

Hello,

My name is Rachael. I am 26 years old. I work at High Hope in Milan, Missouri. When I finished high school I didn't have any idea what I was going to do with my life. There are lots of things I like to do, but my mind and my body just won't let me. I wanted to work in a grocery store like my mom, but they won't hire me. I could work in a laundry, but I am too slow. In my small community the only safe place I could be while my mom and dad were at work was a nursing home, and I definitely know that place isn't for me.

Then, I learned about High Hope. I had some interviews and right away I could tell it was the place for me. At first I didn't know anyone and wasn't too sure I could do it. My job coaches helped me get acquainted and showed me what was expected. If I made mistakes they told me about them in a kind way and showed me again. They encouraged me to set goals for myself and timed me. I love trying to break my old records! I work in a clothing store called the Hope Chest. I find and pull empty hangers from the racks, I sort, fold, and hang clothing, I bundle and band shoes, I clean and sanitize knick-knacks and toys. I even take my turn cleaning our break room. Believe it or not, I like washing down our lunch tables.

This is my fifth year at High Hope and I just love it. Even though I have to pay someone to take me 50 miles to work each day, it is worth it to me. My friends are there. I feel good about going to a job and having a purpose. My job coaches are terrific. And, of course, I LOVE pay day! It may not be much, but I know I have earned it, and that makes me very proud. Thank you, High Hope, for giving me this great opportunity! I don't know what I would do without you- and I really don't want to find out.

Rachael