

Johnathan (Arizona)

Johnathan was one of the first students to enroll in Florence High schools, Transition from School to Work (TSW) program. While he does not speak or read well, he does know how to work with people and follow directions.

With support from TSW and the school Principal, Johnathan landed a job as a groundskeeper at the high school – a position that he has held for two years. He works closely with his mentor, the lead groundkeeper, and has taken on a variety of duties including setting up for sporting events.

Johnathan says that he likes “everything” about his job. He enjoys working with his supervisor and co-workers, and has developed close relationships with them. More importantly, he loves the independence that comes with working in the community. He has his own apartment that is close enough to walk to work each day.

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The TSW program was instrumental in supporting Johnathan to develop the skills necessary to become a successful employee. While the goal of the program is to teach skills, the team will advocate alongside students when the right employment opportunity presents itself. Claire Allain-Broeman, Transition Technician at Florence High School notes that her students are often enter the work force with more skills than the general population.

“People with disabilities have the same right to work at a job that pays them minimum wage or more, in a place that has people with and without disabilities working together, and provides chances to get raises and promotions, as people without disabilities,” she says. “Competitive, integrated employment helps the individual secure the dignity of economic self-sufficiency within their community. This is a basic human right!”

