

Success Story: Davontae Rhue

Davontae Rhue is a young man with clear ideas of who he is and the path he has taken to become a role model to others around him. This was not always the case.

In July 2012, Davontae came to VSP through referral from the Division of Rehabilitation Services. Because he lacked work experience and life structure, Work Readiness at LifeBridge Health (formerly Work Adjustment Training) was deemed most appropriate for him. Initially assigned to Sinai's Environmental Services department, Davontae requested a transfer to Levindale's Environmental Services department for more advanced training. "The training I received at Levindale was great, as I was kept busy throughout the day. I learned how to properly and safely mop and strip floors in the dining room and hallway," shared Davontae. He trained in a real-work environment and learned to communicate and be courteous to others. He continued, "Training gave me structure and responsibility, and I realized that I was doing something positive for myself." Davontae was candid about the positive influence of VSP services on his social relationships, stating that prior to entering VSP services, he was placing himself in "negative social situations."

Davontae successfully completed Work Readiness Training in September 2012 and began VSP employment in early October 2012 on the Social

Security Administration Woodlawn campus. As a janitor, his duties include floor stripping and waxing and cleaning bathrooms. At first, Davontae's transition to employment was not a smooth one. He demonstrated less than acceptable attendance, took unauthorized breaks and did not know how to address work frustration. Rather than face these challenges, he walked off the job. In response, VSP's project

manager, human resource coordinator and case manager all intervened and assisted him in maintaining employment and learning to effectively address his concerns. Since that initial transition, Davontae has demonstrated tremendous growth. Case manager Veronica White said, "Davontae has matured quite a bit and possesses a strong work ethic. Through VSP employment, he has positive social outlets with co-workers." VSP project manager Michelle Edmonds stated, "Davontae is now a reliable employee who performs his work tasks well. He follows

rules and often asks for more work." Another example of Davontae's commitment to VSP employment took place during a recent winter snowstorm. He and two co-workers took initiative and decided to pool their resources to rent a hotel room near their Social Security building to ensure they would be to work on time the next morning.

Ultimately, VSP services and employment have given Davontae what he needed. "VSP has matured me and made me more responsible, while giving me structure and routine," said Davontae. He feels satisfied with his job and has confidence in his ability to meet employment expectations. Recently, he moved out on his own for the first time. Davontae is now a role model and example for his family, his co-workers and many other young adults in the Baltimore area.

