

0:00:20.160,0:00:24.080

Bonnie: Hello I just wanted to take a couple of minutes to talk about our sponsor

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Bonnie: Alright welcome back to

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another episode of Navigating Adulthood and IDD I'm super excited today to have Lauren Burgess

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and Robby Chaney uh both uh both representing Dirt Coffee today which is a non-profit coffee bar

0:01:47.600,0:01:53.840

in Littleton, Colorado so to start would you both mind giving like a short introduction?

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Lauren: sure thanks so much for having us um yeah my name is Lauren Burgess

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and I am the founder and CEO of Dirt Coffee Bar like you had mentioned we are located in downtown Littleton

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we were founded in 2013 started off as a small little coffee truck touring around Denver metro

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area and a couple years ago finally we're able to open the doors of our brick and mortar

0:02:24.480,0:02:30.560

Robby: my name is Robby Chaney and I'm the back of the house manager I've been with Dirt since it

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first started out as a coffee truck and I've been working in the shop since it first opened back in

0:02:37.040,0:02:44.160

2018 and I've been working here ever since

Bonnie: awesome awesome well I'm super excited to dive into

0:02:44.800,0:02:50.960

all about Dirt today and kind of the employment opportunities it offers um so Lauren

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you kind of talked about it a little bit with how Dirt got started in a coffee truck so kind of

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I guess to expand upon that why did you start Dirt and kind of what was that journey like?

Lauren: sure

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so in graduate school I was volunteering and working and interning for as many organizations

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in the field of basically autism and education or intervention or policy and advocacy that I could

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to really figure out where where my passions were where I felt like I could make the most

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impact and it was during that that I but I came to the idea of Garden which is the first business I

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started in 2010 and Garden is an organization that works with children adolescents and

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adults with neurodiversity so autism and all other intellectual or developmental disabilities and all

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of our services are community based so the idea there is that we're teaching real world skills

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and real world settings um and most of the places I had worked or I had seen or studied previously

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were doing really great things but um more in isolation either at home or in the classroom or

0:04:09.360,0:04:16.720

um at the back of a school in a gym and almost um isolated and segregated and not really

0:04:16.720,0:04:23.600

um getting the individuals that I was seeing out in their community and giving them exposure

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to their community but also giving exposure of our community to all different types of people

0:04:30.000,0:04:38.000

so um it was during that work that then I was meeting individuals like Robby who were coming to

0:04:38.000,0:04:45.520

Garden um graduating from high school or college and really wanting to start their career but not

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really knowing what was out there for them and um I worked with Robby pretty closely and a few

0:04:51.920,0:04:58.240

other young adults and you know we were filling out applications and going on interviews and

0:04:58.960,0:05:07.840

um there were job offers for sure but none of them were the jobs that I I felt that this community

0:05:07.840,0:05:15.200

deserved and that the people who I was working with were communicating that they wanted so um I

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teamed up with a therapist who was working for me at Garden at the time, Emily Wallace, and her and I

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just started moving full force forward with the idea of Dirt I had written the business plan

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a few years prior to that and it was kind of just laying dormant and then um it was kind of the work

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with Robby and a few others that inspired this and then my ability um and Emily's passion

0:05:41.840,0:05:48.400

of really urging me to get this started so we launched a crowdfunding campaign and raised enough

0:05:48.400,0:05:53.520

money to allow us to purchase and renovate a truck
Bonnie: that is so cool and so and you can still have the

0:05:53.520,0:05:59.280

truck right?

Lauren: yeah we sure do

Bonnie: I saw that

online yeah that's awesome I think that's such a cool idea

0:05:59.280,0:06:03.200

both having like the storefront and the truck look out in the community too

0:06:04.400,0:06:11.360

Lauren: yeah it was having a mobile coffee truck was never part of the original plan um but

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with the amount of funds that we had raised we we had enough to do something but not exactly what we

0:06:18.080,0:06:24.080
wanted and I'm so glad um you know everything ends
up working out in hindsight but being able to have

0:06:24.080,0:06:31.200
the truck allowed us to be mobile and go out into
the community um for a few years before we were

0:06:31.200,0:06:36.960
able to actually open up a shop but by the time
we opened up a shop everybody in our community

0:06:36.960,0:06:42.960
knew about us and so we were able to kind of move
full force once our doors opened

Bonnie: that's awesome

0:06:42.960,0:06:49.520
awesome so um and you've been touching on it what
kind of employment opportunities do you provide

0:06:50.160,0:06:58.640
at Dirt?

Lauren: yeah so our mission is served in
a multitude of ways and purposes so thirty of our

0:06:58.640,0:07:06.160
staff of our permanent staff is neurodiverse
we're one of the few non-profit food and

0:07:06.160,0:07:12.480
beverage establishments that's also recognized
and considered by the state of Colorado and by

0:07:12.480,0:07:18.320
the division of vocational rehabilitation to be
considered I'm using air quotes now integrated and

0:07:18.320,0:07:25.200
competitive so that means that our shop looks like
what the world looks like so not everybody has a

0:07:25.200,0:07:32.880
disability and not everybody is neurotypical
um 30 of our world has a disability so 30

0:07:32.880,0:07:40.560
of our workforce at Dirt identifies as
being disabled and then on top of that we

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have an internship program and that program is
specifically for young adults with disabilities

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who have little to no job experience and so that program takes between 10 and 15 individuals with

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autism or another neurodiversity and they earn their typically what is their first paycheck for

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anywhere from three to twelve months and then work with us and a job coach one-on-one to kind

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of gain those entry-level job skills and be able to put something on their resume and they leave

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our program graduating with a certificate and then a letter of recommendation and the opportunity to

0:08:22.560,0:08:28.160

move on to the next step in their employment journey with having that experience under their

0:08:28.160,0:08:34.160

belt

Bonnie: that's awesome because that could be a huge barrier for for for everyone really it's like

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trying when you're trying to get a job so many jobs want that like entry level experience and so

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many jobs it's like well how do I get that entry level experience if I can't get the jobs so to

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provide that um so that individuals can get like build their career to what they want it to be is

0:08:49.920,0:08:57.280

really awesome

Lauren: that's exactly what we hope it to be too we Dirt is named Dirt for a variety of

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reasons but one of the reasons is that we hope to be kind of that foundation and that stepping stone

0:09:02.560,0:09:08.560

and planting those seeds for so many individuals who are ready to move on and um and start earning

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a real paycheck in the real world

Bonnie: I love that oh

I love that background on the name that's so cool

0:09:14.240,0:09:18.960

so I'm going to switch to Robby a little bit here um
since we're talking about the kinds of jobs that

0:09:18.960,0:09:24.080

Dirt provides and you were in your introduction
you said how long you've been there um

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and I was reading your bio on the website and
I thought it's so cool that you started as an

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intern and have like worked up as a mentor and now
you're a manager so would you mind like expanding

0:09:35.200,0:09:41.120

on kind of your journey through that employment
and what your job is now?

Robby: uh my background story

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um so it all started when I was starting on
job coaching and I've like went in a few places

0:09:48.960,0:09:57.920

with another organization and I never never got
anywhere and then I came across Garden and
that's

0:09:57.920,0:10:04.480

when I met Lauren that was about seven years ago
now and then she started job training me on how to

0:10:04.480,0:10:10.720

apply for a job and that's that's what led me to
get a seasonal job at Fedex and I worked there for

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up until Christmas uh and then when then we
resumed the job training stuff and then Lauren

0:10:18.480,0:10:25.040

approached me with the uh truck and asked me if I were interested and I'm
like yeah sure I'll go for

0:10:25.040,0:10:32.160

it then then I became one of the first interns to

work the truck on several events and then when I

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was in Emily Griffith Technical College in the video production program

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I produced some videos for the organization itself and then after I graduated Lauren approached me

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to produce a fundraiser video for Dirt and the other organizations she's a part of and

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that was my first freelance job and I've been doing some other freelance videos ever since

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then when it came time for the shop to open she Lauren asked me if I were interested in being the

0:11:04.480,0:11:09.840

one of the managers of the shop and I was like yeah sure I'll go for it and that's when I became

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back in the house manager and I was thrilled to finally get a job where I'm in a safe environment

0:11:16.960,0:11:24.800

away from all the rude people all around the other world and I worked really hard and all

0:11:24.800,0:11:30.640

that hard work earned me an employee of the year award and that was the best time in my life

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and ever since that I've worked really hard I've started to teach others if how to keep working

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hard and maybe one day they can't earn a reward or earn enough money to live live independently and

0:11:45.040,0:11:50.240

and so on

Bonnie: that's awesome first of all congratulations that's amazing fully of

0:11:50.240,0:11:56.960

the year I love it that's that's so awesome and it sounds like you found a real good kind of niche

0:11:56.960,0:12:01.280
with Dirt Coffee what kind of strengths
do you think you bring to the job?

0:12:01.840,0:12:06.160
um and it sounds like you've been able to build
a lot of strengths with Dirt as well too
Robby: what

0:12:06.160,0:12:13.840
strengths do I bring to bring to work I learned
from a few minor mistakes and I learned it quickly

0:12:13.840,0:12:21.120
I I like to keep myself detained at all times make
sure everything's where it needs to be neatly and

0:12:21.120,0:12:30.320
I also remind some of my other co-workers the same
things and um I think it's just basically trying

0:12:30.320,0:12:36.720
uh trying to be patient with customers who are in
a bit of a rush or such and they're and they're

0:12:36.720,0:12:43.440
always patient with me even when I tell them
to and as long as I keep my self focused I'm

0:12:43.440,0:12:48.560
I'm good to go
Bonnie: that's awesome that's awesome Robby what's your
favorite thing about working at Dirt?

0:12:48.560,0:12:56.000
Robby: uh my favorite thing about working at Dirt is I
think it's greeting nicer people and being able

0:12:56.000,0:13:03.280
to greet others who share a similar disability
and I do my best to be more polite to them and

0:13:03.280,0:13:09.520
offer them new drinks in case they didn't get
the ones they wanted and always be there whenever

0:13:09.520,0:13:16.160
they need need help with whatever they need
Bonnie: ah that's awesome I need to get out to
Dirt sometime

0:13:16.880,0:13:21.920
the um the pandemics unfortunately they're
kind of holding me back but like it's on my

0:13:21.920,0:13:26.720

radar I have to get there like it sounds like
such a great environment that you guys have

0:13:27.600,0:13:34.800

not only for your employees but for your customers
too and with that I wanted to ask what makes Dirt

0:13:34.800,0:13:40.240

different kind of business operation wise? how do
you how do you meet the needs of the employees?

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how do you kind of integrate um the neurodiverse
employees and the neurotypical ones?

Lauren: yeah I think

0:13:47.920,0:13:57.840

um Robby's story is a great example and you
can probably gather that he is really humble and

0:13:57.840,0:14:06.640

um doesn't doesn't brag about all of the things
that he brings to the table and so um for example

0:14:07.360,0:14:12.960

uh Robby sharing that you know he was working
somewhere else and that we were finally ready to

0:14:12.960,0:14:19.120

open up our doors and offered him the management
position and back when we were just starting

0:14:19.120,0:14:24.480

we knew that we needed baristas and we knew that
we needed managers and we knew who we wanted those

0:14:24.480,0:14:30.960

managers to be and who those baristas to be
um but but we didn't know much more than that

0:14:30.960,0:14:38.080

um running a an actual brick and mortar versus a
mobile coffee truck is night and day different so

0:14:38.640,0:14:45.520

um it was actually Robby who really created and
helped us to create the back of house manager

0:14:45.520,0:14:52.000

position because that position did not create
before or did not exist before Robby and that was

0:14:52.000,0:14:59.040
created because we saw Robby was super
meticulous when it came to anything um

0:14:59.600,0:15:07.680
food prep related and inventory related um we
would learn you know we would add a brand new

0:15:07.680,0:15:14.400
panini to our menu and the vendor would teach us
how to make sure to cook it correctly and serve it

0:15:14.400,0:15:20.320
correctly and make sure that it's all up to par
and um Robby was the one that really helped us

0:15:20.320,0:15:27.360
hone in on that and say and and catch us too and
say oh actually it's I've found that this is a

0:15:27.360,0:15:32.240
better way to do that and let's make sure we're
all doing it the same way and that consistency

0:15:32.240,0:15:38.800
is really important and then that's when we
kind of realized holy moly Robby is bringing

0:15:39.360,0:15:44.800
such a unique strength to the team and making
sure that everything we do is super consistent

0:15:44.800,0:15:53.440
and really high quality and so um we we gave him
the title of back of house manager with his help

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to create it because of those specific strengths
that he brings and he alone brings in his um

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you know every week at our or every other week
at our management meetings he's the one that's

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giving us updates about where our inventory is
at and any new processes with regards to how

0:16:10.400,0:16:16.080
we're prepping the foods and and preparing the
food so I think that's that's important because

0:16:16.640,0:16:23.440
um all of our employees bring a unique skill or

strength to the table and something that I think

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Dirt has been really great at is recognizing and being able to suss out what those unique

0:16:29.440,0:16:35.200

strengths are and what each individual brings to the table and then cultivating a position

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around that um there's there's this idea out in the world that employers just don't know how to

0:16:42.240,0:16:48.320

employ people with disabilities and it's you know how do we manage that or um how do we put

0:16:48.320,0:16:56.800

these modifications in place but it's really it's it's not much different than hiring anybody else

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and um honestly if if Robby wasn't who he was we probably wouldn't have a back of the house manager

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and would still be kind of a duck underwater where it's like calm and cool up above but

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then the kicking feet down below water and still trying to figure out what what these systems and

0:17:13.760,0:17:20.320

processes look like

Bonnie: that's awesome oh that's so cool and like the idea of like building around

0:17:20.320,0:17:25.280

the strengths and making those positions around the strengths of individuals that's so cool and

0:17:25.280,0:17:29.680

Robby that's awesome employer of the year for sure like you had that whole position

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built and it's so crucial for the operations that dirt um built on your strengths so that's so cool

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and um you're kind of touching on it Lauren so how could other businesses like try to

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implement things to be more inclusive because
yeah there's that kind of idea of like oh no

0:17:47.360,0:17:54.560

like it's a hassle or something I don't know like
for as much as people talk about like inclusivity

0:17:54.560,0:18:01.120

you look at the community of like jobs and it
doesn't reflect in the job market still so how

0:18:01.760,0:18:08.560

like if somebody wanted to hire people um and
be inclusive what could they implement

Lauren: yeah I

0:18:08.560,0:18:13.440

think that's a great question and I and I think
that you're right so many people just don't know

0:18:13.440,0:18:20.320

where to start and there's definitely not an easy
answer but the answer that I like to give most

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employers who are interested in this is start by
looking at the positions that you currently have

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at your shop or at your place of business and
thinking about um where where's the flexibility

0:18:34.560,0:18:41.040

within those positions um a lot of times when
I get hired on as a consultant to go into a

0:18:41.040,0:18:46.320

business and think about um you know how how could
this industry or this business or this company

0:18:46.320,0:18:53.280

start employing people with disabilities I look at
all of their positions and I think like okay I see

0:18:53.280,0:19:02.480

this person is in charge of x y z but they're
actually really good at x and y let's think

0:19:02.480,0:19:09.280

about getting z off their plate because I know
somebody who would be really good at z and um

0:19:09.280,0:19:15.440

and be able to like save resources and streamline everything and be a lot more efficient by adding

0:19:15.440,0:19:20.560

in a person to take something off of somebody's plate and adding it to another person's plate

0:19:20.560,0:19:27.840

I also think a really good place to start too is just in your ad or in the application I mean um

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using more plain language just shows that your organization or your company is open to hiring

0:19:36.560,0:19:42.320

all different types of people and not just people with disabilities but maybe people who um English

0:19:42.320,0:19:50.160

is not their first language and so a lot of times and and I've done this too is when I'm posting

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an ad on Indeed or Craigslist I'm using a lot of lingo from the industry or the field even things

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like neurodiversities is considered like field lingo when um it could just be stated more plainly

0:20:06.080,0:20:11.600

with people with disabilities and then also having a statement saying that you're prioritizing people

0:20:11.600,0:20:15.840

with disabilities or you're prioritizing BIPOC on your application so that you start

0:20:16.640,0:20:22.000

being able to get those people in the door a lot of times so many people don't even have the

0:20:22.000,0:20:27.120

chance to enter the door to even entertain that conversation or entertain that option

0:20:27.120,0:20:32.880

Bonnie: yeah oh what a good point I've never thought about like ads and like just that kind of even

0:20:32.880,0:20:38.480

accessibility level of it um yeah I think that's

a really good takeaway that somebody could do

0:20:38.480,0:20:46.400

like today to like implement that to it are your ads accessible are you like yeah that's awesome

0:20:47.040,0:20:52.080

so good and I mean we've been talking about it I hear it in your both your words and

0:20:52.080,0:20:57.760

of describing Dirt describing the journeys of making Dirt but what kind of community do you hope

0:20:57.760,0:21:06.400

to create with Dirt um or have created with Dirt?

Lauren: so I love that question about about Dirt's community

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because it's definitely my perception or perspective on that has definitely

0:21:12.640,0:21:20.160

changed thinking about opening the doors to Dirt I was solely or not solely but I was most of my

0:21:20.160,0:21:29.280

focus was on the people who we wanted to provide opportunities for versus the general community at

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large and we knew that the general community was going to be impacted by our shop and by

0:21:37.280,0:21:41.920

our mission and that's one of the reasons why I chose coffee in particular is because

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so many people go to a coffee shop you know multiple days a week so there's lots of

0:21:48.160,0:21:54.800

opportunity for engagement um but really I think the biggest impact that Dirt has been

0:21:54.800,0:22:00.080

able to make in the community is just giving everyday people again I'm using air quotes

0:22:00.080,0:22:05.040

because I know people are listening to this but everyday people the opportunity to have

0:22:05.680,0:22:11.120

everyday interactions with people who are not like themselves I feel like there's such there's

0:22:11.120,0:22:19.760

so much misinformation out there and um so many people only see what might be a various very

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stereotypical person with autism on a tv show or in a movie when really um

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it it's called a spectrum for a reason and there's so many different types of people within that

0:22:32.720,0:22:40.240

spectrum and I think what has been so great is that our customers who came just because we're

0:22:40.240,0:22:46.080

their neighborhood coffee shop without really understanding what our mission is is getting that

0:22:46.080,0:22:52.160

exposure and being able to develop relationships and get to know get to know Robby and get to know

0:22:52.160,0:23:00.080

Daniel and get to know our whole shop and be able to see them alongside neurotypical people

0:23:00.080,0:23:07.120

um so it's been really great the pandemic has been super difficult but the fact that we're still

0:23:07.680,0:23:16.400

able to keep our doors open just kind of tells me how much the community has taken hold of us

0:23:16.400,0:23:22.160

and finds value in us and what we're doing and finds value in our employees

Bonnie: that's awesome

0:23:22.160,0:23:29.040

Robby did you want to answer that question too?

Robby: I would I would say a friendly community yeah we

0:23:29.040,0:23:35.840

have lots of customers uh loads of regulars who come in they're very friendly to us and

0:23:37.200,0:23:43.280

we know what they it's like every time they come
in we we know what they want and I'm usually like

0:23:43.280,0:23:48.720

would you like your usual today I'm like yo sure
and we give it to them and I feel like there will

0:23:48.720,0:23:55.040

be one day where we'll just be extremely nice
to them and just give it to them for free and

0:23:55.040,0:24:01.200

they won't have to pay us because they come here
too much but they insist on paying paying us and

0:24:01.760,0:24:06.640

that's what makes us friendly

Bonnie: that's awesome yeah
and you both you both touched on it coffee is so

0:24:06.640,0:24:13.200

perfect because it's it's different than like if
you had like you know like a clothing store it's

0:24:13.200,0:24:19.200

not that same where it's like having your usual
drink and like building those connections that way

0:24:19.200,0:24:24.960

so it's so easy with coffee um to be like oh hey
you're in here again getting your drink for the

0:24:24.960,0:24:31.040

day and um and can be like that really like
social environment can build so easily with

0:24:31.040,0:24:37.680

coffee

Lauren: absolutely it's super relational

Bonnie: definitely

all right and you started talking about it Lauren

0:24:38.400,0:24:47.360

so how have you guys pivoted this year with the
pandemic?

Lauren: yeah so we started 2020 with um the idea

0:24:47.360,0:24:55.840

that we're gonna open up shop number two somewhere
in Colorado and um again everything happens for

0:24:55.840,0:25:01.840

a reason and I'm really glad that we didn't find
hadn't found that perfect location yet we were so

0:25:01.840,0:25:09.360

close to signing a lease for a place in downtown Denver um and luckily we decided against that I

0:25:09.360,0:25:16.240

think um in early March and then the pandemic hit and we tried really hard to keep our doors open

0:25:17.120,0:25:25.440

but we did end up having to close for I think a full month there while still doing our best to

0:25:27.120,0:25:33.200

keep everybody on payroll to the best of our capabilities um we were lucky enough to get some

0:25:33.200,0:25:39.520

of those ppp funds to keep people on payroll even during the times that they weren't at our shop

0:25:40.560,0:25:46.720

and then we finally reopened on May 5th which happened to be our two year anniversary

0:25:47.360,0:25:53.600

which was um definitely better sweet to say the least but luckily we have been

0:25:54.640,0:26:02.000

slowly getting back to what what a normal sales day looks like we did have a couple

0:26:02.000,0:26:08.080

of days last week where we either met or exceeded the sales that we were making last year which was

0:26:08.720,0:26:15.120

really great to see that people are still coming out and showing up we've for the first time are

0:26:15.120,0:26:22.480

on all the delivery apps which I was always really against doing before just because we care so much

0:26:22.480,0:26:28.400

about the quality of our product and so if you have a hot coffee that is being made and then

0:26:28.400,0:26:34.000

put into your hands in a second the quality is a lot different than a hot coffee that's being made

0:26:34.000,0:26:40.080

and then delivered to your door 20 minutes later
so we've had to tweak some of that a little bit

0:26:40.080,0:26:46.480

Um Robby has also been super helpful with
that too but that's helped us um and now

0:26:47.280,0:26:55.440

we're really focused on what can we do to continue
to expand our outreach and our impact but do it

0:26:55.440,0:27:04.720

in a way that is not only safe but also um is
more accessible and more inclusive the black

0:27:04.720,0:27:10.080

lives matter movement has really inspired
us and has helped us take a closer look at

0:27:10.720,0:27:18.320

all of the barriers that um even the people who
have graduated from our internship program or who

0:27:18.320,0:27:24.720

are employed by Dirt still all the barriers that
still exist um it's one thing to be you know

0:27:25.600,0:27:32.000

white and living in Littleton and be disabled
but then add um being black and being disabled

0:27:32.000,0:27:38.800

on top of that and um so now we're asking those
questions like how how do we make our mission

0:27:38.800,0:27:45.680

more accessible and more equitable for every
single person with a disability

Bonnie: that's awesome

0:27:45.680,0:27:52.800

I think that's a good point and um I think
sometimes the overlap people don't think about

0:27:53.360,0:28:01.680

you know

Lauren: absolutely yeah it was this year has
definitely um been awakening in more ways than one

0:28:01.680,0:28:09.280

but to think that you know we were kind of doing
the right type of work by just serving people

0:28:09.280,0:28:14.240

with disabilities or just being focused on people with disabilities but then completely neglecting

0:28:14.240,0:28:21.440

to look at all the intersections that exist within the disability community so um yeah I'm glad that

0:28:21.440,0:28:26.400

it it finally happened and that our eyes are being opened and it's allowing us to create

0:28:27.760,0:28:33.520

more opportunities in terms of partnerships and we're looking at maybe launching a virtual program

0:28:33.520,0:28:38.320

to be able to get out into the communities that don't have that easy access to us like

0:28:38.320,0:28:43.600

they do now

Bonnie: that's awesome awesome we'll have to keep an eye out for that for sure

Lauren: definitely

0:28:43.600,0:28:51.520

Bonnie: yeah so Robby how has the pandemic affected your job?

Robby: how's it affected my job well when the

0:28:51.520,0:28:58.960

virus first broke out in China I thought well when I was watching the news I hoped that it wouldn't

0:28:58.960,0:29:04.240

become a worldwide thing like it would be like a zombie pandemic that would destroy

0:29:04.240,0:29:11.840

the planet but then when it started getting worse and they decided to close a shop

0:29:12.720,0:29:19.840

I was jobless for a month then I had to look for a secondary job until they reopened and it was

0:29:19.840,0:29:25.440

basically look for something that was close by like I had to look for a job at a local grocery

0:29:25.440,0:29:34.160

store or a little shop and then after a while my bus routes got cut off so I'd ask my mom and dad

0:29:34.160,0:29:38.960
to give me a ride to and from work and on Sundays
where they're working late in the afternoon I had

0:29:38.960,0:29:45.120
to take the bus home which was good good for
me because of the bus that I've been taking

0:29:45.120,0:29:50.320
out lately in the afternoons it's close by their
house so I would hang out there after my work day

0:29:51.200,0:29:58.880
and would just hang out for a while and also
with some of my hours being cut off I had to

0:29:58.880,0:30:09.520
try to persuade my uh manager to give me more
hours or find me some extra uh options to look

0:30:09.520,0:30:15.920
for to get more money that way I don't end up
being homeless and you know I'm just working

0:30:16.880,0:30:23.840
doing my best to work around and be safe around
the just be safe around everyone make sure they

0:30:23.840,0:30:27.920
follow the procedures too because if they don't
they're going to end up getting sick and they're

0:30:27.920,0:30:34.160
going to end up somewhere else
Bonnie: yeah that's tough a
lot it's been a tough year for everybody that's so

0:30:34.160,0:30:39.360
tough and this came up on another episode people
I don't think people think about the bus routes

0:30:39.920,0:30:45.920
um very much and how that affects like if you
don't use a bus I don't think people really think

0:30:45.920,0:30:53.120
about how that affects people who do use the bus
and um that's so difficult and I'm sure it's been

0:30:53.120,0:31:00.240
a stressful year but you know I'm glad I'm glad
Dirt's doing okay and that um you're not homeless

0:31:00.240,0:31:04.160

because that it's just tough and it's scary
it's scary that you have to worry about that

0:31:04.160,0:31:11.120

you know so the pandemic's really been tough for
everybody

Lauren: I will say I've gotten a few questions

0:31:11.920,0:31:18.800

in other interviews where people are specifically
asking how how have your staff with autism been um

0:31:19.520,0:31:26.160

how did they handle all the changes that that
you had to go through as a business and um this

0:31:26.160,0:31:30.480

is the first time that I'm hearing Robby had to
look for a second job and things like that and

0:31:30.480,0:31:37.600

I've uh Robby I just want to say you've
been so um patient and understanding with us

0:31:37.600,0:31:46.000

the whole way anytime we had to make a tough
decision or make a cut it was honestly Robby

0:31:46.000,0:31:53.200

and some of our other employees who were who
are on the spectrum who um made sure that we

0:31:53.200,0:31:59.840

were making the safest decisions for everyone
regardless of how hard it was on them personally

0:32:00.640,0:32:07.040

um and some of the more difficult conversations I
had to have were from our neurotypical or with our

0:32:07.040,0:32:14.480

neurotypical staff um but again it just shows
that there's this perception out there that um

0:32:15.200,0:32:21.360

people with disabilities are harder to manage
or more difficult to get along with or more

0:32:21.360,0:32:29.520

difficult to um to employ but um time and time
again Dirt has proven that not to be the case

0:32:30.080,0:32:34.560

Bonnie: that's awesome that's awesome yeah those

stereotypes are definitely out there I will say

0:32:34.560,0:32:40.800

my sister has autism and I would say of our family she's probably been handling the pandemic the best

0:32:41.440,0:32:46.640

this is she's really rolling with it just kind of like oh well this is what we do now and wearing

0:32:46.640,0:32:52.800

her mask and and just like definitely kind of supporting us more so um so there's like that

0:32:52.800,0:32:57.360

stereotype that she would have the most difficult time with it but she's definitely been kind of

0:32:57.360,0:33:03.440

supporting us with it

Lauren: ah yeah see it's those are the things I keep hearing from people who

0:33:04.240,0:33:09.440

are actually in relationship with or have a relationship with people who are different

0:33:09.440,0:33:14.720

than them

Bonnie: yeah and yeah the stereotypes out there that like oh no like they would

0:33:14.720,0:33:20.080

be really difficult during a time like this and and you know they're not they're being patient

0:33:20.080,0:33:26.480

um they're they're good employees they're good individuals

Lauren: yeah exactly

Bonnie: so Lauren what are your

0:33:26.480,0:33:35.520

hopes and plans for the future?

Lauren: yeah so we have next month is our last board meeting and that

0:33:35.520,0:33:41.040

in that meeting we kind of brainstormed about what we want Dirt to look like and

0:33:41.040,0:33:47.760

my goodness and um you know April we were having conversations around like should

0:33:47.760,0:33:55.440

we close our doors should we completely pivot
and focus on um a completely different side of

0:33:56.160,0:34:05.840

what we're doing to now um I mean amid what is
looking like potentially another lockdown but um

0:34:06.720,0:34:14.000

now being able to keep our doors open and think
about what programs we can put in place that will

0:34:14.000,0:34:20.560

have more outreach and more impact um all that to
say I have no idea what the future looks like for

0:34:20.560,0:34:27.840

Dirt um I our our biggest goal right now is to
keep our shop open and to keep our programs not

0:34:27.840,0:34:34.880

only alive and surviving but also growing um
in in my heart of hearts I would love to see

0:34:35.840,0:34:42.720

Dirts open up all around the world um and help
other social entrepreneurs um whether you're

0:34:42.720,0:34:48.720

on the spectrum or not or have a disability or
don't open up a small business in their community

0:34:49.280,0:34:56.080

that is opening up their doors on day one
with people with disabilities in mind um

0:34:56.640,0:35:08.000

I had written in a blog post over a year ago now
but if just one percent of all of the businesses

0:35:08.000,0:35:14.400

in the United States committed to hiring just
one person with a disability there would be

0:35:15.280,0:35:21.280

essentially no unemployment rate whereas right now
90 of people with autism are either unemployed or

0:35:21.280,0:35:28.800

underemployed so um it honestly does not take
a whole lot to make a big change we just need

0:35:28.800,0:35:36.400

more employers committed to um doing something
so simple like changing the language in their

0:35:36.400,0:35:42.560
in their ads

Bonnie: yeah and and it shows like just a
little bit you know just a little bit of work if

0:35:42.560,0:35:46.960
everyone did just a little bit of work towards
this more like inclusive I would get rid of the

0:35:46.960,0:35:53.600
unemployment rate like

Lauren: exactly exactly

Bonnie: Robby
what do you look forward to most day-to-day

0:35:53.600,0:35:58.240
working at Dirt? kind of what are your hopes and
plans for the future too?

Robby: what I look forward to

0:35:58.240,0:36:08.000
in the future I'm looking forward to seeing new
faces on on our team and possibly more places to

0:36:08.640,0:36:17.120
open up and have more um people on the spectrum
learning and get their jobs and hopefully they

0:36:17.120,0:36:23.760
learn to live to work independently and they
can make enough to earn their own homes and

0:36:24.400,0:36:30.080
hopefully one day they'll know what
it's like to know what it's like to uh

0:36:31.040,0:36:39.280
work hard and keep going until they uh make
enough to start their own retirement funds

0:36:39.280,0:36:46.160
and so on and so forth
Bonnie: awesome awesome both
beautiful visions that you guys both have

0:36:46.160,0:36:51.440
I love it so much all right so those questions
for both of you guys is there anything else we

0:36:51.440,0:36:58.240
haven't touched on that you want listeners to

know?

Lauren: if you are in Colorado and have access to

0:36:58.240,0:37:03.360

coming to our shop we would love to serve you a cup of coffee and have a conversation with you

0:37:04.160,0:37:10.880

otherwise people can always support us by ordering coffee or our awesome breakfast burritos through

0:37:10.880,0:37:16.640

delivery app or donating online we have Colorado gives day coming up which is a big day for us

0:37:17.280,0:37:22.560

we haven't been able to have any of our in-person fundraisers this year which is typically

0:37:22.560,0:37:28.080

where we raise enough money to kind of pursue that next step in our vision and

0:37:28.080,0:37:34.240

in our mission and to keep our programs alive and thriving so um if if people are able to support

0:37:34.960,0:37:39.920

through any of those ways we would love for that to continue to happen

0:37:42.160,0:37:48.320

Bonnie: awesome I'll make sure the link link to things in the show notes for sure

Lauren oh thank you

Bonnie: and you guys

0:37:48.320,0:37:52.640

you guys had the tip jar like the online tip jar this year with the pandemic right?

0:37:53.360,0:38:00.960

Lauren: yes so while we were closed we had an online tip jar which would people would be able to donate to

0:38:00.960,0:38:07.040

directly um or virtually and then all of those were distributed to our team during

0:38:07.600,0:38:11.680

during the time that they weren't able to work inside the shop

Bonnie: that's awesome

0:38:11.680,0:38:16.560

yeah that's a perfect like pivot example and kept the coffee themed I remember seeing that and I

0:38:16.560,0:38:22.000

was like oh that's awesome

Lauren: oh good good

Bonnie is there

anything else you want listeners to know Robby?

0:38:22.000,0:38:30.080

Robby: yes uh to my family and friends that follow me on social media if you ever in Colorado or in the

0:38:30.080,0:38:38.400

Littleton area come by Dirt Coffee and say hello I would love to see a familiar familiar face and

0:38:38.400,0:38:44.960

off for you uh one of our best beverages and yeah I'd like to see all my friends drop by and say

0:38:44.960,0:38:50.880

hello and have a good drink for me

Bonnie: yeah that's

awesome Robby did you want to plug your video

0:38:50.880,0:38:57.200

production company or freelancing?

Robby: yeah I've been

yeah I've actually thought about starting my own

0:38:57.200,0:39:03.680

film production company for a long time it's I'm still in the process of brainstorming ideas of

0:39:04.800,0:39:10.960

where and when it started yeah it's my dream goal is to become a movie director and make

0:39:10.960,0:39:17.840

hot uh blockbuster movies

Bonnie: that's so cool I love

that

Lauren: Robby are you are you available for hire for

0:39:17.840,0:39:24.480

freelance videography though?

Robby: yeah if you reach

out to me I'll be available whenever

Bonnie: all right

0:39:24.480,0:39:30.960

and how can listeners find out more about Dirt and

reach both Robby for freelancing and Lauren

0:39:30.960,0:39:39.200

for any questions?

Lauren: right so a perfect way to reach
Dirt is through our website www.dirtcoffee.org

0:39:40.000,0:39:45.280

and we also have a contact us button that
links directly to our emails and can come

0:39:45.280,0:39:51.280

to us

Robby: if you want to reach out to me and get
more information about my videos you can check

0:39:51.280,0:39:56.960

out my YouTube channel it's Robby Chaney and
you can check out some of my most viewed videos

0:39:57.760,0:40:05.040

and if you'd like to reach out to me I'm also
on um facebook twitter instagram and linkedin

0:40:05.040,0:40:09.600

Bonnie: I will get those in the show notes cool well
thank you both so much for coming on today

0:40:09.600,0:40:16.080

this has been awesome learning more about Dirt and
all the employee opportunities and the community

0:40:16.080,0:40:21.120

that you guys are building with coffee which who
doesn't love coffee I guess some people don't but

0:40:21.120,0:40:26.720

there are other drinks too I'm sure on the menu
so there's a drink for everybody at Dirt and um if

0:40:26.720,0:40:33.760

you're in the Colorado area uh please consider uh
stopping by or like we said supporting supporting

0:40:33.760,0:40:38.480

Dirt for our listeners here but yeah thank you
guys so much today for coming on

Lauren: thanks for

0:40:38.480,0:40:44.800

having us

Robby: yeah thanks for having us

Bonnie: wasn't that an
awesome conversation with Robby and Lauren? I've

0:40:44.800,0:40:52.080

really enjoyed hearing all about the Dirt Coffee
kind of origin story and really the community

0:40:52.080,0:40:57.600

that they've started to cultivate together
which is a community of inclusion that really

0:40:57.600,0:41:02.560

builds um positions around the strengths of
their employees whether or not they have a

0:41:02.560,0:41:08.800

disability and having those flexibility in those
positions is a great takeaway for you if you're

0:41:08.800,0:41:13.760

looking to employ people with disabilities
things to keep in mind are looking for those

0:41:13.760,0:41:18.000

flexibilities looking for those strengths and
then even starting with your job ads and your

0:41:18.000,0:41:25.200

applications and reevaluating and reviewing the
language that you use is it accessible for all

0:41:25.200,0:41:30.880

kinds of people to take the job another thing
that we discussed that I wanted to talk about

0:41:30.880,0:41:36.160

are intersections in the disability community
which was touched on briefly in our conversation

0:41:36.160,0:41:42.400

and I thought that Lauren put it really nicely
and that it's something to definitely consider

0:41:42.400,0:41:47.440

I think a lot of times when we think about
people with autism whether it's conscious or not

0:41:47.440,0:41:53.360

we're thinking of white people with autism and to
remember that there are these intersections there

0:41:53.360,0:41:59.040

you know are Latinx people with autism there are
Autistic Black people and that there are these

0:41:59.040,0:42:05.120

intersections of different communities where they might have things affecting their lives um that

0:42:05.120,0:42:11.440

are not just their disabilities so that creates a more um complexity on the different issues

0:42:11.440,0:42:18.880

and obstacles that they face in life and how um as we can we as employers as a community as people

0:42:18.880,0:42:24.240

how can we make things more accessible especially for these people that have these intersections and

0:42:24.240,0:42:28.560

their identities so that we can continue working towards inclusion and entourage

0:42:29.120,0:42:33.360

and towards just yeah a more inclusive world more inclusive work environment

0:42:33.920,0:42:38.880

one of my favorite points from the conversation too was that if just one percent of business

0:42:38.880,0:42:44.480

owners employed one person with a disability then the unemployment rate for people with disabilities

0:42:44.480,0:42:50.080

would be non-existent it shows how we each can make such a change even in a world where it feels

0:42:50.080,0:42:55.440

like we are not making those changes every one of us can work towards small movements of change that

0:42:55.440,0:43:00.880

can build towards a better community and move towards bigger movements of change as well too

0:43:00.880,0:43:05.680

and I really feel like Lauren um and Robby both discussed a lot of things that can give

0:43:05.680,0:43:11.680

employers a lot of ideas on where to start with making employment more accessible for individuals

0:43:11.680,0:43:18.480

and Robby's story was awesome how his position was completely built around him and how he is now

0:43:18.480,0:43:24.320

this crucial part of the Dirt Coffee community
and that you know he talked about working hard

0:43:24.320,0:43:29.360

and finding a job that you enjoy and how important
that is to him and how important that can be for

0:43:29.360,0:43:34.400

anybody and anyone with disabilities so thanks
again for to Lauren and Robby for coming on and

0:43:34.400,0:43:40.160

sharing their stories and their information their
life experiences their knowledge and helping us

0:43:40.160,0:43:46.240

make a more inclusive work environment and world
and please like we said if you are in the Colorado

0:43:46.240,0:43:52.480

area consider stopping by Dirt and um supporting
them or consider supporting them online Colorado

0:43:52.480,0:43:57.600

Gives Day is coming up I believe it's December 8th
and that's a day where you can give to different

0:43:57.600,0:44:03.920

Colorado organizations and what would be better
than Dirt Coffee this non-profit that is creating

0:44:03.920,0:44:09.760

job opportunities for everybody that is creating
a more inclusive environment where people are more

0:44:09.760,0:44:14.800

exposed to people who are different than them
in these positive experiences please consider

0:44:14.800,0:44:20.160

supporting or giving to them check them out
at dirtcoffee.org check out all the show notes

0:44:20.160,0:44:26.160

for their information and for Robby's freelancing
information as well too and yeah definitely check

0:44:26.160,0:44:31.600

them out so to end today we're gonna end the way
we always do with the outline of the session plan

0:44:31.600,0:44:35.200

of the month I know this episode's coming out after Thanksgiving but there's definitely things

0:44:35.200,0:44:40.480

in here I think that can be done during the fall in general versus the hello song then it

0:44:40.480,0:44:45.120

is a movement activity to "Thank You for Being a Friend" by Andrew Gold then it's gratitude

0:44:45.120,0:44:52.000

drumming songwriting composition um then next would be a relaxation sensory activity with

0:44:52.000,0:44:56.560

leaves that you can bring inside crunching them and feeling them from outside

0:44:56.560,0:45:02.400

to "Autumn Leaves" and then a goodbye song so for a breakdown of this session plan you can become

0:45:02.400,0:45:09.520

a patron on [patreon.com/navigatingadulthoodandidd](https://www.patreon.com/navigatingadulthoodandidd) for five dollars a month and

0:45:09.520,0:45:17.440

you can gain access to a breakdown of this session plan as well as access to episodes one

0:45:17.440,0:45:26.640

week early and free other resources access to our monthly intervention swaps and join our Navigator

0:45:26.640,0:45:31.520

Facebook community offer so you can get all that for five dollars a month and get a breakdown

0:45:31.520,0:45:37.680

of how I would implement these interventions in more detail along with any visuals or extra links

0:45:37.680,0:45:42.640

um that can help support the session plan as well too thank you so much for listening other ways to

0:45:42.640,0:45:47.200

support this podcast include sharing it with somebody you think would like it reviewing us on

0:45:47.200,0:45:54.320

iTunes and just continuing to tune in thank you so much for listening I will catch you guys next time

0:45:56.720,0:46:00.000

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0:46:00.000,0:46:13.840

LLC with content and music produced
by Bonnie Haupt thanks for listening