

# Possibilities

## in Education and Training

Fall 2021



## Self-Advocacy Pays Off in a Big Way for Des Moines Resident

By Mike Hoenig, *Director, Conner Training Connection*



“There’s so much stuff to do here! It’s awesome!”

That’s how 29-year-old James Bruggeman describes his new life in Des Moines. He moved to Des Moines from Clarion almost two years ago. Though he’s still well-connected with his family in Clarion and Lake City, he’s thrilled with his new beginning.

“Where I lived before, there

was a menu and a dietician who planned all our menus,” James told me. “Now I get to plan my own menus. I love to bake, and I make a mean stir fry! For my birthday, I went to a bar and to Olive Garden. I’ve gone to several concerts.”

Life’s not all fun and games for James. “I work for an antique shop four days a week,” he proudly explained. “And I’ve started a napkin imprinting business which friends are helping me grow.”

With two self-advocacy conferences having just been held in Iowa, the timing is perfect for telling James’s story. He is where he is today all because of self-advocacy and support from two programs.

“I was living at a group home with five other guys in Clarion,” said James. “I ended up having to do

most of the work around the house and I told staff that I wanted to move.”

Enter Cindy Pauk, a now-retired transition specialist with Iowa’s Money Follows the Person (MFP) program. MFP supports eligible Medicaid recipients with disabilities to move from large facilities to community settings of their choice.

“Cindy opened a case for me,” James explained. “She found a place in Des Moines operated by Tynique’s Rose Garden (residential service provider). I got to visit it and I really liked it. The owner of Tynique’s, who is really nice, came up to Clarion to drive me to my new place.”

Once in Des Moines, James’s advocacy journey continued. Faced with having to find a new guardian because of a relative’s failing health, he asked his new friend, Cindy Pauk. She accepted! When the antique store where he works opened for business on Mondays, he asked and was allowed to swap out his Saturday hours. “I love having the weekends off so I can sleep,” James told me.

When asked for advice to anyone considering a move to the community, James said, “Try it out. I took the risk and I loved it!”

I’m looking forward to hearing about James’s continued growth and adventures in the coming years!

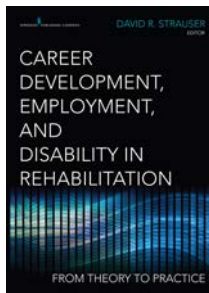
## Career Development Books

Mitch DeFauw, *Disability Resource Librarian*

In conjunction with this issue's article on James Bruggeman's self-advocacy, the Center for Disabilities and Development Disability Resource Library (DRL) would like to highlight the below items from our collection on career development and disability. Finding one's place in the workforce is a right every person deserves, and it is the hope of the DRL that these materials may be of use for our readers. Each of these items and additional materials are available for check out from the DRL.

If you have any questions or would like to make material recommendations, please reach out to Mitchell DeFauw at [mitchell-defauw@uiowa.edu](mailto:mitchell-defauw@uiowa.edu) or (319) 356-1345.

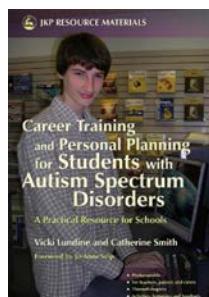
To find out more about the DRL, you can visit: <http://uichildrens.org/cdd/drl>, or search the online catalog at <http://uichildrens.org/drl-catalog>.



### **Career Development, Employment, and Disability in Rehabilitation: from Theory to Practice**

by David R. Strauser, PhD, editor

This highly regarded resource is the only book in rehabilitation counseling to provide comprehensive coverage of vocational behavior and employment theory and intervention techniques as they apply to individuals with disabilities. Scholarly yet practical, the second edition is updated with key information and research, delivering new employment statistics, employment rates, and poverty levels of people with disabilities. Woven throughout this new edition is the Illinois Work and Well-Being Model, incorporating foundational theories and providing a framework for understanding the critical factors that impact the career development process.

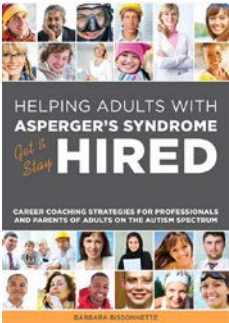


### **Career Training and Personal Planning for Students with Autism Spectrum Disorders: A Practical Resource for Schools**

by Catherine Smith and Vicki Lundine

This training program for teachers and careers assesses ASD students' strengths and abilities, fears and challenges and helps them acquire the skills necessary for a smooth transition from school to employment.

The authors give guidance on developing life skills for employability and independent living, for example, hygiene, time and money management, communication skills, decision-making and setting and achieving realistic goals. They also clearly define the role of parents, job coaches and employers and stress that students are empowered by appropriate support from collaborative, informed teams.



**Helping Adults with Asperger's Syndrome  
Get and Stay Hired: Career Coaching  
Strategies for Professionals and Parents  
of Adults on the Autism Spectrum**

by Barbara Bissonnette

Employment expert Barbara Bissonnette provides strategies that professionals and parents need to guide individuals with Asperger's Syndrome (Autism Spectrum Disorder) to manageable jobs, and keep them employed. Career counselors and coaches, vocational rehabilitation specialists, other professionals, and parents are often unsure of how to assist people with Asperger's Syndrome. Traditional career assessments and protocols do not match their unique needs. In this practical book, readers will gain insight into how people with Asperger's Syndrome think and the common employment challenges they face. It explains how to build rapport and trust, facilitate better job matches, improve interpersonal communication and executive function skills, and encourage flexible-thinking and problem-solving. With tried-and-tested advice, assessment tools, and in-depth profiles of actual coaching clients and innovative companies that are utilizing the specialized skills of people with Asperger's, this book shows the way to a brighter employment future for those on the autism spectrum.

*Possibilities in Education and Training* is a quarterly publication of University of Iowa Stead Family Children's Hospital Center for Disabilities and Development, Iowa's University Center for Excellence on Developmental Disabilities. It is an outreach initiative of the Conner Training Connection, a program funded by the Iowa Department of Human Services (DHS) to support the transition of individuals with disabilities from congregate to community-based settings.

Nothing we do changes the past. Everything we do changes the future.

-Sister Joan Chittister

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