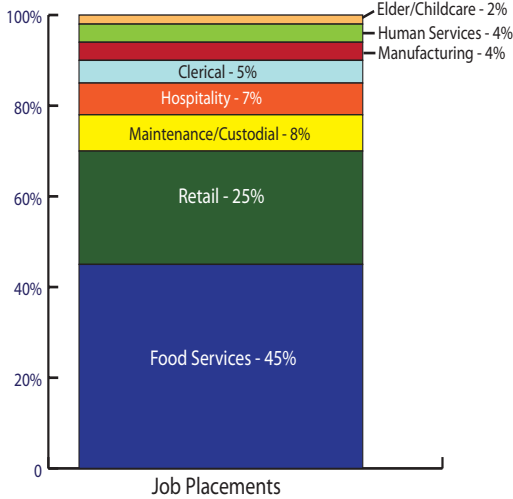
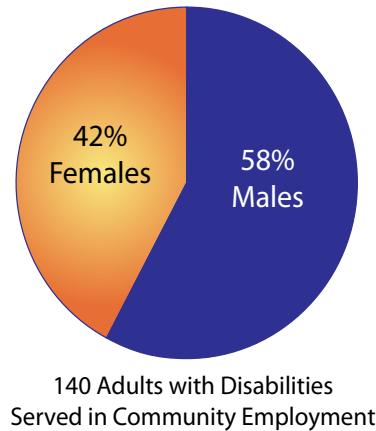
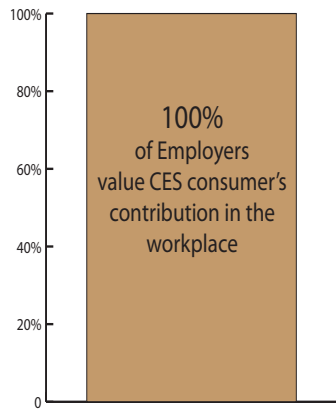


# Community Employment

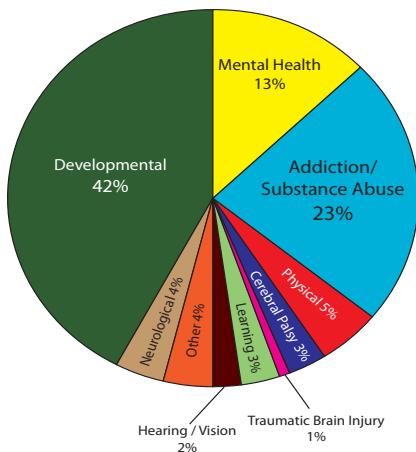
The old saying goes, “Sometimes you have to take a step backwards to move forwards.” Cathy certainly knows this philosophy. A few years ago, health problems forced her to leave her community-based job. Understandably, this was not a circumstance that she was pleased to accept. Cathy really enjoyed her work and the perks that it brought: a paycheck, increased independence, and the self-esteem in knowing she did a good job. Not one to give up, Cathy worked with her doctor in efforts to get back into good health. She never missed appointments and always followed the instructions of healthcare professionals. At the same time, she re-enrolled in the CHAC Occupational Training Program in order to continue developing job skills in several areas. Throughout the process, her attitude remained positive and steadfast. Finally, it all came together; Cathy’s health improved. She worked with a Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor and an Employment Specialist in CHAC’s Community Employment Services Program to re-enter the local workforce. Six months ago, Cathy’s journey came full circle. She became an employee of Firehouse Subs in Sarasota.



Cathy really enjoys her work as a lobby attendant. Her supervisor describes her as a very friendly and helpful addition to their team. We certainly agree. Congratulations, Cathy, on your success.



## BREAKDOWN OF DISABILITIES



Community Employment Services benefits the community through job preparedness assistance. \$16 dollars is returned to society for every public dollar spent on vocational rehabilitation to prepare people with disabilities for employment (Data Source: **Able Trust of Florida**). Our community realizes increased spending on goods and services due to increased earnings of people with disabilities with this program. In helping people with disabilities create a path leading to employment, they gain self-sufficiency *without* reliance on Medicare or Medicaid coverage and other public assistance; conversely, our community realizes a decrease in public assistance payments. Health, quality of life and ability to control life improves in most cases. They feel valued for their contributions and help their employers reach bottom-line goals. Employers and all community members gain the rewards of a wholly integrated community where people with disabilities become a “normal” part of the landscape, contributing to its vitality.