



THE ACADEMY at Tommy Nobis Center

An Accelerated Vocational Training Program
for Young Adults with Disabilities



From learning skills to landing jobs, The Academy at Tommy Nobis Center is where growth gets real!

Meet Jay

At 22 years old, Jay is determined to keep moving forward. A passionate musician, songwriter, boxer, and Mixed Martial Arts enthusiast, Jay approaches life with resilience and grit. After experiencing a major head injury in 2015, he faced significant physical and communication challenges that changed the course of his life. But through perseverance, support, and hard work, Jay continues to pursue his goals while building confidence and independence along the way.

Finding the Right Path

Jay graduated from high school in 2024 and knew he wanted to work and earn his own money. He was eager to explore employment opportunities and gain more independence. Last summer, he decided to enroll in The Academy at Tommy Nobis Center.

Embracing Growth

At first, Jay admits he was unsure if The Academy was right for him. Despite his initial hesitation, Jay quickly became engaged in the program and embraced the opportunity to grow. During the eight-week education phase, he participated in group activities, strengthened his communication and teamwork skills, and developed strategies for emotional regulation and workplace success.



“TNC helped me to look past my challenges and keep an open mind on trying new things.”

Overcoming Challenges

Before coming to Tommy Nobis Center, Jay struggled with the stress and frustration of finding a job. Through support from the Academy staff, Jay learned how to build a resume, improve his interview skills, and develop a more positive mindset around the job search process.

Meaningful Employment

Today, Jay works weekly shifts at Poco Loco Mexican Restaurant, where he assists with labeling products, cleaning, breaking down boxes, recycling, and helping keep the property clean.



“Having a job gives me a paycheck that I can use to pay for my hobbies and goals. I like the owner Nick and he works with me a lot. He is chill and likes music.”

Ongoing Support for Success

Tommy Nobis Center continues to provide ongoing support through monthly check-ins, virtual meetings, employer communication, and coaching when needed. These services help ensure Jay feels supported as he continues building workplace skills and confidence.

Looking Ahead

Outside of work, Jay continues to pursue his passions for music and combat sports. He works with a music therapist to strengthen his voice and speech through songwriting and singing, and he remains focused on his long-term goals of becoming a musician and songwriter.

Empowered Through Employment

Jay's journey is a powerful example of resilience, persistence, and growth. Through hard work, determination, and support from Tommy Nobis Center, he continues building a future filled with possibility.

Through the generosity of Tommy Nobis Center supporters, young adults like Jay are empowered to build confidence, obtain meaningful employment, and pursue brighter futures.