
MINNESOTA YOUTH SUCCESS STORY: CLAY

WSA 12 – ANOKA COUNTY JOB TRAINING CENTER

CLAY



When Clay at age 20 came to the Youth Program in the Fall of 2011, he was within days of becoming homeless. He was a high school dropout with limited work experience, needing to get his act together very quickly or he would likely find himself living on the street. Within a very short period of time, Clay was co-enrolled in the Minnesota Youth and WIA Older Youth Programs and placed as a building assistant at the Blaine Human Services Center of Anoka County. With limited work experience, it was impressive how

Clay managed to arrive at work by 6:30 am and work an eight hour day, 40 hour week. It was especially difficult when he needed to rely on others for rides, but somehow Clay always managed to arrange the transportation he needed. Eventually, after earning regular income through the program, Clay's home situation stabilized and he was able to borrow money to purchase a reliable used vehicle. This was the perfect opportunity to learn fiscal responsibility as Clay has since paid off his car loan. For Clay, his work experience through the Youth Program was not only a means to earn much needed income, but also a great opportunity to develop good work habits.

Although Clay did a great job overall, there were still areas he needed to improve upon and the mentoring provided by his worksite supervisor helped make the difference. Clay's supervisor really took the time to explain job duties to him, clarify and confront as needed, and role model good work habits. Clay has always been very open and willing to learn on the job. His worksite supervisor noted: *"Clay never complains about tasks that aren't so fun, he is polite to the staff in the building and is well liked."*

In addition to working full time through the program, Clay was a high school dropout and needed to complete high school. Through the support of the Youth Program, Clay enrolled at Metro North Learning Lab and successfully obtained his GED. For Clay, this was a major achievement and something he will always feel good about doing. Most recently, Clay was hired as a janitor working for Mid City Cleaning and as of his initial date of hire increased his hourly rate of pay by 64 percent. Although as yet, Clay has not made any decisions regarding a career path he does know that he would like to at some point continue his education. While enrolled in the Youth Program, Clay did complete a variety of career assessment and exploration activities and now has working knowledge of the tools and resources necessary to make an informed training decision.

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