
MINNESOTA YOUTH SUCCESS STORY: CODY

WSA 02 – Rural Minnesota CEP



Cody started his sophomore year at the Walker High School wondering what his future held. With encouragement from his school's work-experience coordinator, Kylie Carlson, he completed an application for the Rural MN CEP youth employment program. Since Cody's selection and consequent placement at the Hardee's restaurant in Walker his teachers and peers have noticed a definite change in his behavior. When Cody puts on his uniform at school before leaving for work, he becomes much more social and recognized by his peers. The teachers notice that he now walks down the halls with pride.

At work, Cody has blossomed. When Cody started working at Hardees he lacked self-confidence and interacted minimally, saying little to coworkers. That quickly changed according to his work supervisor and Hardee's store manager, Jeanie Phillips. Cody started work in the back of the store doing dishes, but he quickly learned the job and became more self-confident. As his self-confidence grew, he started to open up with coworkers and his big smile and friendly personality emerged. Soon he was too valuable to keep at the back of the store. Cody now works up front making fries, prepping food, and delivering orders to customer tables. He has done so well with all the tasks that were presented to him; his supervisor hopes to soon train him at the counter taking orders and operating the till. His success and new found self-confidence from working gave Cody the idea that he might be able to do more in his personal life. When he saw an opportunity through the school to be part of a weeklong science trip to Costa Rica this summer, he jumped on the opportunity. Cody is anxiously awaiting his new adventure, leaving for South America in June. It will be his first time to fly in a plane, the first time away from family and the first trip out of the country. Cody says he couldn't imagine himself doing anything like this even a few months ago.

Cody looks forward to coming to work every day. He says his favorite thing about work is seeing friends and meeting new people. With his big smile and bubbly personality, Cody is going places and doing things he didn't even dream about last fall.

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