

BRIDGES YOUTH SPOTLIGHT

Bridges participant Symone McReynolds graduated from Campbell High School in May of 2008, but decided not to enter college immediately following graduation. Symone's Bridges representative, Susie Stockton, helped her land a job at the Atlanta Marriott Northwest Hotel as a banquet server, which has proven to be a good match for her skills and abilities. Symone has remained employed at the hotel for more than one year, where she has perfect attendance. Symone plans to attend Chattahoochee Technical College in 2010 and enroll in the Paralegal Studies program. Symone's achievements were recently showcased in front of guests and dignitaries at the annual Bridges reception held September 17th at the Marriott Marquis. ↪



PEOPLE FIRST LANGUAGE

When communicating with (and about) people with disabilities, remember that they are first and foremost people—and that their disability is only one aspect of their identity. People First Language, as it is known, is endorsed by the National Business & Disability Council. Developing a comfort level with People First Language alleviates the apprehension that many people have when communicating with and about people with disabilities. Too often the fear of saying the wrong thing results in saying nothing at all, and this only serves to further segregate people who have disabilities. The chart below illustrates some examples of People First Language.

<i>Instead of . . .</i>	<i>Use</i>
× In Special Education	✓ Person receives Special Education Services
× Mentally retarded or retarded	✓ A person who has an intellectual, cognitive or developmental disability
× The disabled; handicapped	✓ Person with a disability
× Confined or restricted to a wheelchair	✓ Person who uses a wheelchair
× Learning disabled or LD	✓ Person who has a learning disability

For more information about interacting with people with disabilities, visit the website for the National Business & Disability Council, <http://www.nbdc.com/>, and click on the home page link for *Disability Etiquette*. ↪

EMPLOYER CHAMPION

Our Bridges Employer Champion for this Quarter is Lawrence Wright, concessions manager for Aramark at Turner Field. Lawrence has collaborated with the Bridges program since March, 2009, when he spearheaded a recruitment event that resulted in more than 18 job placements for Bridges youth in various Aramark positions.

Lawrence's first job was a dishwasher at a pizza parlor, so he knows from experience that everyone has to start somewhere—and that entry-level jobs can be stepping stones to better opportunities. He began his career with Aramark as a food runner and has risen through the company ranks over the past eleven years. As someone who was given a chance as a youngster to make something of his life, he is committed to doing the same for other young people. This is why, he says, programs such as Bridges appeal to him. ↪

BRIDGES STAFF PROFILE



Bridges staff member Deloris Birch, originally from Greenwood, Mississippi, graduated from Tougaloo College with a degree in English Journalism. She recently celebrated her five-year anniversary as a Bridges employer representative in the DeKalb County School System. Before joining Bridges, Deloris had a long career with Delta/WorldSpan, where she worked with the Global Distribution Network as a product analyst.

Deloris' goal is to establish and manage an agency that serves people with disabilities. She is married to Barnett Birch, Career Technology Instructor (CTI) at Washington High School in Atlanta. Together they are parents to two lovely daughters, Bernadette and Morgan, and the grandparents of a one-year-old dog, Anderson.

In her spare time, Deloris enjoys singing, reading, writing poetry, traveling, shopping, networking, and viewing educational programming. Deloris has participated in, and successfully completed, the Peachtree Road Race for the past three years. ↪