

## MARTIN MCCOVEY PAVES WAY FOR HRC CLIENTS AT UPS

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*Editor's Note: As Employment Specialist, Ms. Heck is in a position especially created by HRC to work together with clients, counselors, supported employment service providers and our community, to promote employment opportunities for our clients.*

I first met Martin at a going away party for his job developer, Michele Mar, of Westview Services. He kept telling everyone how much he loved his job. It was endearing to see how thankful he was for Michele's help in getting his job with UPS.

Martin has autism, but he has not allowed this to stand in his way of living a fulfilling life or accomplishing his goals. He understands the importance of responsibility and hard work to reach these goals. While attending Cerritos High School, Martin enjoyed working as an assistant to the school janitor.

Martin graduated from Cerritos High School in June 2004, and attended a continuing education program at Cypress College. Throughout this time, he knew he wanted to work. He began taking automotive repair classes, and dreams of being an auto mechanic someday.

In the fall of 2006 Martin decided that he wanted to find a job. He applied to Wal-Mart, Target, McDonald's, Blockbuster and many other places, but had no luck getting employed. His HRC Counselor referred him for supported employment services. After enlisting the services of Michele as job developer, we discovered that Martin wanted to work at UPS. She felt confident that Martin would be the perfect employee for UPS – she just had to find a way to get Martin's foot in the door.

Unfortunately, finding the right person to talk to is not easy when it comes to job development, especially with a large company like UPS. All companies have

rules and regulations and often deadlines, quotas, security clearances, so finding a niche for our clients isn't always easy. At UPS the package handlers are in a fast-paced environment, requiring them to continually lift, lower, and slide packages. Michele was able to convince the hiring manager at UPS to give Martin a chance. It took four or five months to actually make it happen, but the end result was worth the wait for Martin.

Martin commented about his job coach, Erin, who now coaches not only Martin but another HRC client as well, saying "It felt good to have Erin there because there were certain things I needed help with in the beginning." Erin explained that due to the phenomenal

job Martin has done working at UPS, he has paved the way for other clients to work there. Erin continues to assist Martin with asking questions, maintaining his focus, following special procedures, safety issues and social skills. On occasion Erin has been instrumental in helping educate Martin's co-workers on disability awareness.

After six months of work, Martin is now receiving benefits and has a goal of living on his own someday. Martin's supervisors have already noticed his incredible dedication and stamina in a very psychologically and physically demanding job. When I asked Martin about his future, he answered, "Maybe I can work for UPS forever and be an auto technician there." He is continuing his education in auto mechanics towards this goal.

We all agree that Martin is going to go far in whatever he does. ■

