

Autumn Dyer



Autumn Dyer – VR client, Region 4 (LaGrange Unit)

What do industrial cleaning, industrial coatings, concrete polishing, and **Autumn Dyer** have in common? They're all successful parts of the business at Blackwell's, Inc. in LaGrange, GA, which has since 1984 grown from a one person operation to twenty-plus associates. Those first three common denominators are the result of the hard work of Mr. David Blackwell; the last one, **Autumn Dyer** - common wouldn't describe her!

Autumn came to the VR office in LaGrange, GA in May 2005 as a self-referral with a reported disability of Spina Bifida. She had limited work skills but a strong desire to work. A work plan was developed with her counselor, Sherri Kirby, to include post-secondary training in Business Office Technology, counseling/guidance, job readiness training, job placement assistance, and follow up when she became employed in an Administrative Assistant position. Autumn jumped right in and got to work on this plan. She enrolled at West Georgia Technical College, utilized Pell Grant and received VR assistance with transportation as a support service.

Due to Autumn's small stature and small hands, she experienced difficulty with keyboarding skills. The AWT Rehab Engineer, Scott Barr recommended a laptop equipped with a reduced size keyboard. CRC Kirby, and Rehab Assistant, Dee Forbus, encumbered the funds and the equipment was purchased.

Autumn received job readiness training from Pearl McCoy, Rehab Job Readiness Specialist, that prepared her for future job search activities.

Autumn faced some health issues which forced her to suspend her technical training for several months. When she returned to training it was realized that she would not be able to achieve the required typing speed to receive a diploma. CRC Kirby and RES Dale Spruill got together to strategize the next step on how best to serve Autumn. They realized that Autumn did not have any significant work history and they were unsure of how to market her work skills in her field of interest. Autumn's work plan was amended to include facility Work Adjustment Training with focus on clerical skills. She was referred to New Ventures, Inc. in LaGrange to gain work experience and develop employment skills. She also was referred by CRC Kirby for personal/social adjustment training to address budgeting/money management skills and for additional job readiness training.

CRC Kirby also arranged for a seating evaluation to be done at Roosevelt Warm Springs and she was able to obtain a more appropriate and comfortable wheelchair through Medicaid.

During her training at New Ventures, Inc., RES Spruill developed a RES Placement Plan with participation from the client, and the job search commenced. RES Spruill assisted Autumn in completing job applications, on-line applications, job leads and encouraged her during her job search. Autumn was placed at Blackwell's for a Community Work Adjustment site which turned into permanent employment. Autumn was also willing to give up her Social Security benefits if given the opportunity of full-time employment. At this point, she has continued to receive a portion of the previous benefits which has enabled her to maintain her Medicaid until she is eligible for benefits through Blackwell's, Inc.

Some of her duties at Blackwell's include daily job report, credit card receipts, and balancing the monthly statements, all of which she manages in Peachtree accounting software. She prepares time cards, handles mailings to promote the business, serves as receptionist, and types up proposals in Access just to mention a few of her duties. RES Spruill provided placement follow up as Autumn's case progressed and CRC Kirby is proud to report that her case has resulted in a Status 26! Ms. Nora Ayres, the Bookkeeper for Blackwell's, Inc. is thrilled to have Autumn on staff.

The successful outcome of this case could not have been achieved without the VR Team of Sherri Kirby, CRC, Dee Forbus, RA, Scott Barr, AWT, Pearl McCoy, RJRS, Dale Spruill, RES and the New Ventures team.

The LaGrange VR office is proud to have served **Autumn Dyer**.