

What is the Value of Work? Just Ask Brian Bush!
submitted by SPIN, Inc.

What is the value of work? Anyone who has ever asked this question has not had the pleasure of knowing Brian Bush. Brian is a young man with a lot of energy! His abundant energy has created challenges for Brian throughout his life. He has channeled this energy into being a valued employee of the Angela Jane Pavilion.



Tom Devern, the manager of Angela Jane Pavilion's dining services, admits that when he first met Brian, he had huge doubts that Brian could contribute to the workplace in any meaningful way. He agreed to give Brian a chance to prove himself with the assistance of his Employment Specialist, Jason Proske. Jason, who works for SPIN, assured Mr. Devern that he would be there to train Brian in his job duties as well as show Tom the

best way to work with Brian. As Tom talks about Brian he begins to smile. He says that you can't help but smile when you talk about the young man with the wide toothy grin that will say "Hi" to you five times during the shift, and tell you his name another five times! Tom is quick to make sure that people know his first impression of Brian was inaccurate. "I wish I had more employees with Brian's work ethic and positive attitude," said Tom.

The obvious reward for being the best pot washer in Northeast Philadelphia is the paycheck. There are many other rewards Brian has realized through his employment. He has become part of a team. His coworkers not only like him, they have total respect for him as a coworker. He is recognized as a hard worker who is pleasant to be around. Brian takes great pride in the job he performs. He will tell you over and over, "I'm Brian Bush. I work here!"

When Brian started working 13 months ago, he approached every task with an aggressive nature. When it was time to break down the empty cardboard boxes, Brian would pile them up and jump and stomp on them to make them smaller. When he observed how his coworkers calmly flatten and stack the boxes to take to the compressor, he began to model their method. He now calmly untapes the bottoms, folds the boxes and stacks them in a neat pile. When he has a full pile, he gathers them up and hauls them out back to put them into the compressor. He closes the door, latches it, and pushes the button on the compressor. Brian's boss initially felt that operating the compressor would never be in Brian's job description, however, Tom said, "Brian has proved his capabilities over and over again."

Pot washing is not an easy job. It takes a lot of energy, strength and discretion. Brian is a perfectionist and inspects each pot for %100 cleanliness. He has learned where everything goes in the large kitchen. When he first started working, Brian had a difficult time staying focused; there was much activity in the kitchen to distract him. Brian learned his job quickly, but needed support maintaining focus and working at a consistent pace. A Direct Support Professional, Derrick, who supports Brian in his home started accompanying him to work. This added support has allowed him to work independent of his Employment Specialist. Brian is learning to work with less and less support. Eventually, he will be completely independent on the job, with only the supervision and support of his coworkers!

Brian recently accompanied his boss to an awards luncheon, where Tom Devern was being honored by the City of Philadelphia as an employer who is making a difference. As Tom went to the podium to receive his award, you heard an upbeat voice say, "Tom, Tom." As Tom turned around to look back at the table, there was the young man with the disarming smile, his employee, Brian Bush, cheering him on. Brian gave Tom the "thumbs up" and a supportive, "Good job."

What is the value of a good job in the community? Just ask Brian Bush!