

Brittany Volchert's Speech

Good afternoon ladies and gentlemen, peers and supporters of the Jobs for youth program!

My name is Brittany Volchert and I am here this afternoon to briefly describe my experiences over the course of the past 8 weeks. After being accepted into the Jobs for Youth program, I am not going to lie, I was a little uneasy, I did not know what to expect and did not fully understand how the program worked. Thankfully the Youth Worker Leaders were excellent! I'd like to thank Morgan, Tim and Steve for going above and beyond and for always being there as a constant support. They allowed myself and other youth in Niagara Falls to transition smoothly into the routine of the program. Welcoming me with a smile and being available to clarify any questions or concerns I may have had. Not only did they find each and every youth in Niagara Falls a job for the summer, they conducted the workshops (every Friday) extremely well. The students were able to learn a lot from these sessions. They taught us valuable life lessons, such as how to build a resume, interview skills, how to communicate effectively in the workplace, problem solving and teamwork skills that reach far beyond any workplace environment.

I never thought earning two credits while getting paid would be so easy and fun! This being said on behalf of myself and all the other youth, I would like to thank the Jobs for Youth program and the John Howard Society of Niagara for creating such an amazing opportunity for high school students. This program has allowed myself and I'm sure every other student in this room an ample opportunity to learn and gain new skills and experiences. Just an overview... The jobs for youth program was designed for youth ages 15 to 18, who come from a variety of different backgrounds facing identified barriers to employment. We were provided with an opportunity to be employed during the summer months and were eligible to receive two credits while getting paid to go to school and while working in the placement catered to our interests and needs.

My placement was at Wendy's on Lundy's Lane. This job was chosen for me because of my previous work experience in the fast food industry as stated on my resume. Each week I worked approximately 35 hours. During my shifts, my responsibilities included cleaning the dining room, making sandwiches, stocking and many other duties. Working at Wendy's with full-time hours gave me and I'm sure every other youth and insight into "adult life". It gave us a taste of how hard work and earning money come hand in hand.

All in all I feel confident that leaving this program I have grown into a more responsible, organized and independent person. Thank you again to the John Howard Society for creating such an awesome program and also the employers who took the youth under their wing by providing them with a summer job. Good luck to all the youth down the road for future success.

Thank you