

2023 PACTESP LIFE/WORK CHALLENGE AWARD RECIPIENT FIRST PLACE



William E. Rainey, III is legally blind, but he does not let this condition get in his way, it only motivates him. He has developed the skills necessary to ensure he has equal access to the curriculum and educational materials, to not only learn, but excel in the Information Technology (IT) program at Clearfield County Career and Technology Center (CCCTC). He works exceptionally hard and is meeting the goals he has established for himself. Will receives accommodations with magnification devices and special software that helps him see presentations and lectures from his CTE instructor and receives braille and assistive technology from a teacher of the visually impaired.

Will has grown so much since he first joined the IT program and has developed skills and new tools to help him along his career journey. These include discovering that he can use a mobile device to see images on his screen, magnifiers to see computer hardware, etc. He also has learned to adjust to various tasks in the IT program that may arise while at his Co-op placement.

Since Will joined the IT program, he has gained confidence and has shown himself he can achieve all goals he sets. Will has high goals for himself—to live independently, attend college, and work in the IT field. Will's teacher noted that because Will is now reading material that is important to him and his chosen career field, his reading accuracy and fluency have increased. Will's self-esteem has soared as have his self-advocacy skills. He has learned how to work as a team with his classmates and professionals in the workplace.

Will has achieved more certifications in the IT program at CCCTC than any other student before him in the program – from his first TestOut IT Fundamentals Pro certification to his most recent CompTIA A+. Test Out Certification magazine featured Will in an article. He has been a SkillsUSA District first-place champion twice in Cyber Security and Other IT Services. He was also a SkillsUSA state third-place winner in Cyber Security and will look to that yet again in IT services this school year. Will has also served as Vice President for his SkillsUSA chapter. He is a member of the National Technical Honor Society, maintains a high GPA, and has amazing attendance. His list of achievements continues to grow daily. Click [here](#) to read more about Will's success.

He works on his family's farm before and after school each day. Will has a very supportive family that has high expectations for him.

William was nominated by Jessica McKendrick, Student Services Coordinator, Clearfield County Career and Technology Center.



Pictured from left to right: Michael McDermott, PACTESP President; Jerome Mick, Information Technology Instructor; William Rainey, III, 2023 Life/Work Challenge Award Recipient; and Wendy Chalmers, Life/Work Challenge Award Chairperson