



FOCUS ON *ability*

An Update from ODC, Inc.

FEBRUARY 2019



Nick's coworker, Chad, says that Nick "brightens his day". "He is an easy-going, all-around good guy." (L to R: Mandy, Chad, Nick and Josh)

LESSON LEARNED

Josh and Mandy Witt were so excited when they recently took ownership of Power Pac, a "power sports" dealership in Marshfield. One of the things that was important to them as new business owners was creating a business that did what it could to be a contributing part of the community.

Enter Nick. Nick was searching for his first community job after having trained and worked at ODC's center in Marshfield for over 11 years. The Witts immediately accepted an offer to work with ODC and Nick, allowing him to participate in a temporary work experience at Power Pac. That experience gave Nick the opportunity to identify his interests and abilities, and the Witts an opportunity to give Nick a try.

Turns out, Nick fit right in. According to Josh, there was no decision to be made when it came time to determine if Nick would be a permanent Power Pac employee.

"It was, 'Yes, we would love to have him here permanently,'" said Josh.

Nick is now part of the Power Pac family. Outside the dealership walls, the team participates in everything from social gatherings to parades. Every anniversary and birthday is worthy of a celebration and a cake – apparently, one of Nick's favorite foods.

Inside the dealership walls, Nick is reportedly indispensable.

"This is a guy that loves his job and being part of a team," said Josh. "He is just happy and grateful to be here every day. He is taking on more and more responsibility, and he is very productive during his shifts."

"It's hard to put into words," said Josh, "how valuable an employee like Nick is. If everyone could have his outlook on life - just work hard, get stuff done... and, 'Where's the cake?'"

There is no disputing Nick's work ethic, but one stumbling block that arose was his inability to communicate verbally. No matter how we sometimes feel about technology, this was one instance where an app made all of the difference.

With assistance from DVR and ODC Employment Coordinator Eric Gudmunsen, an app was installed on Nick's iPod that made it possible for him to "talk". When Nick selects the Power Pac file, pictures of his coworkers appear. When he selects the person he's communicating with, his digital "voice" can say, "Good morning, Chad. How are you today?" or "What is the next job you'd like me to do?"

"The purpose of the app is for Nick to become more independent on the job," said Eric. "He can do his job well, but without verbal communication his team members were saying, 'What is Nick trying to tell me?' This technology has really helped."

According to Mandy, participation in ODC's services is important to the people of the Marshfield community and "super important" to them.

"If you're not hiring through ODC, you're missing out," said Mandy. "They offer opportunities to hire great, qualified employees that will change your life."

"I think we could all learn a lesson from Nick," said Josh. "Eat dessert first, love being part of a team and laugh just because it feels good."



PLEASE NOTE: ODC and the Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development's Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) work together to fund and support individuals through job search and training services.



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Alex's thinking about his future...

start thinking about yours.

What does Alex's future hold? Will he find a good job and be successful in his work? Will he discover new interests, explore new hobbies, make new friends?

With the support of ODC, he will.

Alex and the hundreds of other individuals with disabilities served by ODC each year are achieving their goals in both work and life. They're gaining confidence, increasing independence, and using their gifts and talents to contribute to their communities.

Have you planned for your future? Did you know that with a stroke of your pen, you can help ensure that ODC will be here to support Alex and others for many years to come?



MEET ALEX

ENDOW A GIFT TO ODC -

through a charitable bequest in your will or living trust.

DESIGNATE ODC AS A BENEFICIARY -

(full or partial) of your IRA, retirement plan, life insurance or bank account.

SEE IMMEDIATE TAX & INCOME BENEFITS -

by transferring cash, stock or real estate to a charitable trust which distributes annual payments to you for life and ensures a future gift to ODC.

Think about Alex's future.

Then think about yours.

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For more information on how your gift will empower people with disabilities, contact Pam Ross at 715-424-2712.