

# Charles Oguejiofor



Charles Oguejiofor– VR client, Region 3A (Canton Unit) and his “Virtual Assistant” PDA.

You’re hungry, you’re on a budget, so you drop in at CiCi’s Pizza for lunch. If the CiCi’s Pizza you pick is in Woodstock, Georgia, chances are that one of CiCi’s employees whose work at that location helps to make your dining experience a good one is Charles Oguejiofor.

At age five, Charles was in a car accident and suffered a traumatic brain injury. Throughout the next 15 years of his life, Charles would experience great difficulty with the sequencing of events – both in school academics and in work duties.

Upon leaving high school, Charles Oguejiofor became a client of the Department of Labor’s Vocational Rehabilitation program. His rehab counselor, Mary Hurlbut from the Canton VR Unit, assisted Charles by sending him to Goodwill Industries of North Georgia Inc – Woodstock for work adjustment training (WAT) and also arranged for driver lessons with Freedom and Mobility. At Goodwill Charles learned retail skills such as operating a cash register and balancing cash draw at the end of his shift. As a part of his WAT, Charles learned to detail cars and change tires and brakes. RES Judy Padgett assisted Charles in developing a resume and worked on his interview skills.

Charles transitioned to a part-time job at CiCi’s Pizza, beginning in February, 2009, for 15 to 25 hours of work per week.

Goodwill also provided supported employment training at CiCi’s Pizza with Melanie Morris and Jamie Warengo of Goodwill acting as job coaches.

On his job, Charles was responsible for cleaning restrooms, busing tables, washing dishes, and slicing pizzas and getting them to the buffet table. He had trouble doing the multiple tasks that made up each of these general duties.

Counselor Hurlbut recognized that Charles still had difficulties completing job tasks, especially those involving a sequence of steps and contacted the College Park AWT team. Rehabilitation Technologist Ouida Hale took the case, and began the process of assessing Charles, identifying the job barriers, and applying appropriate assistive technology.

Ouida recognized the potential benefit of Charles using a personal data assistant (PDA) with special software that could help him to keep the sequential steps of cleaning a restroom or slicing a pizza in the proper order. With help from Ben Satterfield of the Dunamis Company, she loaded a special program called Pocket Communication Integration Suite onto the PDA, and then proceeded to analyze the various steps of Charles’ work. She combined photos, short written descriptions, and voice output instructions of each step of each job. As an example, Charles could now see, read, and hear, “Remove pizza from oven. Using pizza cutter, slice pizza in half. Then slice each half into halves. Then slice each of those into halves. Move the sliced pizza to the buffet table.”

Charles now has all his job tasks broken down into easy to understand steps, in the proper order of action, and is able to work accurately and productively. He even uses his specially modified PDA to remember his work schedule, eliminating the possibility of missing a shift. His supervisors at CiCi’s Pizza are very pleased with his work. In Feb 2009, Charles successfully completed his driving test and is now a licensed driver.

While working at CiCi’s Pizza is good, meaningful work, Charles does have eventual higher employment aspirations. He’d like to attend technical school and study auto mechanics. Perhaps he’ll merely need to get Ouida to take more pictures and write instructions on how to rebuild a carburetor.