

ERNEST JACKSON

Testimony: Ernest Jackson

My story is one of growth, grit, and a deep commitment to helping others rise. I am a bold advocate, innovative leader, and passionate changemaker with over 20 years of experience championing marginalized communities, most notably adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD). As an autistic professional and the proud parent of a child with autism, I bring a deeply personal, empathetic lens to my work, one rooted in lived experience, unwavering commitment, and transformative vision.

Currently, I serve as the Director of Mentorship and Professional Growth at Chimes. I have led initiatives to reimagine what workforce development can be. I designed and rolled out a comprehensive onboarding system consisting of staff training protocols, a 180-day peer mentoring program, and the launch of a Leadership Development Academy. Each program is crafted to elevate staff performance and deepen connection to person-centered, mission-driven care.

Throughout my career, I have held roles ranging from a Direct Support Professional to high-impact leadership roles overseeing multiple programs, including day and residential services, and as a Director of Operations, all with an emphasis on person-centered and community-based engagement initiatives. Whether increasing program enrollment, boosting satisfaction scores, or inspiring organizational culture change, my leadership is always rooted in people-first values and a belief in the power of inclusion.

A graduate of the Leadership Baltimore County Class of 2025, I am widely recognized for my servant leadership, team-building excellence, and ability to cultivate strong partnerships across sectors. My driving mission? To build communities where every person, regardless of ability, circumstance, or situation, is seen, heard, and valued.