My Transitional Journey

By Jamie Curran
A Little Bit About Me

When I came to EMR I was very shy and had low self-esteem. With the help of my parents, community and EMR program I:

• am currently working on studying for the HiSet exam.
• have a part time job at Westfield State University in the Dining Commons.
• have my license and my own car.
• am a sub for the Westfield Public Schools.
• am able to speak up more for myself for my wants, needs and interests.
• have more control over my own life and the choices of what I want to do.
Building a Vision
Created September 2013

What is your vision for the future?
Where will you live?
Where will you work?
How will you spend your free time?
What are some new things you would like to learn?

• Live – For now live at home then move into my own apartment.

• Work – In a daycare with small children and babies.

• Community – Driving my car to hang out with friends and spend time with my family.

• Learn – Pass my permit test, go to college, budgeting, & advocacy skills.
I’m On My Way to Moving Into My Own Apartment

- Budgeting
- Personal hygiene
- Cooking
- Sewing/ironing
- Shopping
How I Created a Career Path

- Participated in workplace readiness trainings
- Received ongoing training and support from EMR staff
- Paid (WIOA) internship through College for Kids summer program
- Ed coach for a bilingual peer at WSU
- Paid job coach (WIOA) for a peer with Down Syndrome at a local preschool, elementary school and Goodwill
- Provided respite (WIOA) for a peer with Down Syndrome
- Job coach for another bilingual peer at the local children’s museum
- Volunteered at a local hospital
- Team leader for two peers at Shaker Farms Country Club and YMCA
- My fourth year I did my internship (WIOA) at East Mountain Road Transition Program
Community Involvement

- Bowling
- College dances
- Movies
- Assisted with SAG
- YMCA
- Testified at the State House
- WIOA Convening Conference
Education Options
Westfield State University MAICEI Program Course List:

• Intro to Learners with Exceptional Needs
• Schools in American Culture
• Social Work
• Introduction to Psychology
• Art Class

*Driver’s Ed
*Math MCAS retakes
*HiSet
I Applied For a Fellowship

The Open Society Foundations’ Youth Exchange, in partnership with the Human Rights Initiative, was looking for young adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities to apply for their Community Youth Fellowship.

The Community Youth Fellowship supports activists aged 18–25 who want to complete a project they have created that advances human rights anywhere in the United States.

**My Project Description:**

I want to help young adults with disabilities be able to get the job they want even if they don’t have all the skills and educational requirements. Young adults who don’t have their diploma or cannot pass the MCAS have the right to full employment opportunities. I want to be able to change my community therefore they can accept everybody no matter what level of education they have. The need for change is so that all individuals with disabilities have a chance in the world like any other person. They should have the right to choose if they have the skills for the job they want. It is important because it gives them an equal chance to pursue their career and job choice without educational requirements. This project would bring people together who are committed to helping myself and other young adults to achieve their dreams of paid employment in careers that they enjoy and are good at. I will provide the tools and the confidence necessary for them to use these special skills for positive change.
I am a Member of The Massachusetts Partnership for Transition to Employment Consortium (MPTE)

- It is a system change project of the Massachusetts Department of Developmental Services (DDS), designed to improve employment outcomes for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities transitioning from school to adult life. MPTE is funded by a 5-year federal grant from the Administration on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities.

- As a Consortium member I am committed to participating in one workgroup that will target one of the four focus areas.

- I am in the group that will work on developing recommendations for systematic development of self-determination and self-advocacy skills for youth with intellectual and developmental disabilities, with a focus on employment.