

## Vocational Rehabilitation Linking Learning to Careers Project – Success Story

BARRE, VT – R is a 19-year-old man living in central Vermont with his mother. He is engaging, relationship focused, and has a great sense of humor. He is naturally curious and enjoys learning about his community and people around him. R graduated from high school after completing two years in the Digital Media Arts program at a local career and technical education center. He has had an interest in digital media and information technology for several years.

R experiences anxiety that can make him second guess his decisions and this limits his ability to take steps forward and reaching goals. R and his mother both report that high school had been challenging because of these barriers. R’s anxiety can cause him to become “stuck”, which would bring challenges with problem solving and communicating his feelings without the support of a school behavioral interventionist. To move through these barriers, R has been seeing the same mental health provider since he was ten years old. He has always had the support of his mother, who has gone great lengths to support him and his older brother.

R began working closely with VocRehab and Linking Learning to Careers (LLC) in spring of 2018. With support from VABIR, R maintained employment with a grocery store from summer 2018 to spring 2019. During spring of his senior year, he was introduced to his new LLC Career Consultant (CC).

At this time, R expressed interest in post-secondary education but was unsure about how to move forward. He invited his CC to meetings he had with his therapist and this allowed the team to collaborate around next steps. The CC was able to obtain information on how best to support R with making decisions and reducing anxiety. The CC and therapist sent weekly emails to R, his mother, and the Youth Employment Specialist (YES) to ensure the entire team was working towards his identified goals.

During the summer of 2019, R graduated high school; committed to and attended Intro to College and Careers at Community College of VT (CCV); kept weekly appointments with his CC and therapist; completed an informational interview with a local employer; met with the LLC YES to apply for local jobs; toured CCV and Vermont Technical College with his CC; engaged in LLC Assistive Technology supports, and used LLC Transportation funds for individual driving instructions.

By fall 2019, R had obtained a part-time job independently, attained his driver’s license, began part-time school at CCV, and became proactive in his work, education, and relationships. R’s confidence in his resourcefulness and flexibility has increased dramatically. His mother reports that she is “incredibly proud” of her son and that “he comes home with a smile on his face.”



R is continuing to work towards his degree in information technologies. He is looking for internships in the technology field and is navigating school, work, and free time like a seasoned pro. His team is incredibly impressed with the strides he has made in the last year and are confident that he will continue to excel.

Learn more about Vocational Rehabilitation services at: <https://vocrehab.vermont.gov/>

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*Our mission is to make Vermont the best state in which to grow old or to live with a disability - with dignity, respect and independence.*

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