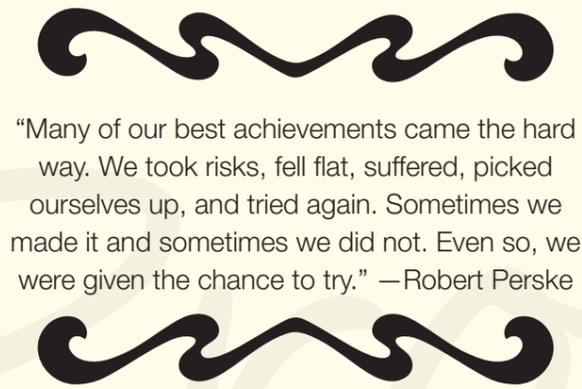


Empowered. Independent. Productive.



“Many of our best achievements came the hard way. We took risks, fell flat, suffered, picked ourselves up, and tried again. Sometimes we made it and sometimes we did not. Even so, we were given the chance to try.” —Robert Perske

Often the greatest obstacles and challenges that we face in life awaken our abilities and passion to succeed. As Robert Perske said, “Many of our best achievements came the hard way. We took risks, fell flat, suffered, picked ourselves up, and tried again. Sometimes we made it and sometimes we did not. Even so, we were given the chance to try.”

West Virginians live by a code of values that not only define who we are, but represent the roles that we play in society. Regardless of how we come to achieve our goals, it’s our determination and resourcefulness that distinguishes us and guides us to our achievements. We are a people defined by determination, independence, contribution to family and society, productivity, resourcefulness, achievement, and various other admirable values.

meaningful careers, become home owners, engage in their passions, or identify and capitalize on their talents and potential, those things have happened. They also make an impact on the communities in which they live.

In this section, we have highlighted the successes and contributions of four West Virginia citizens. Whether or not these four people intended to find productive and

One commonality among these individuals is that each has a developmental disability that fails to define them. They recognized barriers and broke them down; they had goals and they attained them. They are empowered, independent, productive. They are go-getters.

Tiffany Wiseman



Jeff Marr

Jeff Marr’s hard working and helpful attitude keeps him changing hats. While working in the House Clerk’s Office, he was appointed by the governor to serve as a member of the WV Developmental Disabilities Council. He has advocated on behalf of people with developmental and other disabilities and has provided valuable insights and contributions to the work groups and committees he participated in.

Jeff attended an eight-month-long advocacy training called Partners in Policymaking where he met with both state and national legislators. After graduation, he shared his knowledge and supported others in their advocacy efforts.

In addition to working at the House Clerk’s Office, Jeff has held jobs at the state Legislature and the Supreme Court of Appeals. Working in these environments was highly compatible with his eagerness to learn and willingness to tackle any new job assignment. It was also conducive to meeting and socializing with new people, which is one of Jeff’s hobbies.

Jeff’s a go-getter, and his personality and perseverance ensure that he will accomplish all that he sets out to do.



Cathy Jones

Being friendly, hard-working and meticulous makes Cathy Jones an asset to her employer at Wendy’s. No job is left undone and she is happy to assist anyone who needs it. When asked about her, the manager said, “Cathy takes a lot of pride in her work and I am glad to have her as part of our team!”

Cathy, a recent University High School (UHS) graduate, was elected the 2010-11 UHS Ambassador for her dedication and school spirit. While attending UHS, she received a certificate in General Foods, a vocational class offered at Monongalia County Technical Center. She was also a participant in the Student Transition to Employment Program (STEP) managed by Community Access, Inc.

Cathy is a hiker who has hiked trails all over the state, including Seneca Rocks. An active member of her church, she welcomes members and distributes programs each Sunday. She has also traveled to Washington, D.C. to do service at the Washington, D.C. Temple.

Cathy’s varied interests, roles and experiences have helped shape her into the social, nature-loving, hard-working person that she is today.



Neal Davis

Neal Davis is the kind of neighbor we all wish we had. Soon after meeting the new person to the neighborhood, a snowstorm hit. Neal went over and offered to shovel her walkway.

Growing up on a farm has instilled the meaning of persistence and hard work in Neal, which is likely why he now runs his own business, Davis Lawn and Garden Services. In his first season, he served over a dozen customers and he is now looking to expand his business. Things have not always been easy for Neal. Although he had done quite a few odd jobs, he had never been employed. With guidance from Job Squad, Inc., he has a career and is a happy business owner.

When Neal is not working, he loves listening to country, gospel and bluegrass music, dancing and playing the spoons. He also likes getting together with family and friends.

Neal did not let hard times get in the way of his ambitions of becoming a homeowner, business owner, friend, family member, woodworker, church member and contributing citizen.



Alan Elkins

Alan Elkins’ dedication and drive are impossible to ignore. He was recognized for Outstanding Achievement by the Autism Society of WV and by Boone Memorial Hospital as the Employee of the Month, where he has worked for eight years. During this time, he has built a network of friends. He has been called a “dedicated work machine” and has received only praise and high marks on his yearly evaluation. Alan does his job well and he is highly valued by his co-workers and supervisors.

Alan is an avid concert goer and loves to swim and go to the movies. He is a member of his local church, enjoys attending church social events and never misses the important occasions in his friends’ lives.

Alan is also a member of the West Virginia Fair Shake Network (FSN) Cross Disability Advocacy Organization. He attends FSN events at the state capitol and has also visited his state senators in Washington D.C. Alan’s roles and experiences have given him opportunities to be an invaluable advocate for himself and others with developmental and other disabilities.