



# Gearing Up For Your Transitions

## Tara Bustard's Personal Story

Meet Tara Bustard, described by family and friends as “a really neat lady who just happens to have a disability”. Bustard’s successful career is ongoing. She has been employed with Bank of America for 14 years and is a competitor in three different sports with Special Olympics of Delaware.

**Q: What are you currently doing now that you have left high school?**

*A: I am working full time and have been at the same employer for almost 14 years. I do Special Olympics for 3 sports throughout the year. I walk every day for health and I don't drink sodas. I am losing weight.*

**Q: What were your challenges and successes as you went through the transition process?**

*A: The high school staff was a challenge for me in so many ways. I was told by the “vocational teacher” at my IEP meeting in front of everyone that I would never work, that I would always live in a group home, and that I would always be dependent on the state. She then asked my Mom why my Mom was “forcing them to teach me to get a job.” This sums up my transition help from the high school. My DMR Case Manager helped me get my job at MBNA and I love it. I left school when I was 18 to work and got educational tutoring from the result of a due process win. The best thing I did was decide to leave Middletown High School early and go to work. My Mother taught me how to live on my own and helped me get my own apartment where I lived for 4 years.*

**Q: Were there any specific programs, agencies or persons which were helpful to you and your family/caregivers during your transition process?**

*A: DMR Case Manager, Janine Lamond, was the best. She believed in me and helped me get a job.*

**Q: What is your anticipated path for the future?**

*A: Stay working at Bank of America, be rich, find a nice boyfriend who loves me and will share my life.*