

OPPORTUNITIES

efi.

"Creating Life Opportunities"

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www.Team-EFI.org

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Sertino's Café: On The Go With Jo



If you have ever been to Sertino's Café, located in the Westfield Capital Mall in Olympia, on a Tuesday or Thursday afternoon between the hours of 11 a.m. and 3 p.m., then you have probably seen a man "flying" around the mall at breakneck speed in a wheelchair delivering drinks and sandwiches to customers. That man...is Jo Lowther.

Jo is 41 years old and was born with cerebral palsy. However, he hasn't let that stop him from living a purpose-filled life. Jo has some of the most unbridled energy, passion and drive you could ever see in a human being. In talking to Jo, one quickly senses his unique confidence and notices his warm, friendly smile and contagious laugh.

Jo has been an EFI client for the past five years, and he loves how involved EFI and their Job Coaches are with him. His favorite part is that the EFI Job Coaches really work with him and his employer to ensure they have a great working relationship.

When Jo showed up at Sertino's Café for his initial job interview, he brought with him a stack of business cards from around the mall. He pulled them out and said to Kimball Parker, co-owner of Sertino's, "Here, I already have the customers, now I just need something to sell."

EFI Employment Consultant, Gary Franzen and Job Coach, Don Tripp, together with Kimball, created a special position just for Jo that enables him to propel his 3200 rpm wheelchair around the mall, taking and delivering lunch orders to other stores' employees who are unable to leave their stores. A former EFI Network Administrator, Bob Boyd, also assisted Jo with adaptive technology and built a specialized carrying tray to fit his wheelchair. So with this opportunity, Jo was able to fill a much-needed niche not only for Sertino's, but for himself, as well. Jo loves the freedom that working at Sertino's gives him.

If you ever get a chance to stop by Sertino's, make it a point to meet Jo Lowther, and make sure you bring your running shoes, as he might just make you run to keep up. For Jo, it's not 'business as usual' at Sertino's - it's just Jo's usual way of business...

One-on-One with Kimball Parker, Co-Owner of Sertino's Café

Kimball Parker, co-owner of Sertino's Café, has some good advice when it comes to employers hiring EFI clients. Kimball knows, first hand, what it's like to have workers with disabilities, and he has this to say:

"Before you hire, make sure you take a good look at your operation and figure out what parts of your business are available for the potential client. Also, working closely with the EFI Job Coaches is an essential element of the process, because they have a real understanding of their client's abilities and challenges and are able to help you, as the employer, map out ways for them to overcome those challenges. They also help train and integrate their client as your employee, ensuring a smooth working relationship."

EFI wants to give a big THANK YOU from the bottom of their hearts to the Shelton Police Department and Mason County Transit for going above and beyond the call of duty for one of their clients. Thank You from the whole team at EFI!



Carol's Corner



Hello Mason County,

My name is Carol Boyd, and I have directed EFI for the past 10 years. When I moved to Shelton 11 years ago, I was amazed

by the sense of community in this little town. I saw individuals with developmental and physical challenges. Being physically disabled myself, I notice things like that. [continued>](#)

Employee Focus – Creating Life Opportunities Here at EFI



Bev Barnes, director of residential services, has been an employee at EFI for almost 17 years. She started out her career at EFI working part-time, driving EFI clients to their medical appointments and to work. She had done many different jobs within the company before taking her current position in November 2008.

Bev's job duties include overseeing all aspects of residential life for the clients, and seeing that the clients' needs are being met and ensuring their welfare and well-being.

Bev says, about working at EFI, that "it's not boring here, there is something going on all the time...I'm a people person, and I enjoy the personal interaction. I get a lot of satisfaction from watching our clients integrate themselves in the community. When life 'clicks' for our clients, there is no greater feeling."

Want To Join The Team?

EFI is in the business of "Creating Life Opportunities" for their clients and employees. If you are interested in a rewarding career, EFI is always looking to hire compassionate individuals. To submit a resume, please fax to (360) 426-4989, or deliver in person, Monday - Friday, 7:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m., to the EFI Office, located at 2009 W. Railroad Avenue, Shelton, WA. Application packets are also available at www.Team-EFI.org.

Who Is EFI?

EFI is celebrating more than 50 years of service with a new logo and the new slogan, "Creating Life Opportunities." EFI has been offering residential and vocational assistance to adults with developmental disabilities since 1957.

EFI – originally the acronym for Exceptional Foresters, Inc. – began when its founder, Bob Kimbel, who had two sons with developmental disabilities, wanted to see purpose for their lives. At the time, forestry and timber products provided the work that assisted in the achievements of Kimbel's two sons. However, Carol Boyd, executive director of EFI, said, "Times have changed, and we no longer do forestry and timber work." Boyd added, "Our clients are mainstreaming into the community, and working in gainful employment much the same as you and I. They bring a great deal of passion to any work environment, and are eager to establish their place in the world." EFI and its clients, as the new logo highlights, are moving into life's opportunities.

Carol's Corner cont...

These people were casually going about their business, shopping in town, relaxing on benches, and chatting with others. It was all so normal.

Coming from a large city, my experience had been that these folks were housed in 6 or 8-bed homes, and when they went out, did so in a group. Staff of the companies that owned the homes were always present to assist and guide. They were well watched.

Back in that big city, I was one of the people responsible for operating those homes. The buzzword was, and still is, *mainstreaming*, which was difficult to achieve in the 80's. And here in Shelton, I was witnessing a perfect example of challenged individuals participating in society, being normal – mainstreaming. I still get goosebumps thinking about it.

I made inquiries, and found EFI. This corporation has been operating in Mason County since 1957, and was largely responsible for the individuals I saw in town. Firstly, providing a loving, home-like atmosphere for adults with developmental disabilities, EFI trained folks in everyday living geared to the level of the individual, and then helped them gain the confidence to use what they learned to integrate in the community. Education was then provided to the general public to help them understand and appreciate these folks like we do at EFI.

It worked. And it still does.
Thank you, Mason County.

Mission Statement

"To assist people with disabilities to maximize their sense of honor, dignity and self-worth by providing quality vocational evaluation and training; community employment suited to the individual's needs, skills, desires, and social development; and residential services which enable them to live in comfort while attaining their highest level of independence in all phases of their lives."



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