

OCBPI Success Stories

Goodwill of Orange County

TL joined Goodwill of Orange County in January 2020. He was selected as a participant for a cohort with Project SEARCH; a program designed to provide individuals with intellectual disabilities the opportunity to gain valuable skills and real-world work experience. For two short months, TL and his peers began to explore an unpaid internship program at a local hospital. In March 2020, as the world experienced the COVID-19 pandemic, Goodwill was mandated to temporarily cease all in-person services. For many months, TL remained committed to virtual remote services, demonstrating perfect attendance, and learning diverse social and employment skills. Throughout this journey, he acquired the skill of being patient and learned how to navigate unexpected situations. It wasn't until late 2021 that TL resumed attending in-person services at Goodwill's Community-Based Services office in Santa Ana.

TL used ACCESS transportation as a means to arrive at the program every day. He remained dedicated, arrived on time, and was always eager to continue learning. TL built many meaningful relationships along the way and showed his resilience by showing up and persevering. After a few delays, TL and his peers began their long-awaited unpaid internship at CHOC Children's Hospital in June of 2023. With the aid of community partners, TL had the chance to apply what he learned in the classroom in a real-world in-person internship program. TL expanded his job knowledge by working in the Sterile Processing and Materials Management departments. TL's strengths shined, as he is a quick learner, has a curious mind, and is extremely detail oriented. Because of his strong work ethic, TL was offered an opportunity to continue his employment journey with a Paid Internship (PIP) at Edwards Lifesciences in Irvine; a leading innovative company that specializes in heart valves.

Since December 2023, TL has been participating in a paid internship that showcases his years of commitment. He is currently with Edwards' THV (Patient Registry/Compliance) department. He provides the department with vital support with daily compliance procedures like processing mail deliveries, data entry, and verifying documentation for accuracy. The inclusion TL is experiencing at this prestigious employer has provided the opportunity for him to continue to expand his skills as he works toward securing a permanent position in Competitive Integrated Employment. TL attends department meetings via TEAMS and is proactive when it comes to his work assignments. The THV department has stated that TL is a well-respected and valued team member of the THV department. We are excited to see what TL's future holds.

North Orange Continuing Education

Joshua B joined NOCE's California Subminimum Wage to Competitive Integrated Employment Project (CSP) in August of 2023. He enrolled in CSP courses geared towards employment and independent living skills. When he joined, Joshua was underemployed as a youth basketball coach, only working 1-2 days a week. Through the skills he sharpened in his Job Skills class, and with the help of a job developer, Joshua was able to secure

secondary employment as a youth basketball coach. Between his two jobs, Joshua is now working 30+ hours per week and loves his jobs.

Tristan M. is a DSS Graduate with no work or volunteer experience. Tristan joined NOCE's Workability III Program where he began working 1:1 with a job developer on a resume and applications. During two interviews, Tristan was told that he was not being hired because of his lack of work experience. The job developer assisted Tristan in securing a volunteer position at NOCE's campus food pantry, Pathways of Hope, where he learned to stock, shelf and bag items, as well as communicate with colleagues and work as a team. After three months of volunteering, Tristan secured employment at Ross Dress for Less as a merchandise assistant. Tristan continued his volunteer work at Pathways working toward his long-term employment goal of union work at a grocery store. With the assistance of NOCE's Workability III Program, Tristan was able to obtain a second job at Ralph's as a courtesy clerk. Tristan has been gainfully employed at both jobs for over a year!

Armando A. is an older adult enrolled in NOCE's CSP Program where he takes classes and works with a job developer towards his employment goal. Armando has a lot of work experience but has not been gainfully employed for some time due to complications of his disability. Armando's job developer was able to secure a Paid Work Experience Agreement at Armando's local Orielly Auto Parts Store. Armando's beginning was shaky. Although he was able to complete the work required of him, Armando struggled with the time constraints of part-time work in addition to readjusting to following directions and working under a supervisor. Armando's work is strong, and his supervisor told his job developer that despite a few scheduling hiccups along the way, "Everyone learns at their own pace." Armando is catching on quickly and has been working hard for over a month. He even received his first paycheck in over 5 years!