

CELEBRATING

Mississippians with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities

Steven Benton



Steven Benton grew up and attended school in Jackson, Mississippi. Grand Mal seizures, caused by abnormal electrical activity in the brain, resulted in many people believing Steven would always require an Intermediate Care Facility (ICF) level of support out of concern for his health and safety. In 2016, after living in an ICF for most of his adult life, Steven had an opportunity to move to an apartment in Brandon where he receives Supervised Living services. There, Steven has staff that help care for him twenty four hours a day, seven days a week. They monitor his health, and provide any support he may need with daily tasks. A smaller setting like his apartment is relaxing to Steven, helping to keep seizures to a minimum.

One of the most important things to Steven is his job where he is able to work several hours resulting in a considerable paycheck at the end of the week! However, his support staff has found that the more hours Steven worked, the more likely he was to have a seizure. Despite the risk, Steven loves working at a local fast food chain through the Supported Employment program, and with the help of his job coach, has found a schedule that is conducive to keeping his seizure activity under control. She reports that he hasn't had a seizure at work since September, 2018.

Steven interacts with customers and co-workers, stays on task, and is motivated, according to his supervisor who stated, "He is a good employee and does his job well." The routine and structure of his job cuts down on confusion and frustration which have been known to trigger seizures for Steven. When he's not working, Steven enjoys going to church and out to eat at restaurants, especially those that serve pizza. So much so that he's considering looking for a second job at a pizza restaurant!

Supervised Living and Supported Employment services are funded through the Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (ID/DD) Waiver program. For more information about IDD services, call the Mississippi Department of Mental Health at 1-877-210-8513 or visit www.dmh.ms.gov.



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