

Jake McEntyre's Success Story



As is true with many adult education students, Jake McEntyre began his educational journey after experiencing life's hardships. Jake dropped out of school at age nine and worked in farming to help support his family. Later, he became a father and worked in construction for 35 years until his vision began to fail. In his 60s, Jake found himself legally blind from macular degeneration and glaucoma.

Jake went on disability and decided to return to school and earn the diploma sacrificed for his family decades earlier. As a testament to agency partnerships, Jake contacted the Florida Division of Blind Services who referred him to the adult education program at Atlantic Technical College.

Jake re-started his educational journey slowly and methodically, focused on just one subject at a time. Jake would spend hours in the lab and classroom using a video magnifier, screen magnification software, and relying on his acute listening skills to absorb the information, filter it, and be able to respond orally to his scribe to compose his responses. Jake saved the most challenging subject, Reading, for last but like other challenges in life, he conquered reading to the point where he now enjoys reading and is exploring becoming a writer. To that end, he is now enrolled in a computer class to increase his digital literacy.

In his personal life, Jake is involved with the National Federation of the Blind and has been a speaker at national conferences. Jake has also demonstrated his athletic prowess as he is a member of the Beep Baseball Team for the Blind and just returned from Kansas where he played in the World Series.

Jake's instructors say he is a role model for all students showing everyone kindness, demonstrating a good work ethic, and a positive attitude. He has demonstrated the perseverance to stay the course even as his vision was failing him. He became the star of the Pre-College Academic Studies Program.