

JAMIE GRAHAM 2010 EMPLOYMENT IDOL!

Jamie Graham is an employee at Walgreens distribution center in Windsor CT. She works 40 hours per week and earns an hourly wage of \$15.50, which is a \$1.00 per hour increase since her hire.

Jamie has been very open about how happy she is to have made new friends at work and how happy she is to be a team member at Walgreens. It is not uncommon to look over at where Jamie is sitting at lunch and see, among others, the Director of Human Resources having lunch and socializing with her.

Recently Jamie has purchased a new computer, a desk and a new Queen sized bed. She also started a IRA Roth and was very proud to tell her two sisters, whom are currently in graduate school, that she has made them the beneficiaries. Jamie works closely with the Benefits Counselor at BRS to make sure she maximizes the money she earns.



Charles Rivera 2010 Employment Idol!

Charles Rivera gets up early every weekday morning to catch the city bus so he can make sure he arrives to work on time at 7:30 am. Charles works for the Pembroke Laundry and Cleaners in Bridgeport, CT. where he has been a shop assistant for the last two years.

Charles never expected the trial opportunity would turn into an ongoing job customized just for him. He has learned to work all of the various machines and completes all the work duties needed to make sure customers' dry cleaning and laundry are to their satisfaction. Charles was the first person with a disability ever hired by the company. He is proud of the work he does and he likes every part of his job. He especially likes working everyday and earning money. He works more than 30 hours a week!

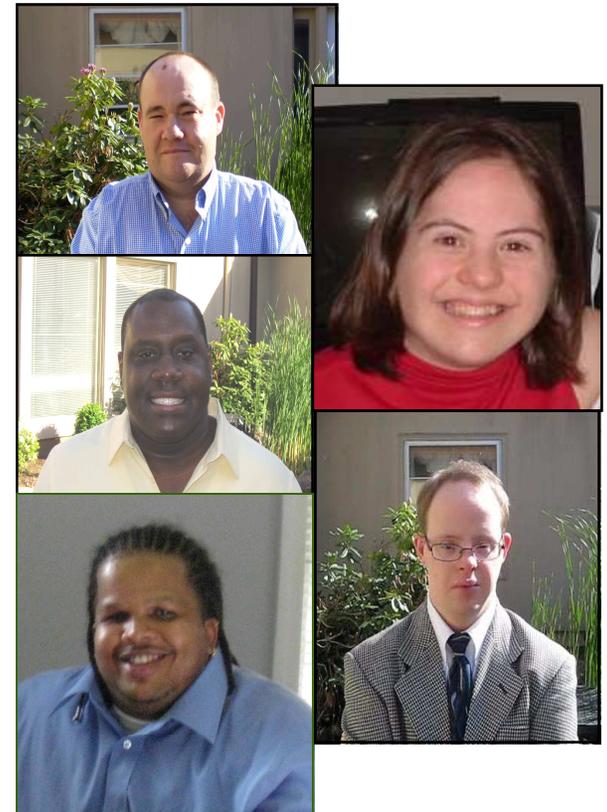
Working for Pembroke Cleaners and Laundry has been a great experience and has shown Charles that he can be more independent. He wants to continue to grow in his job. Charles is now working on getting his driver's license so he can become part of the delivery service for his company.

This document was funded through Connect-Ability, CT Department of Social Services (DSS). This publication does not express the views of DSS or the State of CT. The views and opinions are those of the authors.

CT Department of Developmental Services

DDS IS PROUD TO ANNOUNCE THE
SELECTION OF THE 2010
EMPLOYMENT IDOL WINNERS

PEOPLE WITH INTELLECTUAL
DISABILITIES ARE READY,
WILLING AND ABLE TO WORK!



2010 EMPLOYMENT IDOLS!

Jason Merrick 2010 Employment Idol!



Jason A. Merrick works 30 hours a week in the cafeteria at Mass Mutual Insurance Company in Enfield. His employer is Sodexo. Jason has worked at his job for 13 years. Management of the cafeteria has changed three times since Jason started his job. However, because he is such a valuable and hard-working employee each new company has kept him on.



Jason likes the work that he does and he likes the people he has met at his job. He especially likes making money. He uses

his money to buy clothes (he likes to look sharp!); to go on vacations and to help his family. Jason's mom doesn't worry about him losing his Social Security benefits. She just wants him to feel good about himself.

Jason's Dad passed away five years ago. Having a good job makes Jason feel that he is "the man of the family." Jason's sister Adrienne says, "My brother Jason is the apple of my eye! He takes care of us!" Both she and her mom are so proud of Jason!

Kevin Fletcher 2010 Employment Idol!

As a young man, Kevin Fletcher showed a natural aptitude for electronics and computers. Seeing this interest, Kevin's mom signed him up for computer camp and any computer courses available. Today Kevin is employed at Greater New Haven Transit District putting his interest in computers to work.

Kevin is responsible for scheduling rides for all individuals with disabilities and people who are elderly. He receives calls directly from those looking for rides and, using complex scheduling software, schedules their rides and issues a manifest ticket electronically to the transit drivers. Kevin also assists in cashing out the drivers by counting cash they hand in and securing it in the company safe.



Kevin works 35 hours per week at a competitive wage and earns full benefits. Kevin enjoys the friendships he has gained at work and loves being able to make his customers more independent.

Kevin has come a long way. As a child, doctors told his mom that Kevin would never walk or talk. Today he has a great life. His goal is to be a role model for others.

Robert Collin 2010 Employment Idol!

Robert Collins' work philosophy is to "be polite, kind, generous, and to work my butt off." Robert is employed at Honeywell Industries in Northford where he does just that.



At Honeywell, Robert has many responsibilities including assembling kits for fire products, packaging power supplies and labeling products. Robert works independently only needing support from his co-workers at Honeywell. Robert's role at Honeywell is a critical one that supports Honeywell's mission of making life-saving products. When asked what he loves most about his job, Robert says that he loves "making things that keep people safe."

Robert was able to establish a career at Honeywell because his parent's had high expectation that Robert would be a productive worker and because Robert has high expectations for himself.

Robert is currently working between 22 to 24 hours per week and is considered permanent part time allowing him to receive the same benefits as his co-workers. Robert has now been working for Honeywell for 10 years.