

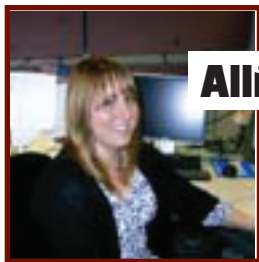
# Promoting Partnerships and Employment for People with Disabilities

Virginia Board for People with Disabilities and Virginia Commonwealth University,  
Rehabilitation Research and Training Center on Workplace Supports and Job Retention

## Success Stories

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**Allie**

Allie is a 29 year old woman with Cerebral Ataxia. Allie knows her way around a PC and is proficient with the MS Office Suite and QuickBooks. She expressed interest in accounting as that is what she has been studying in school. Accounting clerk positions were desirable but she remained open to other clerical positions. Natural supports include her parents, sister, and her boyfriend. Allie is very capable but her shyness, insecurity, and limited work experience present challenges to employment.

Allie has worked as a salesperson at a shoe retailer, an office clerk for Department of Social Services, and a volunteer treasurer for Performance Events. Though Performance events was a volunteer position she gained invaluable experience working with Quickbooks and financial data. Allie had tried traditional routes of job development putting out resumes in response to newspaper and internet searches. One of the problems she faced is that her shyness and lack of assertiveness caused her to not feel confident in following up and aggressively pursuing positions. Allie speaks with a very slight speech impediment and speaks very softly, her awareness of this affects her confidence when job searching and interviewing.

The Department of Rehabilitative Services referred Allie to Career Support Systems for Job Development. Career Support Systems contacted Caliper and discussed Allie with a recruiter. Allie and her employment specialist met at Caliper and assisted her with registering and supported her during the interview. An opportunity with The Virginia Office for Protection and Advocacy (VOPA) became available. VOPA needed someone to assist their staff with various duties including driving, and reading. They also needed that person to do light data entry and general administrative duties. Caliper considered Allie for the position and contacted the employment consultant to see if Allie would be interested. Allie was very excited and interested. VOPA asked to meet and interview Allie and were very accommodating throughout the process. The employment consultant was allowed to be at this interview and also took the opportunity to identify important "know before you go" things like parking, entrances, and bathrooms. Allie was assigned to VOPA and that assignment lasted 90 days. The employment consultant stayed in close contact with Caliper while pursuing other avenues of job development. After a short time another opportunity presented itself through Caliper. This position was a customer service position with the Virginia Employment Commission had become available and that the VEC positions were usually long term. The VEC requested a phone interview. The employment consultant coached Allie that she would need to speak up with confidence and also position herself in a part of her house where she had a clear cell signal as she has no land line. The first phone interview had to stop because the interviewer could not hear or understand Allie. Allie went to her mother's house and used a landline. Allie called the employment consultant and stated that she did not think the interview went well. As soon as the call ended the employment consultant received a call that the VEC had offered her the position and she was to start the next day.

Initially Allie was placed as a temporary worker through Caliper but after 30 days the VEC offered to hire Allie directly as a long term, full time temporary worker. The only accommodation Allie required was a comfortable chair and the limited presence of the employment consultant/job coach. Allie has been with the VEC two months now.

Allie has repeatedly expressed pleasure and gratitude with the entire process of being assisted by an employment consultant, registering with Caliper, and ultimately obtaining employment. She especially has been pleased with being able to be placed quickly on not one but two occasions. Allie is very happy with how full time employment makes her feel. She says it gives her a sense of normalcy and that it makes her feel more "complete".



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