

## TGI College Engineering student

16 years old

“Engineering has always been my dream. I love working with my hands, figuring out how things fit together, and solving problems. I would really like to work for Aurigny. I love the idea of making a difference with a big company. But sometimes, just getting through the day is the hardest problem of all.

I live with my Mum who is a single parent. She is amazing and has two jobs just to make ends meet. But in spite of this, there just isn't enough money to go round. Some days, I walk out of the door without breakfast because I don't want to take any of our precious food and tell her I'm not hungry if she says anything.

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By lunchtime, my stomach is twisting, but I don't have any money to buy anything to eat. That's just how it is, there really isn't enough to go around. My younger brother and sister need more stuff than me. It used to be worse. I'd sit in class, head down, trying to focus on my work, but all I could think about was how hungry I was. How tired I felt. Some days, I'd just leave college early and make an excuse - I couldn't concentrate, so what was the point?

College has helped. When my Progress Coach stepped in, they saw what was going on - maybe they noticed the way I kept my head down, the way I stopped showing up some days. They gave me a lunch card. It might not seem like much, but to me, it was everything. It meant I could eat. It meant I had one thing in my day I didn't have to worry about. It meant I could sit with my mates at lunch instead of avoiding the café.

And it's made a difference, but I know it can't go on forever; College isn't made of money. But for now I actually finish my College work. I don't leave early anymore. I feel more in control of things. And when I go home, I know I've had a proper meal and can tell Mum if she asks me.

Then there is the kit too but College helped me and allowed me to borrow the steel-toe-capped boots I need for the workshop - they are a bit tight to be honest, but I don't want to say... but I just knew there wouldn't be any money at home for me to have a new or even a second-hand pair, so I didn't even ask.

I'm still working towards my dream. I don't know what the future holds yet, but I do know this: without support, without that help when I have needed it - which might seem small but has been huge to me - I might not still be here at College. And that's a fact.”