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It's great to have Allies

As a parent of a special-needs child, I am sending a letter in support of the work done by Allies Inc.

I wanted to start transition services at the earliest age possible (14) for my daughter, who has multiple disabilities. She was born with kidney disease and also has the combined type of autism that includes attention deficit/hyperactivity disorder and learning disabilities, resulting in challenging behaviors. She is now 17 and has participated in weekly training with Allies staff since that time.

Allies helps students with determining employment interests, resume writing, applications, appropriate work attire, and self-determination/self-advocacy. My daughter has participated in Allies' conference as well as its work for national Disability Mentoring Day annually. Because of this opportunity, over the years, she has had a group lunch with the Hamilton mayor, received a plaque at the kickoff last year, and even appeared in Time magazine last year!

Stephanie was able to do job sampling in area locations besides the Allies office such as Staples in Hamilton and the Hamilton animal shelter, which has been a lifelong interest of hers. Allies matches groups of children with employers or even on a one-to-one basis. Allies also collaborates with other organizations for people with disabilities. It is particularly important for students to have experiences in the community in which they reside and will some day be employed.

— LAUREN AGORATUS, Hamilton