

Matt's Transition Story

Matt

I was a special education student from the first grade until my graduation from high school. My high school purchased a home to serve as a transition house for the special education students to learn life skills. While attending life skill classes I learned how to ride the city bus, some very basic computer skills, how to shop for groceries and prepare meals. I learned how to do laundry and iron my clothes as well as how to do the dishes. I was taught how to handle a job interview. The transition staff explained the importance of personal hygiene and good manners. I learned how to read the bus schedule and ride the bus by myself. I went to the transition house from age eighteen until twenty-one.

While I was still in transition school I got a part time custodial job at a local hardware store. I had this position for a few months which eventually did not work out because I felt I wasn't being treated fairly by one of the employers. One of my teachers at the transition house helped me find a volunteer job at a local radio station. I helped with mailings as a volunteer on an on-call basis. Eventually my volunteer work led to a part time paid position at the radio station. While I was still a volunteer with the station I got another part time job. A young man who was helping in our transition house was related to a family that owned and operated a small local company. He felt that I would fit in well with the staff and encouraged me to apply for a warehouse position. I did apply and I got the job. I continued to work at the radio station as well for four years until the time that they outsourced the mailings. I worked as a warehouse worker in the shipping department making boxes and doing some janitorial type work. My position with the small company continued for eight years on a part time basis. Meanwhile, my job developers at Morningside continued to look for a second part time or a full time job for me. They found a job at Costco in the deli filling condiments and cleaning tables. I tried the job for a month but it was very fast paced and I decided not to continue with Costco. During my career at the warehouse I continually went on job interviews for state positions. Eventually it paid off and I was hired as a receptionist with the Washington State Department of Health. I continued to work my warehouse position one day a week and my new state position four days a week until I knew my state position was permanent. I ended my warehouse job after eight and a half years. Once I was available for five days a week to my state position they added a fifth day. I have been in my receptionist position for just over a year now and I love it. The staff and supervisors are very supportive and patient and I am learning new skills all the time. I would like to give credit to my job coaches at Morningside. They have been very supportive to me in helping me to learn my new job. If I could change anything I wouldn't – I tried a lot of different jobs and found one that fits me perfect.

That's it so far – thanks for letting me share my transition story.