



Connecting PEOPLE & COMMUNITIES

MARCH 2020



Breaking Barriers

“The story you are about to hear involves many people – each displaying the persistence, determination and love that helped Wendy find success.

Wendy joined ODC in 1999, training in our work center. There she learned job skills, and her amazing personal growth made her the perfect candidate for community employment. But it wasn't until ODC staff connected Wendy to the Cenex C-Store in Stratford that she proved to be the employee they didn't even know they needed!

When she started her job at the Cenex store, Wendy was given a list of tasks which continues to be modified because she just keeps growing in her role. It would, however, not be fair if I portrayed this journey as a “bed of roses”... to help Wendy get where she is today took a lot of patience and guidance from ODC and Cenex staff.

Cenex staff admitted a little bit of fear. They had never before worked with someone who is non-verbal, and they were worried

that customers might not treat her kindly. They wanted to know how to approach Wendy when tasks needed to be done over or when she needed training.

But barriers were broken! The group at Cenex became so comfortable working with Wendy that they eventually said, ‘We don't need a job coach anymore... we can take it from here!’ My job was done.

I didn't see Wendy, then, for about six months. When I finally visited the store, it was like a reunion of old friends. Cenex staff were telling me how wonderful Wendy is doing and how happy they are to have her. One of her coworkers said, ‘We love Wendy!’, and every single one of the others chimed in, ‘Yes!’

Wendy gave us the biggest smile... I knew then that her story needed to be shared.”

Nanette Schwantes, ODC Case Coordinator



OPPORTUNITY
DEVELOPMENT
CENTERS, INC.

1191 Huntington Avenue | Wisconsin Rapids, WI 54494



Administrative Office
1191 Huntington Avenue
Wisconsin Rapids, WI 54494
715-424-2712

2406 East 21st Street
Marshfield, WI 54449
715-387-1161

41 Park Ridge Drive
Stevens Point, WI 54481
715-344-4563

www.odcinc.com



Make a gift!
www.odcinc.com/donate
715-818-6451



Above: Wendy and her family celebrated her success at a recent ODC Employer Appreciation luncheon in Marshfield.

“Wendy has been a huge help to our store! She is very much a team player, and a fun person to work with. The environment in the whole store changes when Wendy arrives each morning with her big smile and positive attitude.

Wendy tries her best to continue to learn and listen to helpful direction. She is eager to work on any project we ask her to help us with. She is constantly working on a task and we never have to worry that she won't keep herself busy!

What all of us have noticed is that on days when Wendy is off, customers will ask ‘Where is Wendy today?’ She has been such a positive influence on both staff and customers.

We feel very lucky to have been given the opportunity to work with Wendy. She has become one of the very important members of our Cenex team.”

Megan Newby, Manager, Stratford Cenex C-Store

