

Jamie Iskerka-Dutton

Jamie had been attending Headwaters day services program in Rhinelander Monday through Friday from 8am to 3pm for 4 years since she left high school at age 19. During the day services program, Jamie's activities at Headwaters focused on life skills, yoga, art, photography, and going into the community one morning a week. Jamie's support staff describe her as a very caring and loving person who has had to overcome many obstacles in life.

Over the years, Headwaters staff have encouraged her to develop healthy relationships and connect to community opportunities. When Nicolet College launched their Jump!Start Program in 2014, Jamie was one of the first people Headwaters supported in a postsecondary educational environment and the first to secure a work experience at Nicolet in the culinary department. When Headwaters announced the launch of a service transformation pilot group in the spring of 2016, Jamie jumped at the chance to be involved. Jamie aspired to get a job, grow her small crafting business, build more friendships and connections, and move from her home in Elcho, 45 minutes away, to an apartment in Rhinelander.



As part of the Headwaters new community-based service pilot, Jamie and her team began the Discovery process, from which they developed a positive personal profile with personal goals and helped her apply for DVR services.

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Jamie realized that while she loves to cook for her friends and family, she does not want a job in the food service industry. She wants to pursue another passion - crafts.

Headwaters worked with her on interview skills and took Jamie on several job shadows, which is how she learned about an opportunity at Hobby Lobby. Typically, Hobby Lobby only hires people who can use a cash register; however, Headwaters negotiated an exception and secured a job for Jamie in August 2016. Jamie works 2 days per week for 5-6 hours each shift making \$10.23 an hour. She is responsible for unwrapping and prepping shipments of products for placement on the sales floor. A coworker recently said of Jamie, "She is so cheerful and hardworking. I enjoy every day I work with her!" Jamie intends to work as hard as she can to learn new skills and grow within the company.

On the days Jamie works at Hobby Lobby, she doesn't go to the Headwaters building before or after work. This was an intentional decision made between Headwaters and Jamie because transitions can be difficult. Since making this decision, Jamie has not missed a day of work at Hobby Lobby. This was a shift for Headwaters - typically all the people who have community jobs are transported to the facility and job coaches take them to work. Katherine Garrison, Headwaters' Community Services Manager,

said, "Headwaters had to learn what was best for Jamie and change our model in order to get to know her in this new "work" way and set her up for success." Once Jamie was comfortable with this change, her team challenged her further by having her meet her job coach at Hobby Lobby using public transit. Jamie is becoming self-reliant in her morning routine, then catching public transit to work by herself.



Headwaters' community-based day services are helping Jamie develop other life skills and connect to her new community in meaningful ways. They are helping her learn math and money skills, find a welcoming church, polish her crafting techniques, and take cooking classes. She volunteers with a small group of people at a homeless shelter and goes independently to help at a nursing home to prepare meals and do activities. These opportunities afford Jamie the chance to learn compromise, negotiation, sharing, and effective communication. Headwaters is pursuing another volunteer opportunity to place food on shelves at the local food pantry, which will help her prepare for advancing to

the sales floor at Hobby Lobby. She is taking more responsibility for herself by learning safety on the Internet, how to make doctor's appointments, and doing her own laundry and healthy meal planning. About all these new activities, Jamie says, "I like being busier, I'm not bored anymore."

In November 2016, Jamie found a roommate and an apartment in Rhinelander. Headwaters offers supported living services as well, and Jamie had the chance to interview the support staff for her apartment. In this way Jamie learned about herself, what she needs, and how to express her needs so that others can help her. This model of wraparound support will provide Jamie with a seamless approach and continuity of staff to develop her skills across all facets of her life.

Moving to Rhinelander opens up many new opportunities for Jamie. She is applying for a YMCA membership and plans to do Zumba and swimming with her roommate. She plans to join a knitting or crocheting group and would like to get a table at the local flea market to sell her crafts. A crafting mentor was identified for Jamie who will help her improve her skills and develop a small hobby business. In addition, Jamie and her roommate positively influence each other: Jamie is interested in taking continuing education classes at Nicolet, like her roommate; and her roommate, who has spent many years working in the work center, plans to take part in Headwaters' community-based services.

When Jamie spent her days in the facility-based program and isolated in a small community, she had few positive role models. She depended on staff for most interactions and socialization. Now that she is working and has developed relationships with her roommate, people at Nicolet and volunteer sites, and others in the community, Headwaters has begun fading supports. Jamie is quickly becoming more independent at work, at home, and in the community. The primary role of staff is to support positive social interactions and foster community relationships that will model good behavior and ensure Jamie will continue to grow as a person to her fullest potential. When asked "what advice would you give to other people wanting to have a fuller life?" Jamie responded, "Know what you want, be honest about it. Then, try your hardest to make it happen."

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For more information about the Building Full Lives initiative, visit <https://wi-bpdd.org/index.php/building-full-lives/> or contact Molly Cooney at 608-266-0266.