

SPOTLIGHT: KELLY DYES



"I couldn't believe that an organization such as AIB existed. My struggle to find gainful employment was finally over," said Kelly Dyes. A native of Arizona, Kelly joined Arizona Industries for the Blind in 2020 as a Material Handler within the Distribution Services Unit (DSU). Most recently, Kelly successfully competed for and was promoted to the Human Resources/Admin Assistant position.

As part of its mission, AIB is dedicated to Inspiring individuals who are blind to pursue their maximum potential. This is accomplished through upward mobility opportunities ... which empowers individuals to advance into new roles, better compensation, and career growth.

Kelly said "I was ready for a challenge and wanted to prove to myself that I could do it. Working in a professional atmosphere again was also very appealing to me. I love working for AIB and this opportunity allows me to represent AIB in a new and exciting manner."

Prior to working at AIB, Kelly has worked as a phlebotomist, she pursued a RN degree through Maricopa Community College and worked as a nurse in the emergency department at Mesa General Hospital. Kelly had also held administrative positions and pursued an accounting degree with the goal of becoming a CPA.

After being laid off, Kelly earned a certificate in Massage Therapy and began her own business. Unfortunately, due to her Retinitis Pigmentosa, a hereditary eye disease affecting the Retina, Kelly surrendered her driver's license and was faced with another career change. Following the advice of her retinal specialist, Kelly prepared her resume, called AIB and was invited to an interview. After the tour, interview and meeting with Chris LaFollette, Kelly was offered a position as a material handler. "I literally cried when I gratefully accepted," said Kelly.

"Working at AIB I am able to earn a living wage, be financially independent, become more inspired and confident that I will be able to continue working successfully regardless of my vision."

In Kelly's free time, she enjoys target practice at the shooting range, horseback riding, nature walks, camping, swimming, traveling, listening, and dancing to music. Kelly said, "I have made some great friends at AIB, and I often plan activities with them outside of work."

Kelly approaches life's challenges with an "adapt and overcome philosophy." Life is not easy; it was not meant to be. As with every challenge in life, it is an opportunity to learn and grow. It reminds me that challenges I face now will soon become easier or even automatic, given enough practice and effort. As I apply this to my life, I

find myself seeking opportunities to overcome challenges that I once felt were too far out of reach.”