



Pfizer is a pioneer of inclusion of individuals with intellectual disabilities ... starting in Andover

PGS Andover, US



Challenge

The need to provide meaningful hands-on work experience to young adults with intellectual disabilities in our society is rising by the day.

Opportunities have existed on a small scale, in the food service industry, grocery stores, etc. But what about Pfizer?

Colleagues at Pfizer's Andover took up the challenge ...



Idea

Partnering with the Andover High School's special education department, the team had a big aha moment. The centralized office supply room had just recently gone through so-called "5S" certification which means it is run according to a very specific set of instructions, something that plays perfectly into the skills taught at the school.

So why not invite the students to gain first-hand work experience there? The "Learn to Work" program was born!



Experiment

The experiment began in the office supply room with 4 students who would manage the supply room with the help of a job coach (provided by the school). The students caught onto the process so quickly that the team adapted by adding mail room tasks and later special projects like laminating, creating training binders, scanning, etc. The program has now even expanded to the security department, to include assisting with new hire induction materials, making keys and handing out parking tickets.



Impact

"Learn to Work" is an enormous success: At Pfizer, it has freed up colleagues to work on more complex tasks, and the presence of the students has had an incredible impact on the morale.

The impact on the students' (25 participating to date) lives is immeasurable. They gained capabilities, skills and confidence in themselves in a way that would not have been possible without the program. - A ray of hope in the lives of these students and their families.



Team

Bridget Burke
James L. Watson
Tricia MacDonald
Maribeth Regan
Carolyn Hynes
Pamela Markert
Sandy Diminico
Inoelis Dejesus

