

How Local Meat Cutter Makes a Difference with His Kindness

By M.K Sullivan



Many people have worked in retail. But many have *not* worked in retail and that leaves them with a lack of empathy for the clientele that serves shoppers. In Hannaford Supermarkets, a grocery store chain scattered all throughout New England, a particular worker caught my eye when I was doing my weekly shopping after work. Alex Day, an assistant meat cutter at Riverside Hannaford in Portland Maine was talking to a flustered old woman. She was very distraught about her dogs not being able to chew up the marrow bones on the shelf because they were just too big. Many in his position would just kindly nod at her and apologize till she walked off. But the genuine concern look on his face turned to action as he ran into his "office" the meat department. He disappeared for a few moments and then suddenly returned with a smaller cut-up version of the bones. The woman thanked him kindly and they talked for a few more minutes. He added something to her day and I wondered what motivated his work ethic.

I thought maybe he could add something to everyone's day by asking him about his methods. Retail customer service is hard sometimes with unreasonable customers but, his insight might bring

some hope to humanity yet. On November 1, I caught him on his way out from work around noon. He usually works the morning shifts making sure the department is functioning correctly. He greeted me with a smile and then we sat in his car and talked over Redbull.

My first inquiry was questioning whether he liked working for Hannaford. He responded that he liked it with a humble smile. He elaborated further talking about why he enjoys his place of work. "Basically, the people, the people you see every day, and making a positive impact in their life." He knows he has a small fragment in a customer's day, but helping them when he has the opportunity makes his job so much more enjoyable. In the rest of my time with him, we went over some of his accomplishments.

Over the years he has won service star, a customer service based employee of the month award, multiple times. To win this, an employee must be nominated by a customer. This year, Alex has won it twice. He has also won 2015, 2016, and 2018 service star of the year, a district-wide award involving many Hannafords. He was very humble about this conversation. Alex serves as an example to all retail workers (and regular human beings) should be kind to everyone.