

Emily's Story, by Emily Claveau

Nasal voices. Hand movements. Mouthing of words. Gestures. Funny expressions.

My name is Emily Claveau. I was born deaf. I use American Sign Language.

Are you sure about Lenoir-Rhyne College? Maybe you should go to Northwestern Connecticut Community College, my parents said.

No. Three and half years later, I graduated from Lenoir-Rhyne College with double majors in Psychology and Human Services.

Graduate school? Isn't that hard work? My parents said with pained expression.

No. Two years later, I graduated with a Masters in Human Sexuality Education.

They did not dare to say anything when I told them I was going to own a business one day.

High pitched screams. Weird looks. Hand outstretched, beckoning. Jerked bodily movements.

Her name is Arielle Mabsoute. She has Tourette's Syndrome. Arielle is my boss.

Shh. Stop that. Be quiet. Turn your voice off, people say to her everyday.

Be patient, OVR will come around, one of Arielle's caseworkers said.

No. (high pitched screaming)

Arielle's Art was born.

Together, we are two young women sharing the experience of being underestimated of our abilities. We are now freed of discrimination and from the



skewed system.

We both have passion for the arts and crafts - why not use it to our best advantage? Home based business provides us with complete control and flexibility. No one is to tell us we can't.

From Arielle's Art experience, Arielle had become empowered and most importantly, proud of herself and her hard work. As for me, I absolutely love seeing people's faces when they see how far we came. That is because we are DETERMINED.

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