

FAMILY IMPACT



Jens' Family

Derek Burrows

When Jens was young, he had to undergo surgery that essentially removed one side of his brain. At the age of 12 he had to relearn a lot of basic skills. From being in a wheelchair to now walking 15 kms as a Courier, he really is such a success story.

He first got involved with Good Foot because we were looking for a supportive work environment for him to move into. He had just completed a college vocational degree diploma at George Brown, and in his previous job he learned some of the skills that would end up helping him at Good Foot.

With Good Foot, we were really impressed with the training program and hiring process. He had some previous experience with navigational skills, but he didn't have much opportunity to practice them independently. **The Good Foot training was very comprehensive, and helped Jens get comfortable with the city and learn the expectations of the job, and the mentorship ever since has been terrific.** Good Foot is not an organization that tries to assign blame if a Courier makes a mistake. Instead, the mistake is viewed as a learning opportunity and a chance to grow as an individual. I think the other most important part of Jens' job at Good Foot is just the community aspect, and the social outreach. It's an opportunity to grow as a community, and to socialize with like minded individuals. Being able to sit down with colleagues and talk through situations that might be stressful and find strategies for future problem solving is just so important.

Good Foot has such an innovative structure, with a really great service at the core of the business model. As the organization has evolved over the years, I can see how it's taken on new partners and new opportunities, which has really allowed the organization to evolve and grow.

Businesses like Good Foot are so important because there really aren't enough opportunities for people with disabilities to get that first chance. Jens is essentially paralyzed on the left side of his body, which impacts his ability to take on a lot of job opportunities. But he is highly organized and analytical, and is so good at taking on a job once he learns the processes. Good Foot really provides independence and has allowed him to blossom as an individual. Last year he took a big step and started living independently in his own place. It's been a transition, like anything, but once he sets up his processes, he starts feeling more comfortable. Overall, it's been really, really successful. He's gained so much confidence and independence working at Good Foot.

For Jens, Good Foot is having stability, employment, purpose, and something to wake up and look forward to. It's so important. He's always very proud at the end of the day, when he tells us exactly where he's been, and the problems he solved.