

Darlene (Illinois)



Darlene Kesot first came to Trinity Services, Inc. Behavior Health Network in 2012, looking to leave the nursing home she was living in. She was connected with the Glenwood Day Program, which is a Psychosocial Rehabilitation Center where she works with a clinical therapist to manage her symptoms and develop coping skills.

Darlene first began her path to employment in 2013. In 2015, after a few years of job searching with no success, Darlene began volunteering at a local retirement home. Seven months later, she was hired as a part-time housekeeper. Darlene worked independently and successfully for almost a year. However, Darlene began to experience symptoms while on the job and was unable to cope with them. Eventually, she was let go from her job.

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Darlene took a break from working for a few months to focus on herself and her mental health. She joined Trinity Services' cleaning crew to regain and strengthen her vocational skills while seeking treatment. In 2017, Darlene was ready to re-enter the workforce and she reconnected with Trinity's Supported Employment Program. Darlene was connected with Rebecca Carney, an Individual Placement and Support (IPS) Employment Specialist. IPS is model of supported employment for people with serious mental illness.

Darlene and Rebecca searched for jobs that would be a good fit for Darlene. In 2018, she was hired at the LA Fitness in New Lenox, IL as a part-time Janitorial Worker, and began work with the support of a full-time job coach. It was not long before it became clear that Darlene was thriving in her work. Gym-goers consistently commented on how thorough and professional she was in performing her job duties. Darlene no longer requires the support of a job coach. Even through employee and management changes, she still continues to work successfully and independently. Darlene enjoys having the sense of responsibility that her job brings, and feels more confident knowing that she makes her own money to support herself.

Rebecca continues to check in on Darlene from time to time. Additionally, her management team and co-workers at LA Fitness provide natural supports both at her job and in her daily life. A successful job match has resulted in feeling of calmness and comfort that allows Darlene to thrive. “I believe that increasing opportunities for people living with mental health challenges to achieve competitive, integrated employment is important because it gives them a sense of purpose and hope,” Rebecca says.