

Elizabeth Success Story – Sitka, AK

Elizabeth is a sweet woman with a big smile and a hearty laugh. She has held jobs in counseling and child care on and off since completing her postsecondary certification in early childhood education at North Seattle Community College in the 90's. Between working with her Epilepsy, learning disability, and having children, she has experienced very long gaps of unemployment between each job she has held.

In 2010, Elizabeth became employed by the Sitka School district as a Special Education Aid Substitute. The school district only requested her to work a couple of days a year, leading her to support her family and herself on the limited income she received from SSDI. Due to this, in February of this year she began looking for alternative employment with little luck. She finally decided to stop by the DVR office with hopes of having assistance in finding part-time employment working with children that would also allow her to maintain her SSDI benefits. On the first of June, Sarah Watkins at DVR referred Elizabeth to Tiffany, a SAIL employee, for further employment assistance.

During the month of June, Elizabeth maintained her patience and positive demeanor during the job search process. On June 14th, Elizabeth finally got a lead with a perfect placement for her needs and wants. A local child care center was interested in having Elizabeth begin a work experience for a part-time teacher assistant position opening. After meeting with Elizabeth's soon to be supervisor, I knew immediately that it would be a supportive environment for Elizabeth to grow and work back into productive and meaningful work.

Elizabeth began her work experience on Monday, June 27th and has been improving and succeeding in her new position ever since. She has overcome challenges she had with falling asleep during nap time and has now adapted her schedule to working the morning shift with the children, enabling her to head home by the start of naptime. Furthermore, she has begun creating a birthday board with all of the children's names, birthdays, and photos to help her remember their names. Her supervisor has continued to support her in the process of transitioning to full employment by the end of October. Elizabeth says she is happy with her new position and feels supported by her supervisor. "I really like having a reliable job where I get to work with kids. I love kids and I am really enjoying working again. I feel like I have good support at my job." -Elizabeth Borbridge

