

Business Partnership Success Story: Local Pizzeria Creates Inclusive Workplace that Supports the Success of Diverse Talent



IDVR's **Mission** is to prepare individuals with disabilities for employment and career opportunities while meeting the needs of the employers.



Rural Business SUCCESS STORY

Business: Pizza Pie Cafe

Location: Twin Falls, Idaho

Services Collaborated On:

High School Student Work-Based
Learning Experiences and On-the-Job
Training Programs



“This is my first job, and I am enjoying it and continuing to learn during my on-the-job training program!” - Amanda, VR Customer

***“I enjoy working here. I’m going to be able to continue to work here part-time while attending CSI full-time.”
- Shui, VR Customer***

“Working with VR has been an invaluable program to our company as well as to the students. These students sometimes work out to be the best employees, they are reliable, pleasant to work with, and are eager to work.” – Roberta Larson, Manager, Pizza Pie Cafe

- Kent Ireton, a VR Counselor at IDVR, works with businesses and students in Twin Falls and the surrounding area to ensure that students with disabilities have an opportunity to able gain valuable hands-on work experience prior to graduation and to support their transition from their secondary education to the world of work.
- Through Kent’s work with the school districts and local businesses, he has developed a strong working relationship with Roberta, the Manager of Pizza Pie Cafe. Because of Roberta Larson’s belief in supporting her community over the past several years, she had offered her pizzeria as a supportive workplace for local students to gain skills and experience.
- Through these work experiences hosted by Roberta and her team at Pizza Pie Cafe, students with disabilities working with IDVR have been able to learn from Roberta how to provide customer service, and other skills such as time management, accountability, workplace communication, and teamwork that will support their success in their long-term career goals.
- Amanda is a shining example of this mutually beneficial relationship between IDVR and Pizza Pie Café. After completing exploration to identify what type of work Amanda would be interested in, Amanda’s VR Counselor connected her to Roberta and Pizza Pie Café to explore the potential of employment there. After Amanda connected with Roberta, and the decision was made to hire her, an on-the-job training agreement was initiated between IDVR and Pizza Pie Cafe to support both Amanda and Pizza Pie Café to be successful.
- Roberta also recognizes that sometimes the students and youth may also benefit from employment with Pizza Pie Café while working towards their long-term goals. Shui enjoys working at Pizza Pie Café and sees it as steppingstone toward her long-term goals. She is a freshman at College of Southern Idaho and while working at Pizza Pie Café she is not only earning money to support her educational goals but also honing her communication, customer service, and teamwork skills.

“It has been an absolute pleasure to work with Pizza Pie Café to provide work experiences for local students. Roberta is very supportive and has provided students with disabilities with the opportunity to learn and grow. So, whether they moved on to bigger and better things afterward or maybe were offered a position, it was always step forward.” – Kent Ireton, VR Counselor

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