



Teamwork Powers the Kitchen at Lester Park Elementary



Walk into the kitchen at Duluth's ISD-709 Lester Park Elementary School, and you'll quickly notice something: a team that genuinely enjoys working together. While students line up in the cafeteria for their meals, behind the scenes is a well-oiled operation where everyone plays a vital role, and a little laughter goes a long way.



Rob has been an essential part of that kitchen team as a dishwasher for the past two years. His supervisor, Angie, knows firsthand how much Rob's work matters. Angie has worked at Lester Elementary for eight years and has been supervisor for the past four years. During this time, she has seen what makes the kitchen team click. "Rob is a hard worker and has a great personality," she says. "He instantly meshed with the rest of the staff here. He has really helped with a major part of the workload."

That seamless fit didn't happen by accident. It's the result of a workplace culture where every team member is valued and where there's room for personality alongside productivity. For Rob, that sense of belonging matters. He takes pride in being part of the team and genuinely enjoys coming to work.

When asked what advice she'd give other employers considering a partnership with CHOICE, unlimited, Angie is clear; "It is a great opportunity to help a person become more independent and feel like part of a team, all working toward the same goal. Have patience to see the potential that the person offers."

That philosophy, "patience, teamwork, and recognizing potential", reflects the kind of inclusive environment that ISD-709 has fostered across its 15 schools serving over 8,000 students. At Lester Park Elementary, home of the Labs, they've proven what's possible when employers create space for everyone to contribute and to be themselves. The result: a kitchen that runs smoothly, students who get nutritious meals, and a workplace where people truly want to work.



Rob (center) is proud to be part of this team.

Thank you ISD-709 and Lester Park Elementary for your inclusive employment practices!