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The HAVEN and Starbucks team to Train People with Disabilities In the Workforce

Brady Parker graduated from high school only five months ago and with the help of staff in the Community Employment Services (CES) department of The HAVEN, wasted no time in getting a good job – at Starbucks. The Haven follows up once a week to help and check on his progress. By everyone’s account, he’s very popular with both staff and customers. Best of all, he loves his job – *and* he loves coffee (dark roast, no sugar or milk). “It’s like he was born to do this,” says his mom, Nicki.

Katie Rolfe, Brady’s supervisor is very pleased with Brady’s progress in so short a time.

“Starbucks’ training program is perfect for people with disabilities. All of our employees have very specific duties and each duty is assigned a time frame. When it’s time to stop and begin the next task, a timer goes off. Everything is color-coded. We train everyone the same way. It works well.” Starbucks shares news of their progress and successes with the program through the Access Alliance.

Currently, Brady fills the beans, brews coffee, gets ice and keeps a check on stocking and assures the café is tidy. When asked what he’d like to learn next, he says, “Lattes, I want to learn how to make lattes.” He’s got a personal 15-year plan that includes living in L.A. and helping manage a Starbucks.

In Florida, only 38% of people of working age (18 – 64) with disabilities are employed. At Haven Industries, 89% of the adults with disabilities are gainfully employed.

Photo: Katie Rolfe, Brady Parker, Nicki Parker

Photo 2: Brady Parker

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