

Southern Tier



Steps to Success!

For Students with Disabilities

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VESID's Eligibility Criteria

- * Individual must have a permanent, documented disability
- * The disability must pose an impediment to employment
- * Individual must require services to successfully enter and maintain employment
- * Individual must be able to benefit from services

The State Education Department does not discriminate on the basis of age, color, religion, creed, disability, marital status, veteran status, national origin, race, gender, genetic predisposition or carrier status, or sexual orientation in its recruitment, educational programs, services and activities.

It's been a "Goodyear" for Matt Rice

by Britt Woodhouse, Job Coach, Southern Tier Employment Program

Matt Rice was referred to the Southern Tier Employment Program in January 2005, by the Southern Tier VESID office. Matt's dream was to become an auto mechanic. Because he was so determined to reach his dream he stayed in school an extra year to get his certification in Auto Mechanics from BOCES. As Matt's Job Coach, I met with him while he completed his schooling so that I could get to know him and understand what he was learning in his Automotive Tech class. In Matt's last semester, I took him to places like AAMCO, Advance Auto, Meineke Muffler, and Monroe Muffler. We also completed on-line applications for Sam's Club and Goodyear. Matt also took a class to become able to do New York State Inspections. He successfully completed the class and can now do inspections at any inspection center in the state. Matt was very proud of this accomplishment.

After graduation, Matt took a job with Staples until he could find a job in automotive services. He had been working there for two months when he was called for an interview at Goodyear in Corning. Matt interviewed for the position of General Service Technician and was hired. He gave his notice at Staples and began working at Goodyear in September of 2006.

Matt's job duties include general preventive maintenance services along with complete vehicle safety checks for autos and light trucks. Specific services include lube-oil-filter, mounting/dismounting tires, wheel balancing, and other tire-related services. Matt is also advancing into more complex repair services. His supervisor and coworkers love him. He is a part of the team and his supervisor reports that Matt does anything that is asked of him. Matt states that he likes having the support of his job coach because he feels that it allows him to grow at his own pace. The Southern Tier Employment Program was an integral part of Matt's finding a job in his chosen field.



Referring Students to VESID

VESID can begin meeting with students as early as their junior year, to assist with transition planning.

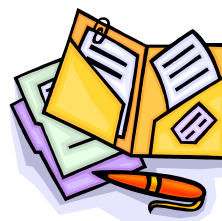
Beginning the process at that point enables the vocational rehabilitation counselor to develop a rapport with the student, assist with the development of a vocational goal, and begin the planning of services, such as job development for individuals

planning to enter the workforce upon graduation. Students planning to go on to college will benefit from

VESID's guidance regarding college-related expenses that can be covered, depending

on the student's financial status, or other expenses that may not be dependent on economic need, such as notetakers and tutors.

Providing appropriate supporting documentation regarding the student's disability, along with the VESID referral sheet, is critical in insuring a timely eligibility decision can be made by VESID.



Following his Call to Service...

Caleb was referred to VESID in his junior year by his Guidance Counselor at Deposit Central School, Mark MacCraie, for assistance with transition planning and possible financial support for college. During Caleb's schooling at Deposit, he had received accommodations such as extended time on tests.

Caleb demonstrated a strong work ethic, having been employed as a dishwasher at the Chestnut Inn, a construction worker, and as a food service worker at two area Wendy's restaurants. However, his career goal took a much different direction. After years of involvement in the church community, most recently at West Windsor Baptist Church, Caleb aspired to be a youth minister. His commitment to his faith and his ability

"Everything Caleb is given he will give back tenfold as an adult"

Mark MacCraie, Guidance Counselor, Deposit CS

to relate well to young people were strong indicators that this job goal was a good match for Caleb.

In the fall of 2006, Caleb began his studies at Davis College in Johnson City, NY. VESID currently assists Caleb with the cost of tuition/fees, books, transportation, and notetaker services. Caleb states "the money support is very helpful". To meet the remaining financial obligations of his college program, Caleb continues to work 40 hours per week. Caleb is very committed to successfully completing his college education and obtaining a position with an area church. Mr. MacCraie stated Caleb "definitely found the right career and the right college. (His goal)..would be difficult to accomplish without VESID." With the

Did You Know?

NYS VESID serves all types of disabilities except for legal blindness, which is covered under the Commission for the Blind and Visually Handicapped.

Examples of disabilities served include, but are not limited to:

**Low Vision
Hearing Impairments
Orthopedic Impairments
Muscular Dystrophy
Cerebral Palsy
Diabetes
Alcohol/Substance Abuse
Seizure Disorders
Digestive System Disorders
Cardiac Problems
Speech Impediments
Mental Health Issues**

assistance of his VESID counselor, Suzanne Pearson, Caleb's goal will be within reach.

Broome-Tioga BOCES Students Participate in Disability Mentoring Day

On Wednesday, October 18th, the Broome-Tioga National Disability Awareness Month Committee held the area's first Disability Mentoring Day, which provides individuals with disabilities an opportunity to shadow employers in their field of interest.

Five students from the Broome-Tioga BOCES Oak Tree and Workstudy programs participated as "mentees",

shadowing employees at Lockheed Martin, Binghamton University, and Community Options.

In total, there were 35 mentees assigned to 24 employer mentors representing a wide variety of businesses and agencies.

The event kicked off with a breakfast at the Binghamton Club, with Doug Mosher of Clear Channel as emcee, and Dr. Edward Placke, Assistant

Commissioner of NYS VESID, as the keynote speaker. Local dignitaries attending included Senator Thomas Libous, and Assemblyman Clifford Crouch, who also served as a mentor for two individuals at his Chenango Bridge office.

Sharon Bagg, LMSW at BT BOCES indicated the experience was a very positive one for the students, stating "They were thrilled to spend time with experts in their selected fields who shared vital information and insights with them about their individual industries."

"The students and I can't say enough about the day and the fantastic opportunity afforded them."

Sharon Bagg, LMSW, B-T BOCES

VESID Assists with "Career Fair" Event

On Tuesday, December 12th, VESID staff participated in "Career Fair", an event which provides high school students, including those receiving special education or other support services, job search and interview training.

The event, which is coordinated by the Transition Support Group of the Greater Southern Tier BOCES region and the Midwest Transition Coordination Site, is held each year at Watson Homestead in Coopers Plains.

In preparation for the event, participating students were provided interview preparation training, and resume tips at their home school districts.

During "Career Fair", area employers volunteered their time to perform mock interviews with students, and to provide constructive feedback to assist with improving the students' job seeking skills.

In addition, Chemung-Schuyler-Steuben Workforce, AIM, NYS VESID, and The Arc of Steuben attended the event to educate the students on the job search

services and supports that are available to them in their community.

Ed Patten, a VESID Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor, provided mock interviews, and Dot Marinaccio, VESID Marketing Representative, was available at the VESID display table to discuss services for students.

