Cordarius participated in United Ability’s Transition Services program in 2017, while he was attending Woodlawn High School. During this time, he was taught pre-employment skills to prepare him for life after high school. He learned skills such as dressing for the job, interviewing and appropriate work behavior.

In 2018, Cordarius went on to participate in our Summer Work Program for transition-aged students at St. Vincent’s Hospital. During this program, he participated in paid work for 6 weeks of the summer. He worked in the St. Vincent’s kitchen learning how to do food preparation and provide dietary services. Cordarius was able to take the skills that he learned in his high school transition program and successfully implement them in a real-life work experience. He caught onto job tasks quickly and took the instruction and direction from his job coaches seriously. Before the 6-week summer program was over, St. Vincent’s had offered him a job in food preparation. Cordarius accepted the position and started working part-time at $11/hour. After 6 months on the job, St. Vincent’s offered him a full-time position.

“We all deserve the same opportunities to work and earn a living wage.”

Cordarius continues to work full time and has received a pay raise. His co-workers rave about how hard of a worker he is and how they could not complete a day without him. He is a valued employee at St. Vincent’s.

Cordarius’ story shows how United Ability Employment Services creates a full circle of supports through the Transition and Supported Employment programs. These opportunities have been priceless for Cordarius, offering on-the-job training and ongoing supports necessary to ensure he and his employer are both satisfied.

“Work is an important part of anyone’s life, whether they have a disability or not,” said Katie Dumais, Manager of Employment Services at United Ability. “We all deserve the same opportunities to work and earn a living wage. People with disabilities are a large part of the population and have many skills and abilities that enhance the workplace. For businesses to give everyone a chance, they are opening the doors to more valuable employees and more innovative businesses and services.”

As for Cordarius, he enjoys working. It allows him to make his own money, which he is learning to manage so that he can continue to be more independent in the future.