

Client Spotlight: Brandon

As a high school student, Brandon attended a private, therapeutic day school with small structured classrooms. He always felt uncomfortable speaking to large crowds and working with people. He isolated himself as a youth and had limited experience communicating with people. The thought of filling out job applications was terrifying.

Brandon came to Kenneth Young Center through a referral from the Illinois Department of Rehabilitation Services (DORS). Upon coming to KYC, Brandon was set up with a job counselor in the Employment Services program.

Through the program, Brandon learned important components of finding a job such as resume writing and interviewing skills. He participated in KYC's interviewing group which meets on Fridays. Participants of the group watch videos on interviewing and give feedback on the various scenarios. Additionally, job counselors teach clients about body language and how to prepare for potential questions.

When asked how KYC has helped him, Brandon stated, "My job counselor has really helped me with my confidence, not just related to work but life in general." He went on to explain how his counselor would take him out and place him in various situations in the public to see how he would introduce himself. This helped him to become more comfortable with speaking to people in different situations. "He put me on the spot and it made me more comfortable. He also took me to a job fair and told me to be pleasant and professional," he expounded.

Brandon described how the various experiences from the program carried over into his personal life and helped him get the job at the Schaumburg Public Library. When Brandon learned about the job opportunity, he started to wake up earlier in preparation for starting the position if it was offered. Brandon was successful in getting an offer the second time he applied. In his role he has to interact with people in a way that was previously very uncomfortable. "I am in contact more with other people and I'm more confident."

The tools he learned through the Employment Services program have also helped Brandon cope with his fear of speaking to crowds. He talked about his experience with KYC to a group of approximately 12 people during a board meeting.

Brandon said that he would tell people that 'Kenneth Young Center has a great job program with a great team that is willing to help you in some ways that other places would not.'