

Clayton's Story

August 2022

Today, Clayton is 24 years old, as a child he was diagnosed with mild IDD, Cerebral Palsy, and ADHD. For many years, Clayton's dream was to follow in the footsteps of his older brother, John, who also has an IDD diagnosis, and works at Whataburger. When Clayton turned 22, he enrolled in the workforce development programs offered by Mission Road Developmental Center (MRDC) at the Unicorn Centers Campus.

The goal of these programs is to help adults living with IDD, Find, Get and Keep jobs. In the Community Employment and Job Coaching program, with the help of his MRDC Job Coach, Bea, Clayton learned the skills necessary to achieve his dream. These skills include reading and completing online applications, registering for job placement with the State, completing government forms like W4s, and securing references. His Job Coach also provided Soft Skills training, which helps teach skills like the importance of shaking hands and looking people in the eyes; punctuality and accountability; proper grooming, hygiene, and manners for work and interviews; and more.

When Clayton was ready, he applied at Whataburger, and was invited to interview. When the day of the interview arrived, Clayton's preparations gave him confidence and helped him to advocate for himself. He expressed the need for time off to compete in Special Olympics and asked about company policies that might affect doctor's visits. To end the interview, Clayton asked the smartest question of all, "When do I start?" 😊

Recently, as the result of his hard work and commitment Clayton's dream of working at Whataburger came true! In addition to Clayton's effort and motivation, along the way to realizing his dream job, he was supported and aided by his MRDC Job Coach and provided with the opportunity he needed by Whataburger and his supervisors—who came to the table ready to make appropriate accommodations to help people who live with the challenges of IDD secure employment.

Clayton, plus Bea, his Job Coach, and his work supervisor round out MRDC's "Power of Three." Each person in the Power of Three make it possible for adults who share an IDD diagnosis to accomplish their goals and reach their true potential for independence, productivity, and inclusion in the community.



"Focusing on POTENTIAL, rather than limitations."

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