



The Arc Teaches Job Readiness Skills in New, Online Format

While COVID continues to limit in person gatherings, The Arc Lane County has switched to an online learning model to help adults with disabilities learn important job readiness skills.

The Arc's Employment Path program helps adults learn what it means to be gainfully employed and explore different career opportunities.

"Despite all the COVID restrictions, the Employment Path wheels keep turning," says Devin Duerst, The Arc Lane County's director of employment services.

Tisha Huey and Kaia Reinke, who both work with the Employment Path team, played an instrumental role in shifting the employment curriculum to an online format.

At first, they worried if the material would be meaningful when delivered in an online format, especially when they had a variety of students with different learning styles.

"It's been hard to take what was once an in-person job exploration opportunity and instead make this meaningful without the hands-on component," says Huey. "Still we persisted, and the result has been positive."

At the end of the eight-week course, the students will have assessed their personal strengths and career aspirations and learned about personal finance, digital citizenship and employment readiness, including how to act in an interview and complete a job application. The goal is to get students ready for the next step, which is job development.



Tisha Huey with The Arc's Employment Path team, leads an online class using Google Meet platform.



Shanelle Beckham logs into class with a tablet.

Reinke notes the switch to online learning has provided a wonderful opportunity for students to grow and enhance their technology skills, which will be beneficial as they enter today's workforce.

Shanelle Beckham is a current student taking the virtual class. When she started she did not have a great deal of experience using technology.

"Now, Shanelle is unlocking the tablet and logging into the Google Meet platform independently," says Reinke. "This is a skill she'll undoubtedly use when she is gainfully employed in the community."