

David Shines at Garretts Mill Diner

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One of the best feelings is when you discover your passions and find a way to share them with others. For David, his passions are cooking and interacting with people, which makes his new position at Garretts Mill Diner in Stow a perfect fit!

"I love it here," David shared, who has been delighting customers at the local eatery since October. "Compared to the other places I have worked, I just don't get stressed here. We just have a lot of fun."

David, who has a developmental disability and receives support from Summit DD, jumped right in when he was hired, working both behind the scenes and with customers. A man of many talents, he does almost everything, from hosting, taking orders and serving food to doing dishes, rolling silverware and filling sugars.

"David is good at developing relationships with people," Lori Nemec, David's Summit DD Service and Support Administrator (SSA), described. "(The owner) recognized that he had a talent for interacting with people, not just doing behind-the-scenes work."

Sometimes it's just David and owner Brian Krasney running the diner together, and they make a great team. "Honesty, I sleep better knowing David is coming in the next day," Brian said with a laugh, explaining that David is the go-to person because he is so reliable and dependable. "I want someone who is here to work, and David comes in ready to work."

Lori is always looking for ways to help David succeed. She shared that she is working with David's support team to find an adaptive scanner so he can help with the checkout process. Once the equipment is available, David will be able to do every task a typical employee would do at the diner.

"Our goal is to have people we work with, who are ready, be out in the community, just like everyone else," Lori stated.

David was connected to Brian and Garretts Mill Diner through his Hattie Larlham job developer. Previously he worked at Hattie's Café in the Summit County Courthouse, and has been successful in various jobs throughout the community.

"I needed help. I identified the right person for the job and that right person was David," Brian explained of his hiring process. "I only focus on the abilities of people. It was an easy decision with the several years of experience David had. All you have to do is work with him to see his abilities. He is very valuable."

He continued to praise David, describing his high attention to detail, exceptional problem solving skills and outstanding customer service.

"David is fantastic," Brian expressed. "He has added a level of optimism and positive energy to the diner. He has got the drive and is going to be very successful."

With that drive and strong work ethic, David said he is working toward future goals.

"I would love to learn how to make pancakes!" he said with a smile, adding that it would be fun to cook with Brian. "I would also love to learn how to be a better cook and then run my own restaurant. That's a dream."

Lori said she will always support David and his dreams, as well as find him new opportunities to help him achieve his goals. Summit DD has connected David to transportation so he can remain independent and active in his community, and Lori also shared that she has been looking for recreational activities David might enjoy, like swimming lessons, fishing trips, bowling and basketball.

"What I admire about David is his honesty and determination. He never stops saying what he wants or needs," she shared. "He is such a great person."

Be sure to stop by Garretts Mill Diner and say hello! David said he loves visitors!