



For Media Use:
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Communications Office
News Release

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VR Helps Hosterman Start His Own Tack Business

Ocala, FL – When an injury cost Aaron Hosterman his job, and his disability led to problems finding new employment, he turned to Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) for help. Aaron met with VR Counselor Stacy Duscher who helped him get the services he needed to get back into the work force.

Aaron had previously worked in the leather business, and he knew there was a need in Ocala for leather repair services. So he and Stacy discussed his options and decided that self-employment would be a good fit, and Aaron's Equine Express was born. "Equine Express is a mobile tack shop," says Aaron. "Instead of the horse person going to a tack shop to purchase products, replacements, or have repairs done, I take the tack shop to them. I have a full inventory of basic grooming supplies, as well as the machine to repair leather goods and replace them."

VR paid for Aaron's back surgery. After that, VR contracted with Laura Coffee Richardson to help Aaron develop a business plan to guide his new business venture. She also offered assistance in setting up and marketing his business.

VR also provided Aaron with a trailer, industrial-strength sewing machine, computer, marketing items, beginning inventory, and business insurance. He has a friend helping him with the accounting for the business. "I've been working with Voc Rehab for almost two years now, and without them I couldn't have done this," he says.

Aaron is grateful to VR and Stacy for all of the help they've given him, so he could get back on his feet again. "Stacy is a wonderful lady, I appreciate her so much. She's always been there for me."

Stacy enjoyed working with Aaron too and says, "He is my first self-employment case, and it's been a wonderful experience. He's very hard working."

Aaron thanks VR whole heartedly. "I couldn't have done any of this without them. I would definitely recommend VR to the next person that truly needed them, not just someone that wanted a hand out. This is definitely a program for a person that needs it."

Florida's Vocational Rehabilitation program is committed to helping people with disabilities become part of America's workforce. Our employer-focused website, **FLJobConnections.com**, allows businesses to search at no charge for employees who are ready to go to work, as well as to post

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available jobs. VR has 80 offices across Florida, and last year helped 6,071 Floridians with significant disabilities find or keep a job. For more information about VR and its services, call (800) 451-4327 or visit **Rehabworks.org**.

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REMINDER FOR MEDIA--When reporting on stories about people with disabilities, remember to use language that puts the person first, rather than the disability. For example, use phrases such as "people with disabilities" (instead of "the disabled") and "person who uses a wheelchair" (rather than "wheelchair bound"); and "people with a mental illness" (rather than "the mentally ill").