Becoming a Barber

Jeffrey Johnson

When I was younger, people always asked me, “What do you want to be when you grow up?” I grew up watching judge shows on television, and so I wanted to become a judge. I soon realized that was too much. First, you had to become a lawyer, and then a judge. So I decided for my career, I would like to become a barber.

I have many memories of going to the barbershop as a child. My mother would take me. I remember how much I liked seeing all the people there sharing stories about the neighborhood. I remember the feeling and smell of the lotion the barber put on me at the end of my haircut. But most of all, I remember my grandfather was the barber. He used to cut my hair. Becoming a barber makes me think of my grandfather. He passed away in 2014 after being a barber for many years. Now it is my dream too.

I know that to become a barber I have to pass a test to get my license. I have come to TASK, Trenton Area Soup Kitchen, to keep up my reading to help me pass the test. In my high school there was a beauty/barber course, but at the time it was too much bookwork for me. Now I feel I am more focused and ready to do it.

When I first got to TASK, I felt lost. I didn’t know what was going on. I found out that working one-on-one with a tutor in a small room is the best way for me to learn. It helps me focus and not get distracted by other people and things, like my phone. I feel like I am making progress here. I can read longer stories now and am figuring out how words work. I really look forward to being able to pick up books about slavery, civil rights, and important people in history. My work at TASK is preparing me to get my driver’s license and one day become a barber. Until then, I will be at TASK five days a week working towards my goals.

Jeffrey Johnson is a 20-year-old student at TASK. He graduated in 2016 from Burlington County Special Services. He lives with his family in Trenton, NJ, and he likes to listen to rap music in his free time. It is a good feeling to be recognized by The Change Agent for his writing.

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Our Education and Our Dreams

Jeffrey Johnson is in school to become a barber. What are some other benefits he is looking forward to as a result of his education?

When you were younger, what did you want to be when you grew up? What inspired you to have that dream? And what happened to your dream? Write a short essay about it.