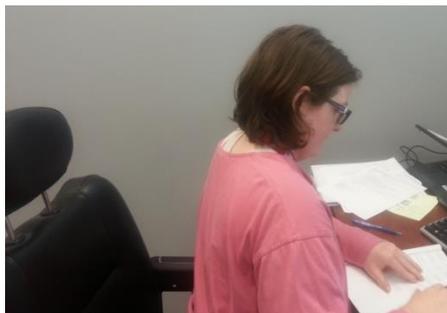


A Little Bit of Confidence Goes a Long Way

HOW A TASTE OF SUCCESS OPENED DOORS FOR A YOUNG WOMAN IN ST. CHARLES COUNTY

After graduating high school in 2011, Lauren embarked on getting a post-secondary degree at her local community college only to find that attending full-time was a bit much for her. She then set her sights on getting a part-time job so that she could get some work experience under her belt while she continued to plug away at getting her degree. Sounds like anybody else just getting out of high school? Except that Lauren found doors closed to her everywhere she looked.



In 2014, Lauren enrolled in the Starkloff Disability Institute's Next Big Step. Throughout the 15 week course, Lauren interacted with representatives from some of St. Louis' biggest companies (Nestle Purina, Centene Corporation, Edward Jones, etc). She learned what attributes businesses look for in new hires, practiced interviewing skills, refined her resume, & developed networking skills. Most importantly, she learned how to provide potential employers the answers they needed.

Since taking this class, Lauren exudes confidence in her own abilities. She has found more employers are responding to her application and resumes, by scheduling job interviews. She has also reached out to one of her personal contacts within her social network and succeeded in getting a paid part-time position. This has allowed her to gain valuable experience, develop a business reference and continue to build her resume. Meanwhile, she continues to look for that more permanent position.

Lauren's goal is to find a full time clerical position in an office setting which will provide career advancement opportunities. Now that she has experienced a taste of confidence, she should have no problem gaining opportunities to showcase her abilities.

"It did not take long for us to see what Lauren was made of and what she had to offer. She rose to the challenges of the course and those of her fellow candidates. She emerged as a leader and caught the attention of guest instructors." Susan Menhard, Director of Next Big Step – Starkloff Disability Institute



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