



An Accelerated Vocational Training Program
for Young Adults with Disabilities

Through your support, Tommy Nobis Center was able to launch The Academy and provide this exciting new opportunity that guarantees employment for every participant who successfully completes the program.

Meet Haley

Haley is a very talented and artistic young woman who is passionate about connecting with nature through photography. She especially enjoys photographing flowers. She is incredibly kind and has a great sense of humor.

Growing up, Haley had difficulty managing new situations and environments, and was diagnosed with autism spectrum disorder (ASD). Although she got along well with others, she was not very sociable and tended to be introverted. Haley said her biggest challenge was being confident around new people.

Haley graduated from high school in 2022, but like so many young adults with disabilities, she had difficulty navigating the transition from school to employment. That's where The Academy at Tommy Nobis Center came in. Haley wanted to attend The Academy because she really wanted to learn about "responsibility, patience, ingenuity, and the value of hard work." She applied, was accepted, and embarked on what she called a "new adventure."

Educate

During the 3-month education phase of the program, Haley was an active participant in classroom activities and discussions and was eager to learn. She became much more sociable and went out of her way to support and celebrate her peers. She developed the ability to remain calm and grounded in periods of stress or transition. The Academy helped her to become a stronger self-advocate and boosted her confidence.



After crafting her resume and honing her interview skills, she was ready to move on to the internship phase of the program.

Train

Haley worked with her Academy Employment Specialist to search for job opportunities that suited her skills and interests. She was thrilled to be offered an internship at a local florist which helped her build work readiness skills while connecting her to her passion for nature. She enjoyed her responsibilities of processing flowers, sweeping, vacuuming, cleaning up the store, assisting customers, and taking orders. The florist staff were delighted with Haley's work ethic and she became an important part of the team.



Employ

Haley's dedication, attention to detail, and eagerness to learn and grow made her a great fit for a permanent job at the florist and led to her final phase of The Academy program. Her Employment Specialist stays in contact with Haley and is available to offer support to her and her employer to ensure continued success. Haley is proud of herself and enjoying her new-found independence. In the future, she hopes to move into a career in nature photography.

"I really loved The Academy because it helped me use my coping skills and be more focused. I really enjoy my job. It doesn't feel like work at all!"



Through the generosity of Tommy Nobis Center supporters, individuals like Haley are given the tools and support they need to find career success.