



Spotlight on Staff

JAY CONTRASTANO

SAYS FAVARH HIS BEST JOB

Jay Contrastano so enjoys his job as a DSP here at Favarh that he sometimes feels bad about getting a paycheck. Really!

Jay is a DSP at Ojakian Commons in North Simsbury, an apartment complex designed for people with disabilities. Jay oversees eight Favarh participants who live there, helping with their meal preparation, laundry, cleaning, etc. A resident of Ojakian Commons himself, he noticed the Favarh participants taking cooking classes in the community room.

"There wasn't much else going on so I started hanging around them. It was fun and I kept going to the cooking class, helping out," Jay explained. "Eventually Favarh hired me. It's like I'm getting paid to be a decent person."

He said the aspect of his job he enjoys most is the ability to "give back" and support those in need as he has been supported "with all my health issues." Jay was diagnosed with multiple sclerosis in 2009.

Jay's first interaction with people with intellectual and developmental disabilities wasn't at Ojakian. It was when he was six or seven years old and his mother worked at a group home in Bristol.

"I remember my Mom pulling up to the house and two of the residents came running out. They were so excited that my Mom had brought someone else with her. They were excited to see a new face," he said. "I see the same excitement with our residents here. That pure emotion; you kind of feed off that excitement and energy all the time."

"I love this job. Hands down, it's probably the best job, the most rewarding job that I've ever had," he said.

Other than the Favarh residents he works with his largest interest is "all the major sports." He likes to talk sports with the residents, though they frequently root for different teams.

Jay grew up in Bristol where he graduated from Bristol Central High School. His mother, father, two brothers and a sister all still live in Bristol.

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