

Employment Across the Spectrum

HMEA's 3rd Annual Central Massachusetts Autism Summit

April 11, 2017

Brittany Collins: Flutie Spectrum Enterprises Managing Director

Lisa Borges: Doug Flutie, Jr. Foundation for Autism Executive Director

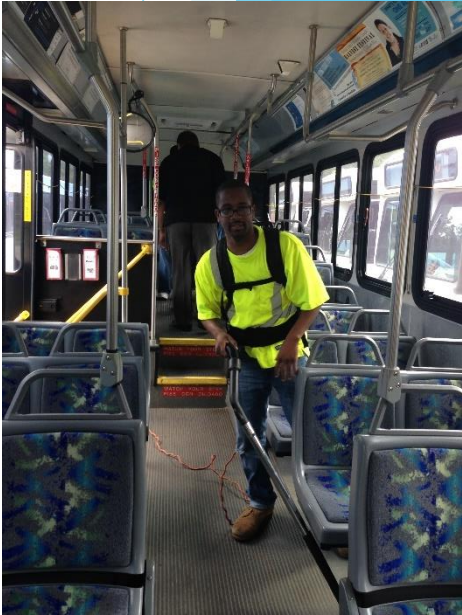
Allison Daigle: Autism Alliance of Metrowest Co-Executive Director & Parent of FSE Employee

Flutie Spectrum Enterprises

- ▶ Origin story
- ▶ FSE Office Solutions
- ▶ Where we are today
- ▶ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ghfABAT6NdE>
- ▶ WHDH news clip: <http://whdh.com/news/flutie-spectrum-enterprises-teaches-skills-to-those-with-autism/>



Extraordinary Ventures (Chapel Hill, NC)



Nicholas Center (Port Washington, NY)



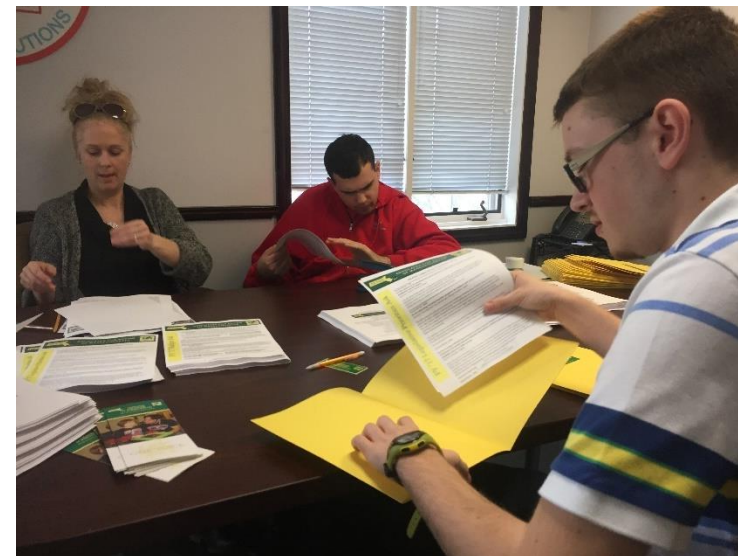
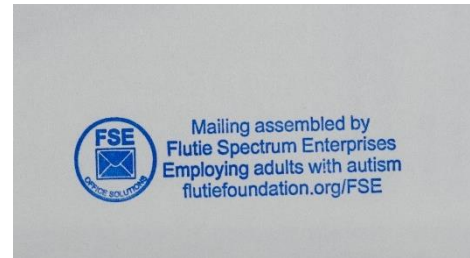
Rising Tide U and Autism Entrepreneurship

- ▶ Car wash in Florida
- ▶ Now offering autism entrepreneurship podcasts, webinars
- ▶ Facebook group
- ▶ Coming Soon: shopthespectrum.com



FSE: Business lessons learned

- ▶ Legal structure
- ▶ Funding
- ▶ Mission vs. services
- ▶ Partnerships: Framingham State Innovation Ctr



FSE: Employee lessons learned

- ▶ Accommodations
 - ▶ Job coaches (not provided but creating an open space for them)
 - ▶ Schedules and length of shifts
 - ▶ Working alongside service agencies
- ▶ Social expectations
 - ▶ Compliance/flexibility, motivation to work, employable skill
- ▶ Adaptive work assignments
- ▶ Beyond the work: volunteering, office parties, etc.
 - ▶ Sense of belonging, contributing, and *fun!*



Preparing for employment

- ▶ Parents/guardians/service providers: be in tune with individual's needs, share strategies with employer as appropriate
- ▶ Volunteer work
- ▶ Time management
- ▶ Listening to directions
- ▶ Start with any skill: following directions, multitasking, flexibility, 2-step directions- they all start at home, set up for success, lay the groundwork
- ▶ Don't worry if they don't have verbal skills
- ▶ Managing benefits (SSI/SSDI, etc.)

Finding Employment

- ▶ Parent networking: use your own connections to build opportunities
- ▶ Look in your own community for work that align with interests
- ▶ Volunteering
- ▶ Shadow a job, gradually taking on responsibilities

Questions?

For more information, email Brittany at bcollins@flutiefoundation.org