trained/retrained



# \$78mm in Federal Contracts

- These product lines ensure over \$78 million in federal contracts stay in Winston-Salem, NC
- IFB Solutions is eligible for these contracts as an agency of the **AbilityOne Program** which directs federal spend towards non-profits with the mission of creating jobs for people with disabilities.
- Using the midpoint of our direct effect estimates and accounting for the costs of administering the program, the **AbilityOne Program generates a positive return on investment of \$2.31** to the federal government for every dollar spent on the program.



# Creating Sustainable Jobs

- Creating and sustaining jobs for people who are blind is critical as **70% of working-age adults who are blind are not employed**
- **Tileka Porter**, Sewing Machine Operator at IFB Solutions, **retrained** from Air Force Physical Training Uniform Jacket to work on the IWOL Jacket



# Thank You

- **IFB Solutions is incredibly grateful** for the support of the City of Winston-Salem
- **Grants like this help us realize our vision** of being America's leader in building life-changing opportunities for people who are blind

