

PIN Impacts My Job

By Laura

Laura, Assistant Teacher at Kids Korner Narberth, explains how PIN encourages her to focus on the highlights of her job and why that is important.

Having a job can create a greater sense of independence. This is something that is front and center to PIN's mission. Having come from a previous long term job, it has been scary starting over again, but a necessary part of my quest for greater independence. Having tried out many different jobs has helped me to see what I do and don't want out of an employer. Having a disability can be a difficult thing

at times. But it has forced me to work that much harder to prove that I am just as competent as my counterparts. While I may not like every aspect of my job, PIN has helped me to find the positives such as a child's smile or their look of wonder when they learn something new.

The staff at PIN has helped me to come up with tools and strategies that I can use on the job from day to day. PIN has helped me to find the positives in job hunting, helping me to realize that one job does not have to be my forever job.

While I may not have yet found my forever job, I have found a job where the good outweighs the bad and this is a step forward.



Laura at work.

What to Expect From Our Program

By Jon



PIN member Jon sat down with Carly Hagen, PIN's Mentor Associate, to share some helpful insight for prospective PIN members. Jon celebrates three years at PIN in September 2016, and is happy to meet any newcomers.

Q. What is your favorite part about PIN/ being a PIN member?

A. My girlfriend, my supportive friends, and the fun activities. You get to live in your own place.

Q. What are the most fun activities to do at PIN?

A. Going out to restaurants, games, beach trips and fun card games!

Q. Do you recall your first day at PIN? What did you expect from the program? Is PIN better than you expected?

A. I did not expect to make many friends. I did not expect to have a girlfriend. Yes, it is better than expected. They help you stay organized, offer support and help, find jobs, keep apartments organized. And Narberth has great restaurants!

Q. What would you tell a prospective PIN member? Why should they enroll at PIN?

A. PIN is fun. You are independent. It is social; you learn about jobs, and get to live in Narberth. Great mentors and great support.

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PIN POINTS

a newsletter from  
Philadelphia Independence Network

JEVS Human Services' Community-Based Program,  
Where Young Adults with Disabilities  
Live in Their Own Apartments,  
With Supports

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Our members at the Relay for Life at St. Joseph's University.



# First Day in My Apartment

By Chrissy

I moved to Narberth Station about 7 months ago on October 17th, 2015. My first day I got to my apartment, I put all the pictures up on the wall and organized my room. My favorite part of Move-In Day was making my apartment my own. I got my bedspread and got my picture. It was fun having a say about my own room. I live with my friend, Nicole, and we’ve been roommates before, so it felt comfortable coming up with everything in the apartment together.



Nicole and Chrissy in their new apartment.

I felt a little nervous and excited. I was nervous because I was moving into a new place and new area, and I was getting excited because it was my first room. The first night, my roommate and I went to our first PIN event. It was cool to see the town. My parents were nearby. When

the event was over, we went back to the apartment. It felt weird when my parents left. I was thinking OMG, am I really doing this? Before I went to sleep that night, I noticed a lot of noise that I wasn’t used to

hearing; people outside, and the vent. The next morning, the fire alarm went off and woke us both up. A great way to start the first whole day in our new apartment.

I’m glad I have my own room.

# Respect at PIN

By Jackie

We treat PIN as not just a program, but a community, and we pride ourselves on that. If you show everyone respect and kindness, you will find a home very quickly. Not everyone has to be your best friend, but remember the golden rule. Treat everyone the way you would like to be treated. If you don’t respect everyone it’s going to come back to bite you.

Everyone is different. Period. We understand that everyone comes into PIN at different ages and stages of independence, and we respect them for who they are. We can relate to each other.

Staff helps us get support by encouraging us to advocate for ourselves and to take the necessary steps towards independence.

I am always warm and welcoming to each PIN member new and old no matter what, letting them know I’m here to support them. Every PIN member has been welcoming and encouraging. I felt at ease coming out about my transgender transition because I knew without a doubt I would be respected by every member.

That’s what respect at PIN means to me.



Matt, Jon, Jackie, Ethan at the Franklin Institute.

# PIN and Relationships

By Elyse

Elyse and Sean are one of PIN’s thriving couples who explained their relationship at PIN and offered advice to other PIN members looking to date.

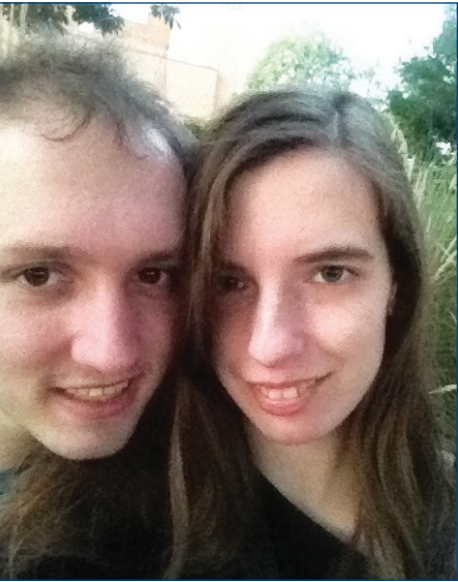
Sean and I met in college for people with special needs called NYIT in the Vocational Independence Program. We were friends for several months before we started dating. We’ve been together for over five years. . . Dear god, over five years! That’s a long time!

We joined PIN with the intention of living together. Most programs like this wouldn’t allow you to live with your

significant other. PIN didn’t have much experience at the time with different genders living together, so it was kind of a trial and error. Director Jill was really supportive of our relationship from the beginning.

When asked what advice they would give other PIN couples or members looking to date, Sean responded, “Learning how to compromise is everything in a relationship.”

Elyse’s answer was, “Desperation can be a turnoff. In general, you don’t need to validate your existence through the existence of another to be happy.”



Sean and Elyse are a PIN couple.

# Support and Personal Experiences



David and Jon

In a Q&A with PIN members Jon and David, we take a look at the fantastic support PIN gives to its members and how that impacts their personal experiences.

**Q. Do you have a favorite PIN memory?**

**Jon:** The Chinese Lantern Festival. There were various lights. I remember the dragon. I waited until nighttime to take a photo of everything! And there was the Phillies Game. A couple of friends went. Jon, Dave, Adam and I went. I liked going. Phillies won. Phillies win every time.

**David:** Going to Dorney Park, went on a

lot of rides.

**Q. Do you feel supported at PIN? How?**

**Jon:** Yes, getting extra help when needed from Carly, Jill, and Meghan. And I also get help from Saundra with basic things. I see them almost every day. Saundra helps me clean around the apartment, keeping organized, cooking and various things. Some people might need help more than others.

**David:** Yes. Helping me staying focused. Helping with my job, social help and time management.

**Q. What advice would you give to a new PIN member? What would you tell a new PIN member about your experiences?**

**Jon:** Take some time adjusting here. You’re coming from a completely different environment from either living with your parents or living at college. I’m used to not being able to walk anywhere I want, so I was excited about that. I like to go into town to walk around. a lot. I just like the idea of being in Narberth. It’s a lot

of fun here and you make a lot of new friends.

**David:** Don’t be afraid to ask questions and get help. You will learn a lot. Don’t be afraid to make mistakes.

**Q. What has been your greatest success at PIN?**

**Jon:** Volunteering at Alex’s Lemonade Stand. I helped out by asking people to write why they came. We were putting paper lemons on our shed, so could you write why you came out so we could put them up. I just thought it was a cool. I felt happy and tired because I walked the whole school.

**David:** Getting a job at Villanova.

**Q What has been your greatest challenge?**

**Jon:** In Montgomery Park, where I live, it’s more than \$40 to keep a dog, so my dog Suky lives with my mom. She’s breaking all my mom’s rules because she can’t control her. Suky used to sleep with me all the time.

**David:** Saving money and budgeting.