

Sam (North Carolina)

Sam has cerebral palsy but never lets that stand in the way of getting things done. He loves to cook and can often be seen riding his bike around his neighborhood in his free time. However, he had never held a competitive job. Sam was being served in a sheltered workshop making sub-minimum wage, but he quickly became bored and decided that he would rather not go to that program any more.

Sam was very excited when he found out that working in the community was an option for him. He started working with a job coach to explore careers he was interested so that they could work together to find what he considers the “perfect job”. After about a month of filling out applications, and having an interview or two, Sam was offered a job working at a small bicycle store close to a local university.

Sam has many responsibilities in his new job. He stocks, rings up sales, makes adjustments on the bikes so that they fit their new owners, and does so many other things. His new boss reports that “he never lets anything stand in his way and will work to get the job done and done right”.

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As of April 2019, Sam has been employed at the bike shop for 14 years and is now the manager. He loves his job and has made friends with all of the other employees and many of the customers who come into the store. He met the woman who is now his wife when he helped her pick out a bike to buy. They now have two children. He reports that one of the best things that ever happened to him was meeting his job coach, working with his VR counselor and getting a job. He says, “Working with people who believed that I could work gave me the confidence to believe it myself.”

