

THE NETWORKER



ATTITUDES, IDEAS AND OPPORTUNITIES MAKE A SUCCESSFUL COMBINATION

With an infectious grin and a friendly, “can-do” attitude, it is easy to like **Jesse Frisch**. This 21 year old North Ridgeville High School graduate’s philosophy about life is “I just need the chance and I’ll do it.” After leaving the walls of his alma mater, Frisch knew he needed to plan for his future, and he took this same positive attitude with him on his quest for his first job.

As anyone who has ever held a job knows, *getting* a job can be a difficult task, and especially so in today’s job market. For someone with both a developmental and a physical disability, this same difficult task may seem nearly impossible. But then “impossible” is a concept that Frisch chooses to ignore. “I wanted a job, and I was going to keep trying until I got one” says Frisch matter-of-factly. Frisch, who is legally blind, faced an obstacle many of us could never fully understand—he actually could not see the work to be performed. Regardless of this seeming obstacle, he was determined to join the workforce. He knew, however, that he needed some assistance with job placement, so the Cleveland Sight Center referred him to Murray Ridge Center.

In December 2007, Frisch began a three-week training program at Murray Ridge Center with a mobile cleaning enclave. Because he can’t see, he was unsure how he would be able to clean tables and vacuum floors. He even practiced at home, but could not be certain that his work was thorough. Then, Murray Ridge Job Coach **Mark Naelitz** had an idea that changed everything: since Frisch was used to “feeling” his way around, this adaption could be used as a strength in training, rather than as a deficit.

Naelitz taught Frisch how to “map out” the area of a room to be mopped or vacuumed. He would first walk the perimeter to measure how many steps it would take him to walk from one end of the room to the other and to get a feel for the shape of the room. From this, he knew approximately how many “laps” would be required to thoroughly clean the floor. The table-top cleaning technique was much the same. This method proved to be very successful for Frisch, who is proud of his quality of work. “It may take me three or four times longer to clean than someone else, but when I’m done, I know I did it right,” smiles Frisch.

It would take several months before an appropriate job could be developed, but, in October 2008, Frisch got the chance he had been waiting for. Marshalls Department Store in Avon, Ohio needed an employee who could open boxes of clothing and sort them for pricing and display. The store manager was so impressed by Frisch’s enthusiasm that he decided to give him a chance, despite the perceived limitations for performing such a job. “While he showed the potential to be a good worker, the supervisor was mostly impressed by Jesse’s utter determination to succeed. I think that, more than anything else, is what convinced the supervisor to hire him,” said Naelitz.

Naelitz said that the same “feel” technique used to train Frisch for janitorial duties was applied to his training at Marshalls. “I showed Jesse how to take the items out of the box and to grab one end of the item with one of his hands. Then he was to search for key things on the item, such as a collar or a zipper to indicate whether it was pants or shirts, etc. Once he’s determined what the item is, he is able to place the item on the appropriate table. The Marshalls staff has been tremendously supportive of Jesse and has actively found ways to accommodate his disabilities.”

Murray Ridge Vocational Placement Specialist **Shawn Hatcher** mirrors the sentiment about Marshalls. “Marshalls has always been supportive of people with disabilities. They have carved out opportunities for several of our clients over the years. They’re very socially-conscious. And when you have an employee like Jesse, it’s a win-win situation.”

Certainly, inventive training techniques and workplace support have played an important role in Frisch’s employment success. But there is no doubt that, more than any other single factor, it is his sheer determination to become part of the workforce and to contribute to his community, that has been his greatest ally on his road to success. Learn more about [COMMUNITY EMPLOYMENT](#).

**This article is a reprint from the April 2009 Murray Ridge Courier*



SUPPORT MURRAY RIDGE ARTISTS

At the Murray Ridge Production Center, a group of artists proudly designs and produces handmade greeting cards. Family, friends and associates will enjoy these high-quality cards that not only look great, but also support a good cause! Your purchase will...

Help inform others of the abilities of people with developmental disabilities in Lorain County.

Directly support the work of these artists and helps everyone receiving services at the Murray Ridge Center.

Provide valuable job opportunities at the Murray Ridge Center, which give our adults with disabilities respect and self-confidence.

If you would like to order cards please [CLICK HERE](#).



**CARDS START
AT ONLY \$1.00**

THANK YOU

Murray Ridge Production Center, Inc. is part of the [LORAIN COUNTY BOARD OF MR / DD](#). Please feel free to forward our information to others in the community. A large portion of our success relies on an informed, caring, and supportive public.

Please add CLEWIS@MRPCINC.COM to your address book to ensure you receive each addition of this newsletter.

WOULD YOU LIKE US TO WORK FOR YOU?

WANT TO LEARN MORE?

DO YOU HAVE AN IDEA?

DO YOU WANT TO SEND A COMMENT?

[CLICK HERE TO SEND YOUR MESSAGE](#)

Are you on LinkedIn? If so, please connect with us by clicking the logo on the right.



Chris Lewis, Marketing Specialist
1091 Infirmary Road, Elyria, Ohio 44035
o. (440) 284-2720 f. (440) 322-7659
www.MRPCINC.com

*This e-mail was sent on behalf of the Murray Ridge Production Center.
If you wish to no longer receive this e-newsletter [please click here to notify us](#).*