

Volunteer Gains Workplace Skills, Helps Others at CARES Center



“My quads hurt!” says Ray after his first day volunteering at the CARES Center.

After two months of sheltering in place due to the global COVID pandemic, Ray enjoys feeling achy from working and being productive again.

“I like volunteering, especially at jobs I know how to do,” says Ray.

Ray is helping two days a week in the new CARES Center, which provides resources to Eugene and Springfield residents in need. Ray has been sorting, organizing and stocking shelves, and packing food boxes to share with people who visit the CARES Center.

Having experienced food insecurity as a child, Ray recognizes the work he is doing will help prevent other people from going to bed hungry. As such, he is happy to put his heart and soul into his work, even if it means sore quads.

Ray is part of The Arc Lane County’s Employment Path program, where he is building transferrable work skills while volunteering for local nonprofit organizations. At the CARES Center, Ray is learning important skills, such as working on a team and meeting deliverables. He has already made valuable recommendations to the CARES Center based on his previous volunteer experience at FOOD for Lane County.

Ray is working with Vocational Rehabilitation to find a job where he can utilize the merchandising skills he has learned through his volunteerism. Ultimately, Ray wants to work for a grocery store, where he can earn money to gain independence and publish a trading card game he has invented. With his positive work ethic and strong charisma, Ray’s future is bright with possibilities.