



*Thank you to Tyler and all of the staff that contributed to this week's story.*

AHRC Suffolk's Supported Work program prides itself on getting individuals out to work at local businesses in the community. During the pandemic, various difficulties including quarantining at home and the temporary closure of businesses in the area has made going to work unexpectedly challenging. Thankfully, with the continued reopening of businesses and services throughout Suffolk County, individuals in our Supported Work program are finally returning to work, with 73 of 89 individuals already back at their jobs.

Tyler L., who lives in our Central Islip home, experienced these challenges first hand. Tyler works at Target as a cashier for the past six years and truly enjoys his job. Tyler, who is very friendly and personable, is well liked by his co-workers. He looks forward to going to work and chatting with fellow staff and customers and, of course, giving Target stickers to the children he sees.

In March, after COVID-19 struck the New York area and OPWDD (Office for People With Developmental Disabilities) required that all NYS group homes be quarantined, Tyler's house was put under quarantine. Tyler was so disappointed and did not want to stop going to work. It was very difficult for him to remain home, especially since Target was open, and he wanted to get back to work and help whoever he could in whatever way he could. Even though it was hard, Tyler remained safe at home, and once he was given the go-ahead to go back to work in May, he eagerly returned. As Tyler noted, *"Target is very important to me-I have been part of a team for 6 years. I didn't like being quarantined because I felt like I wasn't a good team player. Target was open for business the whole time I was quarantined to help the public get their supplies, but I was stuck at home helpless. When I was allowed to return to Target it was the best day ever. Target has been busy every day since I've returned. I am happy to be helping the community, and I feel like I am a good co-worker again."*

Tyler is thrilled to be back, and makes sure to follow all safety protocols while at work. He wears a mask and gloves, and makes sure that his register and station are clean and sanitized. He wipes down the belt and charge machine after each customer to protect himself and the shoppers at Target. Tyler takes pride in his job and hopes someone finds a cure for the virus soon. He is an amazing worker and a true asset to his Target team.