

# SUMMERWORKS SUCCESS: JAMES

## BEN & JERRY'S: SCOOPER



**"Working and being valued has given me so much more confidence and motivation to keep going."  
-James**

Before Summerworks, I had a few other jobs but none of them really stuck for long. I learned about it through New Avenues for Youth's PAVE program. Ben & Jerry's sounded like a really fun place to work. I would get to talk to customers and make them smile, all while slinging ice cream.

Before working at Ben & Jerry's, I felt like I was constantly scraping by trying to find employment. I knew I wanted to get the most out of this work experience, and so far I've saved up more money than I've ever thought I would.

The job is mostly scooping ice cream, but I really enjoy the human connection. We have a cow costume and sometimes I put on the head for the little kids, and they love it. Erica, my supervisor, is the best. She facilitates such a loving and caring environment. We have a lot of homeless and vulnerable people coming through and unlike a lot of bosses, she never turns them away. She'll take the time to listen and support them. It makes me feel better about helping because I know my boss isn't going to be mad about it.

I've started to realize how important it is to have a steady job. I'm able to live a bit more comfortably and support myself. My self-respect and confidence have gone through the roof, and I'm just so grateful for an opportunity like this. I'm so happy with all the good things that have happened through this work experience and now I want good things to continue happening to me. I feel like I'm going to make it.



*Photos by Sean Bascom*



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