

The Youth Apprentice Experience

Youth Apprentice Zamoni Johnson highlights her experience working at M&T Bank in a monthly column.

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Hi! I'm **Zamoni Johnson**; M&T Employee, Buffalo State University Freshmen, and Youth Apprentice via Say Yes and CareerWise Greater Buffalo.

It's been five months since I joined M&T as an apprentice, and I am having a wonderful experience so far. The team I work with is very much interested in helping me to develop to my greatest potential – even helping me to identify my strengths and other areas at M&T I might wish to explore. According to CliftonStrengths – my top five are Competition, Activator, Empathy, Achiever, and Adaptability – and my team has made it a point to create opportunities for me to use those strengths in our work.

Work-Life Balance

Since graduating high school, starting college, and beginning the apprenticeship, one of the toughest lessons I have had to learn is that finding a work-life balance is important.

Being a first-time college student is no easy task and early on I struggled with balancing school and work while maintaining my life. Initially, I quickly gathered that the busy schedule of a full day at school then a full day at work, along with homework and other responsibilities didn't work for me. While I was working, I didn't give myself time for homework or school at all and I would end my days too tired after work to try.

In an attempt to create a work-life balance, I reduced my workload, communicated with my team to shift work, and planned out time to complete homework. I know now that finding that balance between work/school/life will take some practice and trial and error as I am still trying to find what works for me.