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# Transition Works

*Where your future begins*

## Nebraska VR

Nebraska Department of Education

## Learning to Earn: Alexis Hernandez

Alexis Hernandez is friendly, hardworking, self-motivated, and determined. Through his strong passion for music he has learned to play eight different types of instruments and sing. He will attend Wayne State on a music scholarship in the Fall of 2018 and be the first in his family to go to college.

His Pre-Employment Transition Services Coordinator Jami Hubbell began working with him when he was a high school sophomore at Fremont Senior High School. The services provided were based on his questions and his desire to meet his goals. Jami says, "It has been fun watching him learn about himself and taking what he has learned and applying it to work skills and future plans. He has become a very responsible young man determined to do his best at whatever he is doing."

They started meeting once a month for job exploration counseling and workplace readiness skills. In the beginning they reviewed his interests, abilities, and barriers and aligned those with careers. Alexis says, "she helped me match my interest and passion for music to colleges I could attend". They went through Alexis's MDT (multidisciplinary team report) and his IEP (Individualized Education Program) to understand the impact of his specific learning disability in written expression and speech. He worked on self-advocacy skills in order to be able to express needed accommodations, such as needing extra time to understand complex written instructions.



~Alexis Hernandez

In his senior year, they met more often to plan for college. Jami walked Alexis through meeting deadlines and requirements for applying for schools and scholarships. They made several phone calls together to check on the status of college applications. "She actually took me on a visit to Wayne to help me explore and understand the environment." Jami also introduced him to the TRiO

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## Tools for Learning, Earning, and Living!



AT4ALL is brought to you by the Nebraska Assistive Technology Partnership (ATP). They recycle technology to benefit people with disabilities of all ages. You can search equipment available for loan, demonstration, free or for sale. Items include learning aids, communication devices, and adaptive computer technology.

Go to <https://www.at4all.com/> to learn more!





## Employers Speak

Nebraska employers have provided us with simple tips for success for students as they prepare to enter the world of work. Whether you're a high school student, an educator or a parent - read on!

Educators, you play an important role in preparing students for employment and these tips may be useful for sparking classroom discussion or in developing activities to practice these skills. Parents, your children (whether they admit it or not) do learn from you and you can use these tips for reinforcement as you assist them in preparing for a job. And, last but certainly not least, students listen up! These tips could make the difference in preparing for future success.

Here are some tips from Bob Mathews, an experienced interviewer in Nebraska:

**Tip #1** Everyone prepares for the question “Why should I hire you?”, but I never ask it. Instead I might ask, in some form, “How could you mess up this job opportunity?” Interviewees should prepare an answer that demonstrates their experience and ability to persevere in the face of challenges.

**Tip #2** An interview is an opportunity to demonstrate that you want to be part of something. When the interviewer asks you if you have any questions, prepare to ask questions along the lines of “How will I fit in here?”

**Tip #3** Be who you are. Human Resources and Hiring Managers sense when you are being authentic and genuine. I start almost every interview with “What do you do for fun?” It is an ice breaker, but it also tells me how active a person is or how involved they are in their community. It could be that they like to play video games, but I want to see a little passion.

Bob Mathews, Rehabilitation Specialist  
Black Hills Workshops, Omaha

## FAQs

*Frequently Asked Questions from parents, students, and educators*

**Q: How do I find the Nebraska VR Pre-Employment Transition Services Coordinator assigned to my High School?**

A: You can search the contact list found on the student section of the website under the For Schools link. Each Nebraska school is listed with the coordinator assignment. There you can also find a link to the referral form.

**Q: What is the referral process for Nebraska VR?**

A: Referral to Nebraska VR for Pre-Employment Transition Services may be initiated by anyone at any time. Referrals usually come from schools, other students, family members or partnering agencies such as the Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services Division of Developmental Disabilities. Students with disabilities may be participants in special or general education programs.

**Q: When can a student begin working with Nebraska VR?**

A: Coordinators generally begin working with students between the ages of 14-21. Students must be available to actively engage in Pre-Employment Transition Services.



## Learning to Earn: Alexcis Hernandez

(Continued from page 1)

Student Support services available on Wayne State's campus for students with disabilities. The supports help students adjust to greater independence and responsibility required to meet the demands of college life.

Over the summer, Alexcis worked as a cashier and stocker at Brady's Convenient Store and saved his money for college. When asked what he thinks about working with Nebraska VR, he says, "You will receive a lot of good and helpful information that will make you more successful."

## Resource Spotlight

PTI Nebraska (Parent Training and Information) is available to families of children with disabilities.



Parents should contact PTI Nebraska when:

- You would like disability information
- You have a question about your child's special education program or related services
- You would like to schedule or attend a workshop
- You would like to talk to another parent
- You would like to subscribe to mailing list

To learn more about PTI Nebraska visit <http://pti-nebraska.org/>

## The Facts About Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre ETS)

Nebraska VR works in partnership and collaboration with school districts, Educational Service Units (ESUs), and other agencies to provide vital and results-oriented services to transition aged students with disabilities. Transition Specialists from Nebraska VR provide services including Pre-Employment Transition Services in schools throughout the State of Nebraska. These services allow for opportunities for students to explore appropriate post-school goals and needed supports that lead to employment.

The Nebraska Department of Education (NDE) and Nebraska VR (Vocational Rehabilitation) both share responsibility to prepare students with disabilities for successful community employment. Students meet with a Nebraska VR Pre-Employment Transition Services Coordinator throughout the school year to learn in groups and/or individually about the world of work.

Nebraska VR staff will be available, in partnership with schools, to provide and supplement the following Pre-Employment Transition Services:

- 1) Job exploration counseling;
- 2) Workplace readiness training to develop social skills and independent living;
- 3) Work-based learning experiences which may include in-school or after-school opportunities or experiences outside the traditional school setting (including internships) are provided in an integrated environment to the maximum extent possible;
- 4) Counseling on opportunities for enrollment in post secondary educational programs at institutions of higher education; and
- 5) Instruction in self-advocacy, which may include peer mentoring. Nebraska VR staff members provide Pre-Employment Transition Services to students who are eligible or potentially eligible for VR services.



VR

# Attention Students, Parents, and School Staff Members

Don't miss an issue of Transition Works featuring a Learning to Earn student story, tips from employers, and useful information about Pre-Employment Transition Services. Sign up:

[http://vr.nebraska.gov/students/transition\\_works.html](http://vr.nebraska.gov/students/transition_works.html). Contact us with questions, comments, and suggestions by email at: [marketingteam.vr@nebraska.gov](mailto:marketingteam.vr@nebraska.gov).

## Nebraska VR

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## Connect with Us

Nebraska VR has a long history of providing transition services for students with disabilities as they transition from school to work. We partner with parents, schools, and employers to help students prepare for the future. Transition Works, published by Nebraska VR, is intended for students with disabilities and their families, as well as educators.

Find additional resources for students at:  
[vr.nebraska.gov/students](http://vr.nebraska.gov/students)

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Nebraska VR - *Where your future begins*