

## *Frankly Speaking: Reflections on Independence*

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My name is Frank D'Silva, and I am an alumnus of the Class of 2010. I am fortunate to work at two jobs. I work full-time

at D.i.D. which stands for Direct Image and Design Studio. D.i.D. is a healthcare advertising agency. I am an office assistant, and I have worked there for 6 years. I make sure everything is well-stocked, I set up conference rooms for meetings, I take monthly inventory, and I coordinate the lunch club.

I also work part-time at Giant Food Store as a service associate. When I was 16, I applied online and got the job! I am so glad I started working at 16. I liked my job, and it gave me responsibility. Giant is a good place to work, and I am still working there. It will be 9 years at the end of May!

During my Senior Year at NPHS, I was in the Career Work Study Program with Mrs. Wright and Mrs. Stadulis. I am so glad I participated in CWS. At the time, I thought I might be interested in culinary, but I wasn't sure. Mrs. Wright and Mrs. Stadulis set up experiences for me at a camera shop, grocery store kitchen, and a restaurant kitchen. I realized a kitchen was too fast-paced for me. D.i.D. had an opening for a new position -- an office assistant. My speech clinician, Mrs. Janoff, recommended me, so I

interviewed for the position. They liked me and decided to give me a try. I worked at D.i.D. with a job coach as part of the Career Work Study Program. I stayed in NP post-12 for one year. During that year I worked at D.i.D. without a job coach, yet career work study checked back once a week to see how I was doing. I took my diploma in the summer of 2011. At that point, I was totally on my own -- no support from school! As time went on at DiD. I was given more responsibilities and my hours were increased. Today I work full-time with benefits. I am grateful to Mrs. Janoff, Mrs. Wright, Mrs. Stadulis, and Miss Jermain for giving me the jump-start to D.i.D. I am grateful to D.i.D. for giving me the opportunity to work for them.

I am successful at my job because my job is important to me. I work hard and follow the rules. I always get to work on time. I like being independent. I don't have a driver's license, because I am afraid of other drivers and how they drive. I don't want them to tailgate and run into me. So, I walk to the train station and take the train everyday to work. Even when it is snowing or raining, I walk to the station.

My advice to students is that once you get the job, don't be nervous. If you don't understand something, just ask. I was so nervous when I got my job, but everyone enjoys working with me and I enjoy working with them.