

THE SPECTRUM BRIDGE

Spectrum Works School Newsletter, Issue 3

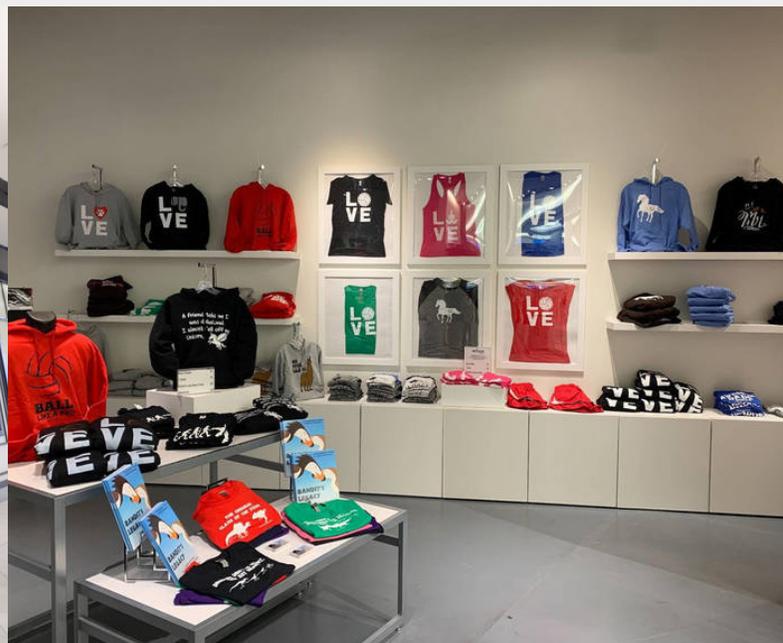
"My students are in real work experiences with high expectations and have opportunities for meaningful employment after graduation. Thank you, Spectrum Works!"

– Thomas Beese, Newmark High School



YOUNG ADULTS WITH AUTISM

PARTNER COMPANIES



SPECTRUM WORKS POP-UP SHOP AT THE AMERICAN DREAM MALL
YOUR STUDENTS CAN BENEFIT FROM OUR SLE PROGRAM

SPOTLIGHT: DENNIS

Dennis James Taylor, A graduate of the Spectrum Works internship program, founded D.J.T. Productions, LLC in 2016 as a vehicle to express his creative talent. The 28-year-old entrepreneur is a graphic designer by day and a writer and illustrator off hours. He professes two passions: animals and anime.

Dennis Taylor is the author and Illustrator of "*Bandit's Legacy*," a story of a young dromaeosaur (raptor) dinosaur, Bandit, and his adventures in surviving the world of Early Cretaceous Montana. He notes that "watching The Land Before Time series videos piqued [his] interest in paleontology." Since the age of 10 he has done extensive research on these prehistoric creatures, putting his membership pass to The Museum of Natural History to good use.

Taylor is also a consultant for the new PBS children's series, "*Hero Elementary*," and he is developing an animated series, "*The Taylor Cubs*," that he strives to produce for broadcast, featuring the adventures of a young boy, Danny, and his friends, as they discover new lands and family lineage.



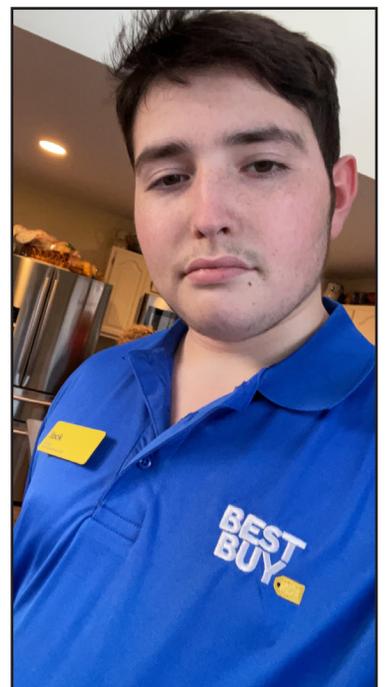
“

It has been my honor to mentor Dennis on his prepress journey at FM Expressions. Knowing that I can make a difference gives me a sense of pride. Dennis has rightfully earned his place on our team due to his willingness to learn and his ability to find creative solutions.”

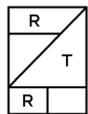
- Will,
FM Expressions.

SPOTLIGHT: JACK

Jack, from Morris Knolls High School, has been an outstanding member of the Spectrum Works team for the past two years. His tech capabilities have made him the “go to” person for students seeking assistance in various coding languages. Jack’s participation at the **Spectrum Works** pop-up store, located at the **American Dream Mall**, has rounded out his work experience. We congratulate Jack on his part-time employment at **Best Buy**, where he has become a valued member of their staff.



CURRENT PARTNER COMPANIES



Rent The Runway



Green Distribution



FM Expressions



AMERICAN
DREAM

American Dream



Walgreens



Bergen Logistics



Old Navy

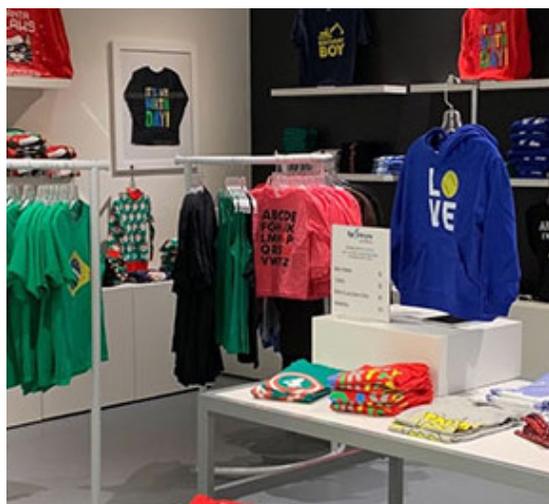
Spectrum Works is a unique nonprofit that provides job training and employment to high school students with autism by building inclusive workforces at partner companies.

The program combines on-the-job training with workplace readiness training and job exploration. Working as paid employees, young adults with autism cooperate with Spectrum Works job coaches and partner company mentors to develop professional skills. Students work in positions with a range of low to high skilled tasks.

Spectrum Works builds inclusive workforces at real companies by implementing its employment program, allowing students to work alongside neurotypical coworkers every day. Job Coaches help students to develop and advance in their skills while partner companies commit to our integrated model and become supportive, inclusive environments for young adults with autism.

STUDENTS GAIN INDEPENDENCE, A SENSE OF PURPOSE, AND PRIDE IN THEIR WORK.

Working at the Spectrum Works pop up store at the American Dream Mall, our students have gained retail experience in inventory management, merchandising and customer service.



“

Working with the Spectrum staff and the students has been a tremendous honor and a high point in my professional career. The students are humbling, excited, motivated, high attention to detail, and hard working. They are absolute role models for the entire Green staff. We at Green are highly anticipating in transitioning as many students as we can into becoming Green employees. At the end of the day, it always feels good in doing the right thing.”

– Sam Jaafar, Green Distribution General Manager

For more information about how to enroll in our program, contact beverly@spectrumworks.org or call us at (201) 552-2055



**AN INTERVIEW WITH DAVE,
WALGREENS MANAGER, AT AMERICAN DREAM MALL**

Q: How many Spectrum Works students have participated in the program at Walgreens?

Dave: A: The Spectrum Works student came to Walgreens this past summer at the American Dream Mall. They assimilated into our program with ease, and they were most helpful to our customers and staff.

Q: How long is the Spectrum Works employee onboarding and intergration?

A: The Spectrum Works student integrated with our staff in a positive manner. Their work ethic was beyond approach.

Q: Have you encountered any negative experiences?

A: Our staff was delighted to have had the Spectrum Works interns as part of their team.

Q: What should other business owners expect from an engagement with Spectrum Works?

A: Business Owners should expect Spectrum Works interns to be motivated to learn their jobs and are supported by Spectrum Works staff during their employment.

Q: What has been the Impact on Walgreens neurotypical employees?

A: The Walgreens employess welcomed the student, and they quickly became part of the team.

Q: How has the Spectrum Works program personally affected you?

A: The Spectrum Works student quickly became part of our team, and I welcomed the opportunity to have dedicated interns interact with our employees and our customer. This is a definite reflection on the Spectrum Works staff and how they transition students to a working environment.

IN THE NEWS



**Autism at Work Across the Spectrum:
My Own Journey**

Allow me to introduce myself. I'm Robert Hansen, a 23-year-old who has never worked a job based on an interview, but currently makes upwards of \$5,000 a month as an autistic freelance writer. Spectrum Bridge



**New TV Series Spotlights
Entrepreneurs With Disabilities**

NBC Universal's new documentary series follows four enterprising young entrepreneurs with various disabilities as they contend with the realities of running small businesses in everything from cookies to concert production. Spectrum Bridge



**Key Findings: CDC Releases First
Estimates of the Number of Adults
Living with Autism Spectrum Disorder
in the United States**

A 2020 report from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) estimated the prevalence of autism spectrum disorder (ASD) among adults aged 18 years and older in the United States. Spectrum Bridge



**Neurodiversity as a Competitive
Advantage**

Many people with neurological conditions such as autism spectrum disorder and dyslexia have extraordinary skills, including in pattern recognition, memory, and mathematics. Yet they often struggle to fit the profiles sought by employers. Spectrum Bridge

THIS NEWSLETTER IS DESIGNED BY A SPECTRUM WORKS STUDENT: KYLE
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