



## This is Sam

Sam is currently undertaking a Supported Internship provided by West Lea School. He is completing his internship with Rapport Guest Services. Rapport is an award winning, boutique provider of guest services within the corporate sector. Sam lives in Enfield and travels into Central London to work at one of Rapport's client sites within their Brasserie as a Catering Specialist.

Rapport understands the benefits of having a diverse workforce and are committed to inclusivity by providing opportunities for everyone in society. Rapport believes that every individual should bring their whole self to work. Their partnership with West Lea School and their Supported Internship Programme has provided an additional recruitment channel, which utilises the free job matching service, enabling Rapport to unlock a pool of hidden talent.



Sam said "For me the most challenging thing has been setting up the tables quickly and not slowly, and learning how to make the different types of coffee and also the cutlery, but I never complain about it and I will do it!"

## Before joining the Supported Internship

Before joining the Supported Internship, Sam was a college student studying for qualifications in Sport. Sam was sure that he wanted to work in Sports and Sports Coaching. However, during his time on the Supported Internship, Sam has had the opportunity to meet with businesses and people within the hospitality sector. He also personally met some of the team at Rapport at a Job Fair hosted by West Lea back in October 2022. With a family background in catering, he then decided that this was the vocation he wanted to pursue and is really enjoying it!



## SAM IS FLOURISHING

He has grown in confidence and feels he can be himself at work. He is open to ways he can improve his performance at work but also as a person and he is able to do this because of the environment that Rapport have created for him. He told us “The staff at the brasserie are very nice, respectful and kind. They showed me the brasserie area, they give me good advice and they give me instructions that I need”

## Sam started his internship in January 2023

Sam started his internship in January 2023 and currently has 100% attendance, both class and at work. This is despite having to adjust to a new routine and relying on public transport to get him to work. Sam has challenges when it comes to his social interaction and communication with others. Naturally this means that Sam has difficulties when learning new things.:



Sam at work at the Brasserie



## Further opportunities

To support Sam's integration into the workplace his manager developed a programme of training and support, even preparing a month-by-month checklist for Sam to work through. This plan of action ensured that Sam learned all the necessary skills to flourish in his role in the Brasserie. Sam is currently ahead of schedule and is working through month 3 of the action plan despite only having been in post for 2 months! As well as honing his skills in the Brasserie, the Rapport team are also developing Sam and offering additional training such as COSHH and fire safety.

Sam said that once he has a job, he would like to give back to his parents for all their support they have given him. He also says that he would like to own his own house and live independently.

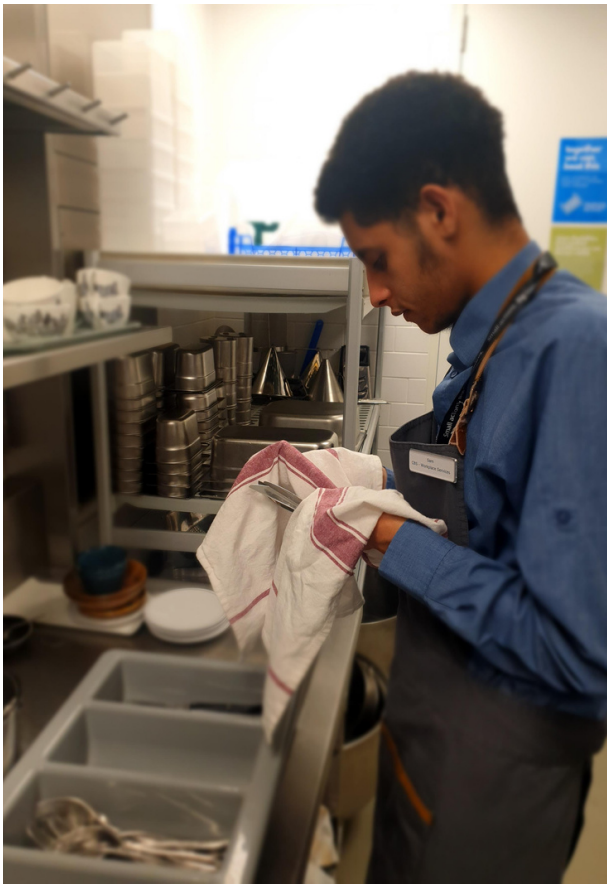
The Senior Head Chef Aaron told us that his own son was diagnosed with Autism 2 years ago. Aaron said, "for me having Sam (working) here with his needs and doing as well as he is... it makes me feel good, it makes me feel good that there is an awareness...so that they are getting the help and support that they deserve."

# AN EMPLOYER OF CHOICE

Rapport is an employer of choice! Recent research from Deloitte found that 69% of millennials and Gen Z workers are more likely to stay five or more years with a company that values diversity and inclusion.



Sam told us that his Job Coach has helped with his posture and how to present himself, how to serve customers and with his communication skills with colleagues. Sam's advice is that if; "any inclusive organisation wants to work with people with Autism, get to know them, have fun, enjoy it and also work together like a team and become like a family." Sam's team say he is a pleasure to work with and have commented to his exceptional attention to detail.



Sam's Supervisor went onto say "The passion (Sam shows) and the self-drive is amazing and it just shows that (with the right support) everyone can achieve anything. He is so precise, his eye for detail, he wants to do everything perfectly, he is a great addition to the team"

### Encouraging greater independence and preparing for Adulthood

During a progress review meeting with West Lea and Sam's family, Sam's father mentioned that he has seen a real positive difference since Sam started his work placement.

Sam is becoming more independent and taking ownership of his day and his responsibilities as a young adult. For example, when he has an early shift, he is setting an alarm to wake himself up to get ready for work.

We couldn't be prouder of Sam. He really has joined Rapport with a fantastic attitude, and we can't wait to see what else he achieves with our support. Thank you to all the team within the Brasserie and ensuring Sam feels at home.

## MYTH BUSTING

Sam's Supervisor told us "I thought this would have been way more difficult than it has turned out to be. I was terrified that I could have said or done something that would have triggered Sam somehow. I was scared of how difficult, challenging and slow the whole process would be. I had lots of assumptions and luckily they turned out all to be completely wrong and I am really glad and amazed about how Sam is performing. What he is doing is unbelievable."

Please click [here](#) to read about some other common misconceptions and myths around employing people with disabilities and Autism.

We are supporting National Supported Internship Day (NSID) to raise awareness of the impact that Supported Internships can have on the lives of young people. 80% of West Lea Interns get Jobs.

Find out how to get involved [here](#).

#NSID

#NationalSupportedInternshipDay

#Autism #SEND