

## Kim (Arkansas)

Kim is the Administrative Assistant for the staff of the Governor's Council on Developmental Disabilities in Arkansas. She works 20 hours a week doing things like answering and transferring telephone calls, answering emails and doing data entry into logs and reports, filing, scanning documents, sending out publications when people ask for them, and setting up for quarterly Council meetings. She is also responsible for special activities like setting up a table with information about the Council at community events and talking to people who come by.



Kim got her job through the U.S. Department of Labor, Office of Disability Employment Policy's State as a Model Employer (SAME) program. SAME is a collaborative effort between Arkansas Rehabilitation Services and the Department of Human Services, Division of Developmental Disabilities Services which aims to hire people with disabilities in state jobs.

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“The main thing that was keeping me from a job in the community was not having a supported living worker assigned to me at my service provider,” Kim said. “I needed the support and a good job coach.” Before SAME, Kim had another job at a hotel, but the schedule made it hard for her to be with her family, and was hard on her body. The SAME program helped her to find a job that was a better fit. Through the SAME program Kim learned how to use the computer and answer the phones. “They also talked to me about how to talk in the office and how to best say things to others,” she said. “My coach is still there for me to support me to keep learning so I can keep my job. When I have a new task and need to practice, my coach helps me do that.”

Kim believes it is important to hire people with disabilities because work allows them to make their own money helps them be independent. “I like that I can take care of myself and my family. I like having my own money so I can make my own plans and I can go places that I want to go to, when I want to go.”