SWEAT: Summer Work Experience in Austin, Texas
Summer Program Report

Student:
Dates of Program: June 12 – July 14, 2011
Program Coordinator: Rebecca Royer
Residential Coordinator: Michael Pollei
Job Coach: Hana Crumley
Residential Instructor: Cory McKinney
Orientation & Mobility Instructor: Carolina Gonzales

I. Program Overview

Description of SWEAT Program:
SWEAT is an intense, demanding, exciting, and fun five-week program that prepares academic students for success in the world of work and adult living by increasing independence, competence, and self-confidence. SWEAT is the most advanced vocational and independent living program offered at TSBVI, and the expectations for students are high. Students receive vocational training at paid jobs in the community, classes that focus on job-related skills and independent living skills, and Orientation and Mobility training.

During their first week of SWEAT, the students received intensive training in independent living skills (including mobility), as well as exposure to job-related skills such as interviewing and appropriate interpersonal skills. During the remaining four weeks, they were employed at individual, paid jobs in the Austin community. After participating in the SWEAT program, it is expected that students will be better prepared to take part in summer jobs offered in their local community.

Individual Student Job Description:

[STUDENT] worked at the Department of Aging and Disability Services in the billing and payment division. His job duties included filing papers, taking out recycling, stuffing envelopes, and paper shredding. He was also asked to help prepare a Microsoft Excel document.
II. Work Experiences

Preparing to go to work:

In the week prior to the actual job experience, the students participated in a job preparedness training class with their peers. In this week-long class, they learned the foundations for successful job performance. This curriculum included interview skills, types of jobs available, career planning, and how to get along with coworkers. The students participated in classes where they learned problem-solving strategies to deal with issues that might arise while at work. They also participated in team-building activities and role-playing various problems that might arise with coworkers. A large part of the class was dedicated to reviewing and learning basic expectations on the part of employers.

[STUDENT] participated fully in all class activities and completed his assignments on time. [STUDENT] also spent a large part of the initial week learning to commute independently to his job site. With his Orientation and Mobility (O&M) instructor, he learned how to safely travel independently on a walking route to and from his work site. His route involved two street crossings at a lighted intersection.

Modifications needed to perform job:

[STUDENT] used a cane to travel to and from the jobsite.

Skills and competencies on the job:

Student’s skills are rated on a scale from 1 to 5 in comparison to their sighted peers.

Basic Skills

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<th>Skill</th>
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<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>N/A</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
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<tr>
<td>Writing</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mathematics</td>
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<tr>
<td>Listening</td>
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<td>Speaking</td>
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Comments:

[STUDENT] displayed a good aptitude for math when adjusting restaurant bills for tip, keeping a weekly time sheet, and paying utility bills. He read aloud during class with ease and his speaking voice was exceptional. His vocabulary and grammar skills were strong and he spoke with confidence and maturity. He listened attentively and gave feedback to show he understood the information being given. His writing skills were good but his handwriting was at times difficult to read.

Thinking Skills

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<th>Skill</th>
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<th>3</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Creative thinking</td>
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<td></td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Decision making</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Problem solving □1 □2 □3 □4 □5 □N/A
Knowing how to learn □1 □2 □3 □4 □5 □N/A
Reasoning □1 □2 □3 □4 □5 □N/A
Monitoring & correcting performance □1 □2 □3 □4 □5 □N/A

Comments:

[STUDENT] was an independent and creative thinker. During casual conversation he consistently had original and insightful input. He had a great respect for authority and a high degree of pride in his performance at work and on the dorm. Once given instruction staff could have total confidence in his ability to complete a task. He rarely needed instructions repeated and used his own reasoning skills to complete his work in the most efficient manner possible. At work he was given filing assignments that were estimated to take a week and he had completed them in just two days.

Personal Qualities

Responsibility □1 □2 □3 □4 □5 □N/A
Self-esteem □1 □2 □3 □4 □5 □N/A
Sociability □1 □2 □3 □4 □5 □N/A
Self-management □1 □2 □3 □4 □5 □N/A
(Including time management)
Integrity/honesty □1 □2 □3 □4 □5 □N/A
Participates as a team member □1 □2 □3 □4 □5 □N/A
Exercises leadership skills □1 □2 □3 □4 □5 □N/A
Accepts constructive criticism □1 □2 □3 □4 □5 □N/A
Organizes information & materials □1 □2 □3 □4 □5 □N/A

Comments:

[STUDENT] was a great team member at work. He confidently introduced himself to his supervisors and fellow employees and offered assistance to all of them. He was willing to take on any task and once completed he immediately sought out his next assignment. Often times his supervisors were out of town or not in the office so [STUDENT] took the initiative to form relationships with other workers in his department. Through these relationships he expanded his work experience and filled the slow times with extra assignments. His job coach reiterated to him the importance of explaining his visual impairment to the employees giving him work assignments and he was very receptive to this advice. His self esteem was high but his desire to please sometimes lead [STUDENT] to be overly critical of himself. He stood out as a leader amongst his peers by acting as a role model and offering guidance and assistance where ever needed. He was well liked by all of his peers.

Technology
<table>
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<th>Uses appropriate technology</th>
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<th>5</th>
<th>N/A</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Applies technology to task</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maintains &amp; troubleshoots technology</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
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<td>N/A</td>
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**Comments:**

[STUDENT] used a computer on the dorm to regularly check work related emails.

### III. Overall Job Performance

**Week 1:**
On his first day of work [STUDENT] found his supervisor on his own and was designated the task of boxing files and taking out recycling. He had no problem navigating the maze like building on his own including finding the basement to gather supplies if needed. He wore professional attire and was always on time. His work space was kept clean and organized. The first part of the week was slow and [STUDENT] expressed some boredom. We talked about bringing something to do for the slower times. Mid-week [STUDENT] was very excited to have a full days work with very little downtime. He reorganized an entire wall of files by date. His supervisor told him the project may take all week and he very proudly announced that he had completed half of the task in one day.

**Week 2:**
[STUDENT] had become more mobile in the work place by walking around asking his coworkers if they needed anything done. He had been sent to a different floor to shred papers, and was regularly taking out recycling on both the floors he was working on. After a discussion with his job coach about articulating his visual impairment he was making a strong effort to let everyone know what his capabilities and limitations were. The busier days were preferrable to [STUDENT] as he enjoyed work and needed little downtime.

**Week 3:**
By week three [STUDENT] had several employees approaching him with various tasks and was able to maintain a steady flow of work. He mentioned some issues with eye fatigue after filing for long periods of time. Again we discussed the importance of communicating your limitations to your employer and [STUDENT] made an effort to take breaks for his eyes and alternate between tasks that required reading and those that did not. His supervisors were not present during this time but he had built a working relationship with a woman in the office who became somewhat of a stand in supervisor for him. She was very pleased to have [STUDENT] 's help and praised him regurlarly.

**Week 4:**
On the fourth week [STUDENT] continued to perform well at his job. The amount of work available to him slowed during this week so he regurlarly checked in with employees to see if help was needed and bided through the slow times with a positive attitude. Midweek he was able to take a break from his work in order to tour some of the other job sites. He visited Amazonia Aquarims and was very curious about all the species of fish available at the store. He also saw Dragon’s Lair (a comic book store), Yarborough Branch Public Library, and Texas Coffee Trader’s (a wholesale and retail coffee roaster and equipment supplier). He asked a lot of questions of his fellow SWEAT students and showed a genuine interests in their work sites.