



April 2019 – Russell McCullough



### *Advocacy at Work*

My name is Russell McCullough, I was born and raised in Madison WI. I'm a part-time employee at the Wisconsin Board for People with Developmental Disabilities (BPDD) but I'm a full-time advocate for the rights of people with disabilities! At BPDD I'm an Office Associate which means I help with any of BPDD's events or projects, getting resources put together and making sure things look nice. I'm a talented public speaker and frequently present at events about being employed and how to advocate for myself. With the signing of the Supported Decision-Making (SDM) law I have been busy travelling around talking about how it has helped me to live independently. I also work as a janitor for the City of Madison at one of the fleet car shops. Being employed has always been important to me but ever since I got my own apartment it's one of my biggest priorities. Having money to pay my bills is one thing but being able to do the things I love makes all my work worth it!

Some of my hobbies include bowling, going out to the movies with friends, dancing, seeing live music and cruising around in limos. I bowl with Special Olympics Wisconsin every

week, for almost half of the year. My highest score is a 204 and even though it was just for fun and not part of my league bowling score I claim it as my best score. A couple of years ago I entered a radio competition to see the EDM (Electronic Dance Music) artist Zedd and won! A friend and I got a limo ride to the show and even got to go backstage to meet Zedd before the concert. For several years I worked at a limo rental service because I love limos but more importantly, I got a discount on rentals as an employee! For my birthday every year I rent a limo with my friends to go to dinner and maybe a movie.

I believe that all people should be able to work and advocate for themselves about their life choices. If I didn't work or spend time with friends in the community, I would get very bored at home. In the future I would like to get my driver's license and open my own limousine rental service. Even when I have my own business I won't stop presenting at conferences or advocating for people's rights. Everyone needs support in life but that doesn't mean you can't work or follow your dreams.