

Pathways to Competitive Integrated Employment

Sandy B.'s Story

Meet Sandy, a consistently joyful and polite individual, whose cheerful demeanor contrasts with her past experiences in noisy food service jobs and a long-term sheltered workshop. The workshop's closure became a catalyst, prompting her to seek fulfilling employment.

In her downtime, Sandy enjoys needlepoint and spending quality time with her family. One of her favorite quality time activities is dining out. Her favorite restaurants are Ponderosa, Pizza King, Dairy Queen, and Domino's Pizza, especially pizza with green peppers. Sandy enjoys participating in the Special Olympics, where she used to bowl and play basketball. She likes to help people out and spend time with her boyfriend, Robert.

Background

Sandy is always quick with a smile and a laugh. She is a joyful, yet mild-mannered, woman who offers a polite 'thank you' when her verbal messages are acknowledged by the listener. Sandy participated in Cardinal Center's sheltered employment program for many years. She gained professional experience at



Long John Silver's and Bistro Lago while also attending Cardinal Center. It was her role to sweep floors and do dishes, tasks she did not enjoy. On top of this, the environment was too loud for her liking. The closure of her sheltered workshop prompted Sandy to explore fulfilling work beyond its walls. Previously, she hadn't considered pursuing enjoyable employment independently, as her duties were confined to the workshop setting.

Finding Purpose at Chore Time Brock (CTB)

Sandy is very happy with her transition from sheltered work to her employment at CTB. Her job involves folding and packaging envelopes with product packages, placing pixie rings, inserting chips, and assembling 'o' rings. Smiling as these tasks are described, Sandy emphasizes, "I love my job!" Sandy proudly adds, "I do it all on my own. Yup!"

For more information: [Center on Community Living and Careers/Employment](#)

While Sandy is not clear about timelines and logistics, she is very clear that she “loves” her current job at CTB. If possible, her smile beams even brighter when relaying that her sister and brother-in-law made it easy for her to find a job there. Sandy’s family helped connect her to CTB and prepared her for the interview process. Sandy shares with a soft chuckle that it was “pretty easy to get the job.”

Sandy works four hours a day, Monday through Friday, and takes a “dinner” break each day. She receives a paycheck every two weeks. She earns “about \$15” an hour. “I’m happy with my job” Sandy shared joyfully. When asked what the best thing about her job is, Sandy replies, “I just love it! You have to wash your hands with a paper towel when you take a break. I love my job. It is quiet and peaceful, and I like that.” When asked what she does not like about her job, Sandy quickly shares, “I love it! Everything about it.” Sandy relays it was “easy to learn how to put things on. I want to keep working there, it makes me happy.” When asked if Sandy would ever like a different or another job, she adamantly shares, “No.”

Cardinal services agency is also attributed with providing support necessary for Sandy to learn new job tasks and become accustomed to a new work environment. Sandy discloses the hardest part of starting the job was “getting to know my job at first.” Sandy gives credit to Connie, her Cardinal job coach, and Joe. Sandy smilingly relays, “Connie is my job coach. Connie and Joe. I raise my hand if I need help. She is a good helper (Connie) and a good worker.” Sandy also gives credit to Norma, her boss,

stating that when she raises her hand, Norma “helps me out sometimes.”

Ingredients for Success

- **Home-Based Support:** Family support clearly impacts positive outcomes. For Sandy, this support comes primarily through her sister, Sherry, and her husband, Tom. Sandy shares their home, is provided with transportation assistance, is encouraged to try new things, and considers them her emotional and physical lifelines. Sandy proudly shares that she likes to spend free time babysitting her nephew, Maddox, who is four years old. Family provides a solid anchor for Sandy.
- **Positive Attitude:** Sandy expresses unwavering joy for her job at CTB, appreciating its quiet, peaceful atmosphere and simple routines like handwashing with paper towels. She finds the work easy and fulfilling, adamantly rejecting the idea of other employment. Her consistent smiles and polite demeanor reflect her genuine contentment and positive work experience.
- **Other Supports:** Cardinal Services played a crucial role in Sandy's successful transition to CTB. Overcoming initial unfamiliarity, Sandy credits her job coach, Connie, and colleagues Joe and Norma for their invaluable support. Connie's guidance and the team's willingness to assist her fostered a positive learning environment, enabling Sandy to thrive in her new role.

Words of Wisdom

When asked if Sandy would lend advice to someone else considering community-based employment, she states, “I would tell them to work at CTB. Get experience. Find someone to show them how to do things. I would tell them getting a job is easy.” Her reply is instant and sincere.

“When asked what Sandy might say to someone who is having a hard time considering competitive employment, her reply is heart-warming: “Can I help you?” Sandy emphasizes that people need to know how to ask for help.



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