

**Quintin's Story:  
Baking his Way to the Top**

*This series of stories aims to shed light on the transformative power of higher education credentials for students with intellectual disability. Through real-life examples, we explore how earning credentials in various fields has not only equipped these individuals with essential skills but has also paved the way for meaningful employment opportunities.*

Career Technical Education

Culinary Arts

Arkansas

Quintin grew up in Jacksonville, Arkansas, where he sometimes struggled in school. Once in high school, Quintin started thinking more about education and his future. He decided to apply to several college programs, and on the day he graduated from high school, he received his letter of acceptance from the 3D Program at the University of Arkansas–Pulaski Technical College.

The University of Arkansas–Pulaski Technical College's 3D Program (UA-PTC 3D) offers young adults with intellectual and/or developmental disabilities postsecondary education and preparation for employment through its certificate programs in the areas of culinary arts, hospitality, and baking. Students take courses in their chosen area and earn a Certificate of Completion upon exit. They also have the opportunity to earn industry-recognized credentials, such as Certified Fundamental Cook, Certified Fundamental Pastry Culinarian, and ServSafe® Food Handler.

In addition to coursework, Quintin had a variety of different work experiences during his time in the program: a student-led lunch service, an internship in the purchasing department, and a position in a student-run bakeshop. During his last year, Quintin began a practicum placement at Great American Wings, but eventually landed a job at Blue Cake Company, a family-owned bakery in Little Rock, Arkansas. This was a result of the exceptional skills that he learned at UA-PTC 3D.

Quintin completed his program in 2022 with a Certificate of Completion in 3D Culinary from the University of Arkansas–Pulaski Technical college, Servsafe® Food Handler Certification, and the designation of CFC® from the American Culinary Federation. These certifications strengthened his resume and made him a more competitive candidate when applying for baking positions. Combined, they demonstrate his commitment to food safety, understanding of culinary principles, and readiness to work in a culinary or bakery environment. Many employers in the foodservice industry, including bakeries, require their staff to hold the Servsafe® Food Handler certification to ensure compliance with health and safety regulations. The Certified Fundamental Cook (CFC®) is a stackable credential that will follow him throughout his career. As he gains more experience, he becomes eligible for higher levels of certification that will enable him to further his career through promotions and raises.

Quintin is proud of how well he is doing. In the almost three years that he's worked at Blue Cake Company, he has been promoted to Main Baker, received a raise, and has trained many other workers to be bakers. He earned his driver's license, acquired his own apartment, and bought a car. Quintin is using the skills he learned in college to build his credit and save money.



**The certifications Quintin has earned demonstrate his commitment to food safety, understanding of culinary principles, and readiness to work in a culinary or bakery environment.**

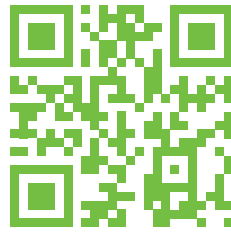


## Why are postsecondary education credentials important?

Earning a postsecondary education credential creates a better starting point for students with intellectual disability entering the job market and adult life. Those who access higher education are more likely to be employed, earn higher wages, and have stronger social and professional networks. There are more than 350 colleges and universities in the US with various credential options providing college students with intellectual disability opportunities for better employment outcomes and more successful adult lives.



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The Inclusive Higher Education Network is a national technical assistance and dissemination center, funded by the US Department of Education, Office of Postsecondary Education. The Network is tasked with increasing regional and state capacity, building awareness, creating strategic partnerships, and supporting expansion and improvement of higher education for students with intellectual disability through resource and training development.

Learn more about TCN at [thinkcollege.net/projects/tcn](http://thinkcollege.net/projects/tcn)

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