

Teacher relies on Open Door to get to and from work

Katrina Anderson
Indianapolis; Marion County
Rehabilitation teacher, Bosma Enterprises



Katrina Anderson is blind. So, doing ordinary things such as going to the grocery store, getting to doctor's appointments and getting to work is a challenge. Since 1992, she has relied on public transportation. She used to take an IndyGo bus, but the scheduled times didn't match her work needs, and the 12-minute drive to her job as a rehabilitation teacher at Bosma Enterprises could take up to 90 minutes.

She now relies on Open Door, a service offered through IndyGo that provides on-demand transit for people with disabilities.

"Without it (Open Door), I couldn't get back and forth to work," she said. "I could probably carpool with someone, but those opportunities are few and far between."

Anderson not only experiences the personal challenges of living with a disability, but she sees others wrestling with those challenges every day.

"(Public transportation) is really important if the disabled are functioning independently in all aspects of life. They need transportation," she said. "I don't know what would happen without it. They would be unemployed and very dependent. I don't even want to think about that."

Anderson works with clients from all over the state and knows that it's even more challenging for those in rural areas. Often, they have to move to areas that offer public transportation, such as Indianapolis, Richmond or Muncie.

"It's kind of sad, but they're moving or looking for employment in cities outside of the rural areas where they live, because their communities don't have public transportation," she said.

For people with disabilities, piecing a daily life together can be like putting together a puzzle. Securing housing, one piece of the puzzle, usually requires a job. That means they must live in an area that has available jobs, and they must have a way to get to those jobs.

As they put the puzzle together, public transportation is a crucial piece.

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