

VR Success Story: A Veteran's Resilience Yields Career Results



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



JAY'S SUCCESS STORY

Occupation: Permanent Substitute Teacher

Employer: Twin Falls School District

Location: Twin Falls, Idaho

"What I enjoy most about my job with the Twin Falls School District is being able to work with students from all different grades. I really like when a student or past student sees me in the community and says hello."- Jay, VR Customer

"Jay has been one of our trusted subs for years. He is always dependable and willing to jump in wherever needed. He is a true asset to the Twin Falls School District."-Eva Craner, Public Relations Director

- Jay, an Airforce Veteran and a Social Security Disability Income recipient, applied for VR services in 2019. He was referred by the Veteran's Coordinator at the Idaho Department of Labor to obtain support from VR in reaching the identified goal to successfully continue his employment at the Twin Falls School District.
- Through Counseling and Guidance, the determination was made that support in continuing education would be beneficial for Jay and would allow him to qualify for permanent employment as a teacher. This was important because despite Jay's experience working as an ad hoc substitute teacher for several years, he did not meet the minimum qualifications for a teaching position in Idaho.
- Jay was a recipient of the TEACH scholarship and grant which allowed him to begin his master's degree in 2019. Through the planning process, Jay and his VR Counselor identified a need for additional financial support to help with the costs associated with completing his master's degree.
- In August of 2019, Jay was diagnosed with cancer and part of his treatment plan was intense radiation treatment and a required surgery. Despite the impact and changes to his health, with accommodations, and support from his VR Counselor and professors, Jay continued his education for the fall 2019 semester.
- Following an accident that resulted in a significant injury and medical reasons, Jay had made a difficult decision to withdraw from the fall 2020 semester. Once he was medically cleared and despite multiple injuries and upcoming surgeries to address his injury and cancer diagnosis, Jay returned to the program. Through his determination and desire to achieve his goals, he continued his program at NNU and successfully achieved his goals and graduated in December 2021.
- After completing his program and ongoing medical treatment for his cancer diagnosis, Jay had surgery in early 2023 to obtain a voice box as a prior surgery left him unable to verbally communicate. While addressing his medical needs he also completed benefits planning to understand the impact of working on his disability benefits.
- After Jay began his job search, he was offered and obtained permanent employment with the Twin Falls School District and began working in his new position as a permanent substitute teacher in the 2023-2024 school year.
- Due to his stability in his employment with the school district, VR closed Jay's case successfully in December 2023.
- Since his case was closed, Jay indicated that he continues to work for the Twin Falls School District and loves his position and being able to share with his students about his lived experiences as a person with disabilities.

"Jay's road to success was not an easy one. He fought and beat cancer and underwent multiple surgeries for his ability to speak again all while completing graduate school. He never wavered from his goal he just kept working little by little."-Brian Patingre, VR Counselor

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