

Stacey exemplifies the benefits of Integrated Competitive Employment. Stacey worked in sheltered employment for several years as a young adult. However, working in an environment with so many people and that much activity going on around her proved to be too difficult. Stacey worked with job development staff and her support team to find a better job fit. Stacey tried out jobs at Hardees and Service Master before she began her job at the Sioux Center Hospital cafeteria in May 2014, after responding to an online job posting. Hope Haven's My Choice Employment staff helped her prepare for the interview, and attended the orientation with her. Since then, Stacey has been performing so capably at her job that Judy Hulstein, her My Choice Employment Specialist, just checks in with her occasionally.

“Stacey has grown personally, and is more confident to speak out for herself,” states Hulstein. “She now sees that she can work in a community and feel successful.” Stacey credits her time with Hope Haven for much of that confidence, stating, “Working through Hope Haven made me realize that I'm not the only one with a disability and with struggles. Everyone has a story.”

Stacey knew her strengths, and was looking for a job where she could largely keep to herself and get to work. Serving as a dish washer in the cafeteria has been a perfect fit. Brent Suing, Stacey's supervisor, notes that Stacey was a fast learner. “Stacey became one of the team very quickly.” Stacey enjoys her co-workers, and the predictability of her job. She works five days a week, and in her free time likes to journal, read, attend church activities, and have fun with her roommates.