

Employment and Training Administration
United States Department of Labor



Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act **STATE SUCCESS STORIES**

Program
Year
2018



TABLE OF CONTENTS



Foreword	1
Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act Adult Program Stories	2
Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act Youth Program Stories	13
Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act Dislocated Worker Stories	27
Other Workforce Program Successes	37

FOREWORD



The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) requires states to submit annual reports highlighting the success and challenges of the workforce development system. As businesses and workers across the U.S. struggle to remain competitive in the global economy, American Job Centers help job seekers access and prepare for employment, as well as match employers with the skilled workers needed. Individuals struggling with social, economic, or personal barriers receive customized services, such as job search assistance or training, in their efforts to become self-sufficient. This report highlights those success stories and provides valuable examples of how states are implementing WIOA to help job seekers gain employment.

These success stories are excerpted directly from the Program Year (PY) 2018 State's WIOA Annual Report Narratives and may have been minimally edited for clarity and consistency. The full Annual Report Narratives may be found on the U.S. Department of Labor's Employment and Training Administration website at: <https://www.dol.gov/agencies/eta/performance/results/annual-results>.

These success stories highlight WIOA Title I programs, including Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth programs. Since WIOA serves both the job seeker and the employer, this report captures the successes from both customers. Employer stories highlight how they strengthened their competitiveness by working with their local workforce board to identify, build, strengthen, and retain a skilled workforce.

Individual's stories highlight how services, such as industry-specific training, employment assistance and placement, certification programs, and vocational rehabilitation, helped them gain economic self-sufficiency. There are several programs that work specifically with certain populations such as veterans, individuals with a criminal history, and individuals struggling with substance use. With such a variety of success stories, it is clear that states are leveraging the diversity, innovation, and flexibility of the types of programs and services that they offer to address the needs of the local community.

The U.S. Department of Labor is pleased to provide these success stories as illustrations of the positive impacts that federal investments have had on the nation's economy and on the nation's economy and workforce.

WIOA Adult Program Success Stories

ALABAMA



■ At the time of enrollment, **Victoria** was a single parent of three small children and recently divorced. She was not allowed to work outside the home during her marriage and had no verifiable work history. Child support was her only source of income. After her divorce, she knew she had to return to school to support her boys. She completed her pre-requisites using her Pell Grant, but she soon exhausted her Pell Grant after completing the second semester of nursing because she had attended the University of Alabama Birmingham after high school but did not earn a degree. She did not know if she would be able to finish school because she did not have the financial aid she needed. A classmate referred her to the Alabaster Career Center to see if she qualified for WIOA. She graduated from Jefferson State with her associate's degree in Nursing and immediately went to work with her temporary license in St. Vincent's Surgical Intensive Care

Unit, earning \$23.00 per hour. She passed her State Board Exam one month later and is still employed as a nurse.

■ **Ms. Abbett** worked in the police reserves as a volunteer for the town of Jacksons Gap before hearing of an open position with the Dadeville Police Department. After being hired for the City of Dadeville, she was placed in on the job training (OJT) on February 4, 2019 as a Patrol Officer trainee making \$11.00 per hour. She completed her OJT on 7/27/19 and is still employed with the City of Dadeville at the current wage of \$15.40 per hour.

Officer Abbett is the first female police officer for the Dadeville Police Department and is being trained to work with the local Department of Human Resources to respond to domestic violence cases and cases with children. She hopes to one day work her way up to Investigator.

ALASKA



■ In June 2018, **Megan** was referred to Career Support and Trainings Services by Kawerak Incorporated and the Alaska Vocational Technical Center (AVTEC). An Employment Services Technician determined Megan eligible for WIOA adult services and enrolled her on July 1, 2018.



“My name is Megan Penayah. I come from the beautiful native village of Savoonga. Living in my village, I noticed how few jobs were available for those who were

responsible and hard-working and how none of those jobs offered much hope of helping me support my large family. I had dreams of finding better work; however, those dreams always

seemed part of a future I could not afford to find. I had worked for years taking a couple college classes a year through a subsidized program the local school district offered with hope of a better and more stable job at the end of a 10-year plan. Then I was told about AVTEC, a school which offers to teach Alaskan people from rural villages with families skills for the current job market and help place students in jobs statewide while also providing housing specific to my situation allowing me to stay close to the school and still have the room, space, and resources to keep my kids close to me. Everything I had desired was possible and it was only as far away as the money and time it took to move there and attend class. Yet, the possibility of better work and more opportunities still seemed out of reach. With a large family, I was never able to save enough to attend even the most affordable school.

With low hopes, I was encouraged to reach out to the AVTEC financial aid personnel who told me about financial aid I could qualify for, and through AVTEC and a few close friends, I discovered many scholarship and grant applications including one for Career Support and Training Services through the Department of Labor and Workforce Development. My biggest hopes of becoming better trained, more competent, and competitive in a broader workforce had become possible. Through many emails, a few flights, even more calls, and a lot of communication and work I was set up to begin training to be a medical administrative assistant at AVTEC. It was both terrifying and thrilling, and I was and am still more grateful than words can express for all the financial and personal help many were part of giving me from the beginning

of learning about scholarship applications until the day I graduated. Through the generosity and care of those who became a part of my story, I have graduated AVTEC with certifications in the medical administrative assistance field and I have been working at the job I started shortly after graduation at Providence Hospital. I have not only my future, but also the future of my children, my family, and my people through the work and success which are part of my example to them all. I plan to continue learning more with the skills I have gained while going through the processes involved in attending and completing post-secondary school in order to continue becoming a larger support to my family, better at my job, and an inspiration to those seeking a better life in my village.”

ARKANSAS



- **Shanisa Thomas**, a single mother of three, wanted to provide a better life for her family and she was interested in pursuing a career as a Nurse. However, she did not have the financial means to pay for the training.

In May 2017, after she met with a Career Consultant at the Arkansas Workforce Center in North Little Rock to discuss her options, she enrolled in the WIOA Adult Program and began working on her educational training at the University of Arkansas at Little Rock (UALR) to become a Registered Nurse.

Working vigorously and determined to succeed, not only was she accepted into the National Honor Society of Nursing, she also graduated from UALR with an associate's degree in Nursing two years later. Shortly after, she obtained her registered nursing license and began working full time at the Veteran's Administration Hospital in Little Rock making a self-sufficient wage.

In the end, Shanisa was proud of the available resources through WIOA that allowed her to reach her goal in finding a career that she would love and that would allow her to provide for her family.

Hoping to obtain her degree in Nursing and unable to pay for the course herself, single mom Nikeia Talley visited the Arkansas Workforce Center at Benton to discuss potential opportunities available through the WIOA program.

In January of 2019, she enrolled in the WIOA Adult program and received Educational Training Services to assist her with completing her final semester in the UALR Nursing Program.

Despite managing her special needs child's busy schedule and all the demands that come with being a single parent, on May 11, 2019, she successfully walked across the stage at UALR's Commencement Ceremony and received her degree in Nursing.

Upon the successful completion of the State Board Examination, she accepted a job offer and began working at the Saline Memorial Hospital on July 8, 2019 earning a substantial wage which allows her to support her family. When it came to defining her educational and career goals, she took advantage of the support and services that were provided through the WIOA funding.

IDAHO



- A 56 year-old single female enrolled in the Adult program in 2017, **Michelle** was a midwife who had completed several years in a nursing program with 2 years left to get her bachelor's degree. At the time of her enrollment, she was living in a camp trailer and receiving food stamps. At the end of 2018, her daughter-in-law passed away from cancer and she took on more responsibility helping her grandson cope and homeschooling him. With one semester left, and strongly encouraged by her instructor to stay in school, she continued. Her efforts led to her induction into the American Nurses Association Hall of Fame in February of 2019, along with an offer to join the Honor Society of Nursing Sigma Theta Tau. After graduating with an overall GPA of 3.93 in May 2019 and updating her resume, she was hired at the end of the month by Bingham Memorial Hospital, earning \$24.00 per hour with full benefits. No longer on food stamps nor living in her camper, Michelle took her NCLEX and received her license this summer.
- Seani** enrolled in the WIOA Adult program in December 2018 as a homeless, disabled veteran. Pregnant with two children, she was not working and living in a shelter that would allow her only 2 more months additional stay. In addition, the pregnancy required her to have a Caesarean section, meaning she would be unable to work for 6-8 weeks. The local Department of Veterans Outreach Program and her WIOA career planner worked together to find the necessary resources that would assist Seani as she prepared for work after the new baby arrived. Directing her to Idaho Housing and Finance, she qualified for a grant that allowed her to obtain an apartment for her family. In addition, the team secured new baby items for the baby once it was born, as well as having a local car dealership provide her a used van that would fit the entire family. To obtain new skillsets, the WIOA career planner placed her in a paid internship with the Idaho Heart Institute for a period of time before the baby was born. Since then, Seani has had the baby and returned to work. She obtained daycare for all her children and began working full time (32 hours per week) in the Medical Records unit at the Idaho Heart Institute earning \$10.75 per hour and benefits, with a raise to \$11.25 per hour after 90 days.

MARYLAND



- Woodrow** came to the WIOA program after working with an employer for 13 years as an auto glass technician. Woodrow earned a good salary but was without any industry-wide credentials. He lost his job in 2018 and was worried about his ability to make a similar, livable wage because of his narrow skill set. Woodrow enrolled in the WIOA Adult program at The Career Center at Hunt Valley. Hunt Valley Career Consultant, Andrea Fuhrman, assisted Woodrow to develop a comprehensive employment plan with intensive case management. Woodrow received WIOA funding for The Community College of Baltimore County's Commercial Driver's License (CDL) Class A truck driving training and earned his credential in February of 2019.

Shortly thereafter, Woodrow obtained a driving job with a local area employer at a starting salary over 60% higher than his previous employment. This income increase was significant given the short time period Woodrow invested to participate in the WIOA program. It is also important to note that the new job allowed Woodrow to be home every night. Woodrow's involvement with Baltimore County's workforce development services and his new CDL Class A license will keep him employed for years to come.

MICHIGAN



- **Kerstin Cybak** visited the Roseville Michigan Works! Career Center, after being out of work for a few years, when a drastic change in her financial situation suddenly made finding employment a priority. She quickly discovered that her lack of recent work experience and marketable skills were barriers to landing a job. Kerstin knew she needed training to make herself more marketable.



She met with a career planner to determine the best course of action. After some exploration,

Kerstin's interest in healthcare led her to the pharmacy technician program at Macomb Community College. She was able to enroll in the program with WIOA tuition assistance. Kerstin excelled in her classes and completed the certification program. It didn't take long for her to gain a full-time position at a compounding pharmacy at Karmanos Cancer Center.

Kerstin expressed her gratitude for the opportunity: "This is the experience of a lifetime. I am extremely grateful for the help of the Roseville and Warren Michigan Works! offices; especially Christine Rinaldi. I am loving my newfound career. I am looking ahead, and my future is looking bright!"

MISSISSIPPI



- **Megan Brady** walked into the Northeast Mississippi Community College (NEMCC) adult education's Smart Start Pathway Program in the fall of 2017 to begin her educational journey. Like many others, she had dropped out of high school to take care of her family. After nearly ten years, Ms. Brady decided that it was time to get a high school equivalency (HSE). However, she needed help to accomplish her goals. She enrolled in the Smart Start program at NEMCC where she completed the program and earned that, HSE. She also earned a silver level on the National Career Readiness Certificate (NCRC); obtained job skills, work ethics, and college credit.

After meeting with a transitions specialist, Ms. Brady was referred to the MI-BEST program. She completed the team-taught classes with a 4.0 and continued as a full-time student at NEMCC. In May 2018, Ms. Brady was accepted into the Licensed Practical Nursing program, and just two months after that time, she was accepted into the associate's degree Nursing program. Ms.

Brady is in her third semester of nursing school, maintains a 3.7 GPA, is a member of NEMCC's Phi Theta Kappa chapter, and is expected to graduate May 2020.

- **Jennifer Martin** has overcome many hardships in her life. She dropped out of high school during her senior year when her baby girl was born with many health issues. Her family needed her more than she needed an education at that point. During the grieving process following her baby's death, Ms. Martin realized that she wanted the ability to help others to pay back those who had helped her child. Ms. Martin was very nervous about going back to school but contacted the adult education program at Meridian Community College to ask for help. She began the Smart Start pathway program and began taking classes to earn an HSE.

Ms. Martin earned the Smart Start pathway credential in June 2017, the HSE in December

2017, and then enrolled in the MI-BEST Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA) program to continue pursuing her educational goals.

Ms. Martin is currently enrolled in the Emergency Medical Technician (EMT) program and is scheduled to complete the paramedics training in 2020.

- **Brian Daugherty** is an adult learner who returned to Itawamba Community College in

August 2017 to pursue an associate degree of Applied Science degree with a major in Computer Networking. Brian had previously worked in a document processing center and was seeking a more challenging career. Mueller Copper Tubing recruited him through the Careers in Advanced Manufacturing and Technology Apprenticeship Program, which was an opportunity to expand his training in a real-world setting while attending class. Brian graduated in May 2019 and remains employed at Mueller Copper Tubing.

MONTANA



- **John**, a young man determined to get his degree in Petroleum Engineering, came to Job Service Montana (JSM)-Butte in July 2016, out of work and on food stamps. JSM staff co-enrolled John in WIOA Adult/HELP-Link. He received help with enrollment at Montana Tech, career counseling, and financial support as he

progressed through school. In May 2019, John graduated with honors, receiving a bachelor's degree in Petroleum Engineering. He started work with Pioneer Energy Services of North Dakota as an operating engineer with a starting salary of \$70,000 per year. John sent a letter of appreciation to JSM.

NEBRASKA



- On December 6, 2018, **Thomas Romero** attended the Workforce Academy offered in the Greater Nebraska Workforce Development Area while he was incarcerated in the Dawson County Detention Center. During his participation in the workshop, a career planner discussed the employment and training programs offered by Greater Nebraska. Once 67 of the 71 workshop were finished, Thomas requested more information on obtaining his CDL Class A through the Title I adult program. The career planner discussed the requirements and expectations of Title I programs with Thomas and asked him to contact the career planner once Thomas was released from incarceration.

On December 12, 2018, Thomas was released and traveled to the North Platte American Job Center (AJC) to speak with the Re-entry Workforce Coordinator. Thomas advised that he was seeking housing in North Platte to be closer to the AJC. AJC staff escorted him to the Connection Shelter and assisted him with filing paperwork to secure a room while he worked on his employment and training plan. On January 9, 2019, staff referred Thomas to the North Platte Elks Club Employment readiness program where they assisted him with paying for his CDL permit. Thomas passed his CDL physical on February 6 and was awaiting conclusion of his legal issues before starting CDL training.

By March 20, 2019, Thomas had successfully passed 2 out of 3 required tests and was expected to finish within 8 weeks. Thomas had secured a part time position in maintenance at the Ramada Inn and was able to move from the Connection Shelter to a halfway house. On March 26, Thomas successfully completed all requirements and earned his Class A CDL. By May 2, 2019, Thomas contacted his career

planner and informed her that he was offered a CDL operator position with Sysco, earning \$23 per hour, and was working to relocate from the halfway house into his own place. The adult program provided supportive services to assist with the first month's rent. Thomas has been able to cover his housing needs since that time. Thomas is still employed with Sysco and is financially self-sufficient.

NEW MEXICO



- In December 2018, the WIOA Adult Program had the privilege of assisting AerSale Component Solutions (AerSale), a global aviation aftermarket service company in Sandoval County, with the hiring and training of a great employee, **Stephanie**. Not only did the Adult Program assist AerSale in gaining a skilled worker but also assisted Stephanie in finding meaningful work. AerSale had an opening for a Mechanic IV, and Stephanie applied. Although she had two associates degrees in applied science, one in integrated studies and one in aviation maintenance technology, and excelled in school, won aviation awards, and graduated with honors, she had some trouble finding employment due to lack of direct work experience in the aviation industry.

Unfortunately, Stephanie's difficulties finding work lead to six months of unemployment after leaving her student work position with the Aviation Department at Central New Mexico (CNM). During this time, her family was supporting her, and as a single mother of three children, Stephanie really wanted to get back into the workforce and provide for herself and her family. With help from the OJT program, AerSale was able to hire Stephanie, even though she lacked experience in the field. Both Stephanie and her direct supervisor, Dathan Power, have really valued the experience.

Stephanie said that "It is what I want to do and what I went to school for, and I have learned a lot of different things that school didn't teach me." Stephanie has been a great fit for AerSale as well, and Dathan noted that "Stephanie has been a good addition to the company, and she has taken quite well to the job." Dathan mentioned that the industry is working to diversify their workforce, and not many women apply or are hired as mechanics in the aviation field. As Women in Aviation International states, "During the last two decades, the number of women involved in the aviation industry has steadily increased and women can be found in nearly every aviation occupation today. However, the numbers are small by comparison." This is especially true in the aviation mechanic field, as the Federal Aviation Administration Aeronautical Center's 2018 data shows, women only make up only 2.44% of aviation mechanic workforce in the United States, based on active certificates held in the field. After this experience, AerSale is looking to continue with the OJT program to support their growing workforce. They are eager to work with the adult program again to assist them in upcoming hires and promotions as they continue to grow and expand their company in the central region of New Mexico.

NORTH CAROLINA



- **Regina Durham** persevered through serious health issues to obtain employment and training with help from her local NCWorks Career Center. After exhausting her unemployment insurance, Durham recognized that to become reemployed in her field, interior design, she would need additional training, but she would need to find a job to support herself at the same time. Juggling medical treatments and job interviews, Durham completed her computer-aided design training and secured full-time employment in the same month.
- In order to obtain education and career training, **Amy Bryan** enrolled at the Oconaluftee Job Corps center in Cherokee. There, she excelled in the Forestry Conservation & Firefighting vocational training program and completed her high school education. Bryan's extensive training continued at Allegheny National Forest in Pennsylvania and Uwharrie National Forest in North Carolina, which resulted in her being accepted into the Savannah River USDA Forest Service program in South Carolina. Her performance there led to a full-time Forestry Technician position with the federal government. Bryan's hard work and tenacity allowed her to graduate from Job Corps and start a career with opportunities for continued growth.

NORTH DAKOTA



- **Tony** relocated to Williston, North Dakota from Louisiana. He had worked with Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) in the past, as a Donation Attendant for a nonprofit business. He was interested in continuing post-secondary education in the Computer Science field but knew that he would struggle with the general educational requirements associated with the degree. WIOA and VR partnered to work with Tony. When he met with VR staff, he indicated he wanted to work with computers because he was good at it and had completed some education in the field but his only experience working with computers was with his family and friends. Tony and his VR counselor formulated a plan with an employment goal of Computer Repair Technician. Tony knew he would benefit from obtaining an industry recognized certification. VR offered to provide the study materials for the exam, but Tony stated he had everything he needed to successfully study for and complete the certification exams. After dealing with a few barriers and some anxiety, Tony completed two certification exams and demonstrated he had the drive to complete his goal and become a certified Computer Repair Technician.

Next, Tony needed to obtain some work experience so he would be more marketable. Through the WIOA Adult program, Tony was placed in a work experience with a local IT company. The case managers worked with Tony to prepare him for an interview. Because of Tony's anxiety, the business allowed the counselors to prepare him with the actual interview questions and for the potential of needing a break during the interview. On the day of the interview, Tony was extremely nervous, but he was able to complete the interview with just one break. The company was thrilled with Tony and offered the work experience option immediately.

Through patience and encouragement by the company staff and the case managers' encouragement and problem solving with Tony, he improved his skills and confidence during the 90 days on the work experience. At the conclusion of the work experience, the company and the WIOA case manager transitioned Tony to an OJT position as a Service Technician Level 2.

To go from little to no work experience to a full-time OJT in 90 days for someone with an anxiety barrier demonstrates the hard work Tony, the counselors, and company staff put forth. Tony achieved his ultimate Computer Service Technician goal when the company offered him a full-time position with benefits.

- **Jane** is a WIOA Adult participant who learned about the program and came to the American Job Center to see if she would be eligible for services. Jane had moved to North Dakota to be closer to her son but fell on hard times. She lost her job, lost her home, and was living out

of her car and sometimes storage containers during the winter months. She was interested in training for a CNA. She had worked previously in the industry, but her license had expired. It was an occupation she loved and was wanting to get back in.

When she came to the AJC, she said that she felt if she would be able to attend CNA training, it would be the shift she needed to get her life back on track. She was approved for training as a CNA. Shortly after passing the CNA exam, she was hired at a local assisted living facility earning \$18.90 per hour. She was no longer living out of her car and a friend had offered her a rent-to-own home option once Jane got a steady paying job.

When the case manager spoke with Jane during the follow-up service period, there was excitement and confidence back in her voice. This training really did shift her life back on track and Jane has gained the self-sufficiency she had lost.

OREGON



- **Carl** came into the WorkSource Office in Lincoln City in November 2018. He had been working as a cabinet maker with a local company. He liked the work, but the hours for the winter were not enough to be able to support himself. He talked about going back to school and getting his CDL license. Carl first met with a WIOA representative to get information about assistance available through their program. He then filled out all the necessary paperwork to qualify for funding through the program. After meeting with the local community college representative, Carl was discouraged because of the cost of the program and remaining associated costs after the amount of available WIOA funding was expended. At that time, staff explained the SNAP Training and Employment Program and NCRC program to Carl and informed him that, starting in March 2019, he would be eligible as a SNAP recipient for additional funds.

WorkSource Lincoln City was able to assist Carl with his tuition for Tillamook Bay Community

College's program. He was then able to complete his CDL in May 2019. Upon graduation from the CDL program, Carl came in to thank the office for their assistance in helping him obtain his CDL. He said that this opportunity changed his life.

A few months later Carl took a full-time trucking job with a logging company based out of Tillamook. He came into the Lincoln City Office in August to say that his job was so much fun he couldn't believe he was getting paid! At that time, he also notified Department of Human Services Self-Sufficiency programs that he no longer needed SNAP benefits. The opportunity to get this CDL gave this job seeker a new opportunity to pursue a career goal that he had wanted, but was unable to attain without assistance from workforce system partners

- **Gabrielle**, a mother of four, came to WorkSource Oregon (WSO) Klamath to get assistance

searching for work. During the welcome conversation, staff found out she had always wanted to work in the medical field. The customer had a scattered work history because she was always taking jobs to make ends meet, instead of preparing for a career.

WSO staff referred the customer to the WIOA program partner, and the STEP Career Facilitator at Klamath Community College (KCC) to discuss attending short-term training. The customer enrolled in the Medical Assistant program at KCC. Both the STEP Career Facilitator and a WIOA Employment Counselor worked with her.

The STEP program helped pay for Gabrielle's tuition and fees, and the WIOA program assisted with tools and a uniform for the training. Upon completion of training, Gabrielle worked one-on-one with the WIOA Employment Counselor to fine-tune her résumé and apply for jobs. Shortly after meeting with her employment counselor, the customer was offered a Medical Assistant position at a Heart Clinic, and has been working there for almost six months.

- When **Rachel** came to WSO, she was very shy and felt insecure because she had failed her registered nurse exam once before. She was appreciative of everything WSO did to support

her. It was obvious that she felt she was not alone when she left her one-on-one appointments. Rachel was hired as a full-time Registered Nurse in Wilsonville, Oregon. She is receiving \$29.00 per hour. In the one month that WSO has been working with her, the program paid a total of \$150.00 for transportation support, \$205.95 for the Registered Nurse Course, and the cost of two pairs of scrubs. This is a minimal investment for this great opportunity. Today she is beaming with pride and optimistic about her future!

- **Jeff** was an older student when he graduated from Portland State University with his bachelor's degree in Computer Science, and was feeling discouraged when he started at the Able Bodied Adult Without Dependents work program at WorkSource Southeast Portland. They referred Jeff to WorkSource Portland Metro North/Northeast Portland, where Jeff was able to improve his interview technique and build his confidence. Coaching Jeff in self-care while job searching was important to his success, and assistance with transportation costs to attend meetups and interviews helped tremendously. Jeff ended up receiving two job offers to choose from and started working as a software engineer at a major software company in Portland!

PUERTO RICO



- **Erick**, 53-years-old, was referred to the North Central Local Board by the Department of Correction and Rehabilitation Community Program. Erick had his goals very defined: he wanted to complete a credential in Culinary Arts, become a professional chef, and open a restaurant. He was assigned an Individual Training Account in Culinary Arts Training at ICPR Junior College.

In the follow-up, his evaluations show his integration and academic results, and as proof, he was part of the Institution's Honor Roll. Erick became a spokesperson and role model, and he offers his testimony of life as a message of prevention and second chances to students, administrative staff, and the community. Going hand in hand with Erick, the Board offered him a second chance and was a part of his transformation process.

SOUTH DAKOTA



- **Danielle (Dani)** visited the Madison Local Office in November to discuss re-careering. She was employed but did not feel she was on a career path, and her compensation was not adequate to pay her bills. Through an initial assessment, it was determined she was a good candidate for the WIOA Title I Adult Program.

Dani inquired about a job opening at Hyland Machining, a metal fabrication company for over 20 years. The company was looking for machine operators, and the Department of Labor (DLR) Madison Job Service office has a good working relationship with Hyland. DLR was able to make the connection, and Hyland interviewed Dani for an OJT position. Dani was hired and started on November 20 at \$14.00 per hour. The OJT was a success and she finished on December 28.

Dani was employed full-time at Hyland after the OJT, and her wage increased \$ 3 . 0 0 per hour. The owner of the business, Jeff Hyland, said Danielle is a hard worker and is always happy. Meegan, the office manager, says Dani is a very good match for them. Danielle thanked DLR for connecting her with Hyland because her new employment would not have been possible without DLR assistance.

When DLR last heard from Dani, she was working a day shift and supervising another worker but would soon be promoted to night shift supervisor once additional experience on machine set-up was completed. As a machine operator/machinist, Dani is a non-traditional worker.

TENNESSEE



- **Jakob Atkins**, a 31-year old single father of 2 small boys, came to the Stewart County AJC looking for assistance in obtaining employment. Jakob was working part time at McDonald's but not making enough money to provide adequately for his family. The local Highway Department agreed to hire Jakob if he was able to obtain his CDL license. With the assistance of Title I funding, Jakob enrolled in CDL training and commuted over 225 miles every day for a month. While in training, WIOA assisted with transportation and daycare expenses. After completing training, Jakob was hired by the Stewart County Highway Department making \$14.00 per hour. At the end of the 1st quarter follow up, Jakob's hourly wage had been increased to \$16.00 per hour!
- **Stephanie Farmer**, 31, came to the Families First (FF) program with a desire to return to school and improve her life for her and her two young

sons. Stephanie knew that she wanted to enter the healthcare field, and Workforce Essentials (WFE) and Family Focused Solutions (FFS), helped her realize her desire of earning an LPN certificate. Stephanie got put on the waiting list for the Tennessee College of Applied Technology-Paris (TCAT-Paris) LPN class to start in January but, unfortunately, there wasn't an open spot for her. Not to be discouraged, she quickly found a neighboring county that offered the LPN class beginning in May, completing all the necessary paperwork to get financial assistance through WIOA. Unfortunately, Stephanie did not get the letter until the day of a rescheduled, earlier orientation. She called the school and communicated what happened, offering to attend a different orientation or wait for another LPN class if necessary. Impressed with Stephanie's honesty and her ability to stay calm in a stressful situation, the school allowed her to make up the orientation.

Stephanie faced many difficulties and barriers after starting LPN classes, including childcare and transportation issues, as well as the death of a close friend. Stephanie never gave up, and her Career Coach referred her to FFS to work on her barriers. She also received supportive services through WIOA. After graduation, Stephanie passed her licensing exam the first time, and immediately began looking for jobs. She was hired as an LPN, working on the floor of a health and rehabilitation center. Stephanie was then accepted into Jackson State Community College where she will complete the prerequisites that she needs to be accepted into a LPN-RN bridge program. She started taking these

prerequisite classes in August 2019 and hopes to have them completed and be accepted into the LPN-RN bridge program by December 2020. She is excited to work full-time and complete her education and career goals. Stephanie looks forward to being able to provide a stable home for her children through her hard work. Stephanie credits SNAP, FF, Workforce Essentials (WFE), & FFS with offering her opportunities for assistance, education, and motivation to set and reach her education and career goals. Stephanie knew what she wanted to do with her life and through the assistance she got from the State of Tennessee and WIOA, she was able to make those goals a reality.

WYOMING



- **Thomas** was a homeless veteran housed at the Sheridan Volunteers of America (VOA), when he came into the Workforce Center to ask for assistance “finding a job.” He met with the WIOA Workforce Specialist and they began utilizing Wagner-Peyser services to look for employment. During this initial appointment, staff shared information about the WIOA program and scheduled a follow up meeting to have Thomas meet with the Jobs for Veteran State Grant (JVSG) staff. Both staff members partnered together to help Thomas remove his barriers and gain employment.

Thomas was very focused and had the goal of reentering the workforce in the oil and gas industry. Unfortunately, he had many barriers that needed to be addressed as he was searching for a job. The WIOA and JVSG staff worked together to find community resources and if those were not available, WIOA provided services to help Thomas.

Thomas received the following services:

1. Counseling and guidance, job searching appointments
2. Career readiness, resume writing, interview skills, dress for success
3. Supportive services which included car repair

Thomas was looking for employment in the Sheridan/Gillette area. However, he received a call from a company in Texas that offered him a position as a gas plant operator. Thomas was thrilled and accepted the position. Thomas stated he had no way to get to Texas and was trying to see if the Sheridan VOA would assist him. It was through this conversation the Workforce Specialist explained the relocation assistance offered through WIOA. With this support, Thomas remains successfully employed in Texas and is earning over \$35.00 per hour.

WIOA Youth Success Stories

ALABAMA



- **Joseph** had been unemployed for about a year after working at McDonald's. Prior to that, he had attended Coastal Alabama Community College but dropped out due to transportation issues. He admits that he was drifting without a plan for his future. That's when he heard about the WISE program. The WISE program is the Work-Based Industry Soft-skills Education. The Monroeville/Monroe County Community Development Corporation is the fiscal agent and administers the program.

Mrs. Thompson, Executive Director of the MMCCDC and the Monroeville/Monroe County Economic Development Authority, says that individuals like Joseph are exactly who the organization wanted to assist when it wrote the grant. Thompson said, "We target young men and women between the ages of 17-24, who need soft-skills training, basic skills training, and occupational certificates that will assist them with acquiring and retaining a job."

In addition to the classroom training participants in the WISE program work for local employers such as Barnes Enterprises, BD&S Cleaning & Security Service, the Monroeville Senior Center, and Homestead Hospice. "This is valuable work experience for our participants," Thompson added. "I had no idea what I was going to do until I saw a flyer for the WISE program," Joseph said. "I spoke to Ms. Veronica Moore and met with Mrs. Thompson."

"WISE gave me a life; I couldn't get a job because I didn't have any experience." During Joseph's

training period, he worked at Barnes Enterprises. His plan was to get his CDL so working at a transportation company was a perfect fit.

Mr. Kilpatrick, owner of Barnes Enterprises, said, "The WISE program provided my company the opportunity to introduce Joseph to the transportation industry without bearing any of the related employment costs or the normal red tape associated with other training programs. Joseph's entry into our industry after completion of his WISE commitment is a win for our industry as well as for Joseph."

- The City of Livingston had five youth complete Work Based Learning (WBL). **Dominique** is one of them who started April 2019 and completed June 2019. He was then transferred to an OJT contract, which he completed August 2019. He is now a full-time employee with paid time off and benefits. The City Administrator couldn't be happier. WBL is a win-win for youth and local employers. In April 2019, a new production company opened in Sumter County. The first seven employees were WBL youth, funded through WIOA. Five of the seven youth completed 390 hours and saved the company startup costs in excess of \$23,000. The youth were then transferred to an OJT contract, where the company can receive an additional \$12,000 in reimbursed wages. Not only is the company benefiting from this program, the youth are gaining valuable experience and a full-time job.

ALASKA



- **Denali** entered the WIOA Youth program during her transitional phase of treatment for opiate addiction after a year and a half at an in-patient facility. Denali had dropped out of school in the seventh grade due to her addiction. Prior to the WIOA Youth program she had never held a job, had no career direction, and lacked basic adult life skills.

Through a partnership between MYHouse, Nine Star, and Cook Inlet Tribal Council, the Youth program provided transitional housing and peer support to Denali. She enrolled in the Adult Basic Education program and earned her GED, gained work experience training at the MYHouse café, earned her barista certification, and developed positive work skills.

Denali completed management training and is now employed as the sole café manager, responsible for training new interns and operations management.

- A WIOA Youth enrollee for two years, **Nyabony** has worked hard to achieve numerous accomplishments and to lay a foundation for a bright future. Having originally come to the United States as a Sudanese refugee, Nyabony has a strong interest in understanding and addressing social determinants of health, especially for refugee and immigrant communities. She is focused on pursuing a career as a physician. With assistance from the WIOA Youth program, she completed her degree in health sciences from the University of Alaska Anchorage and is now focusing on earning a certified health education specialist credential. She is currently employed full-time by the Area Health Education Center, where she served as a student worker while in the Youth program.

HAWAII



- Youth Program Participant, **Wyatt**, is a resident of Papakolea and is a 2017 Roosevelt High School graduate on Oahu. He showed his determination and focus by graduating, even though he had friends who would constantly not go to school; he decided early on that he would not be a follower. Even at home he was surrounded by examples of a path that he did not want for himself, with his brother and father both being incarcerated at times. Since graduation, he has managed to stay out of trouble and obtained his first official job working at Pacific American Lumber with a connection from an uncle. Unfortunately, it only

lasted a month before he decided that it wasn't for him due to differences with other workers. He jumped at the opportunity to be a part of the youth program after a friend of his told him about the construction training through Building Industries Association (BIA) that was coming up. He enjoyed his training and completed the class on November 9, 2018. After participating in a community service activity working with the maintenance crew, he was offered a position from the owner of the company. He now works for JB Maintenance and makes \$12.00 per hour.

IDAHO



- A 22-year-old without a HS diploma, **Syringa** came into the AJC after she had just lost her job at McDonalds. AJC staff helped her register for work and file an unemployment insurance claim, and then directed her to a WIOA Youth career planner who was able to see her right away. The career planner learned that Syringa had a 7-month-old baby, wanted to complete her GED, and was very interested employment as a baker. A call to the College of Western Idaho Adult Education assessment center indicated that the school had no open slots remaining for testing. However, because of the career planner's efforts on Syringa's behalf, they opened an additional slot to include her in the cohort.

After enrollment in the youth program, she took her first GED test and passed, leading to a well-earned and desperately needed incentive bonus of \$100.00 per hour! Arrangements were made for a math tutor's help in preparation for her final GED exam, which she passed. The career planner reached out to her connections at Albertson's and secured an interview for Syringa. She was hired in the bakery at \$11.00 per hour.

- **Rachelle**, a 22-year-old high school dropout, left school in 10th grade intending to finish school online. Unfortunately, she struggled with online classes and did not complete that program. She had previously worked in the retail and food industries, but was unable to find long-term employment. Realizing that her lack of education was likely preventing her from finding better paying employment, she sought to enroll in the WIOA Youth program.

After meeting with Rachelle over the next several weeks, both she and her career planner discussed several options. Rachelle really wanted to get her GED, and look into a potential career as a bookkeeper. She had previously worked well in retail and earned high marks in customer relations. WIOA connected her with North40, a regional retailer, for an internship working alongside the office manager/bookkeeper. Rachelle attended classes at the Lewis-Clark State College Adult Learning Center while participating in her internship. After several months of classes Rachelle successfully passed her GED test. And at the end of her internship, North40 offered her a full time position with benefits.

- Low-income and a single mom, **Niki** was a high-school dropout who worked part time earning only \$9.00 per hour. The baby's father offered no help toward the child's expenses. She wanted to obtain her GED and CNA license as means of improving her situation when she enrolled in the WIOA youth program. She completed both goals successfully and continued with her schooling to gain an LPN license with WIOA's assistance. During that time, she began an internship at Steele Memorial Medical Center after she obtained her CNA license and she was hired after successfully completing the internship. She is now working at Steele Memorial Medical Center as an LPN, receives full benefits, and earns \$16.19 per hour. She plans to continue schooling next fall to become an RN.
- **Rafael** graduated from high school but had low literacy levels and very poor communication skills. After enrollment in the WIOA Youth program, he was placed in a work experience with WICAP, helping to setup computers at all their locations in this area. He did a fantastic job and learned so much about working a daily job – soft skills, like dressing appropriately and interacting with others. The employer liked him so much that, at the end of his work experience, he applied for an open position and was hired as a full-time employee. He loves his job and his work environment, leading him to really come out of his shell. The change has amazed many who have previously known him, noting the progress he has made.

KANSAS



- **The Challenge:** **Allie** attended an alternative school in Iola, Kansas. Allie was very interested in a community service-related field but was unsure where to begin. She had not completed any career exploration or labor market research to really understand what types of opportunities were available to her.

The Solution: Allie participated in the Life Works and A Game workshop with the Youth Career Advisor in Paola. She was able to gain soft skills and improve her interviewing and resume writing skills. Southeast KANSASWORKS assisted Allie with getting a paid internship at Thrive Allen County located in Iola, Kansas. Thrive Allen County is a community resource for Allen County residents. Their goal is to connect people with resources and assist them in any way they can. Allie's title at Thrive Allen County is Executive Intern, she assists with various projects and runs the social media platforms for Thrive Allen County.

The Outcome: Allie has had an excellent experience working at Thrive Allen County as a paid intern. The staff at Thrive Allen County are assisting her with learning how a non-profit organization works and what the benefits are for the community. Allie's supervisor at Thrive said Allie has grown and gained so much confidence and is constantly wanting to learn more skills. Allie has become the lead staff in the communications department and has become an accomplished speaker and gifted writer. Allie has a few more months before her paid internship with Thrive Allen County is finished but she is interested in volunteering there after the internship is complete.

MARYLAND



- Rusty** did not like going to high school very much, and he dropped out during his junior year. After working a dead end job for a few years, Rusty engaged with Upper Shore AJC Partners to transform his life. The Maryland State Department of Education’s Division of Rehabilitation Services, Division of Workforce Development and Adult Learning (DWDAL), Upper Shore’s Workforce Scholarship Office and Chesapeake College’s Perkins Career and Technology Education, and the Chesapeake College Foundation all had a role in the transformation. Rusty’s first interaction with the AJC was the pursuit and completion of his Maryland High School Diploma through the National External Diploma program.

Now that Rusty had his diploma, the Division of Rehabilitation Services and the Upper Shore Workforce Scholarship Office worked with Chesapeake College’s Career and Technology Education staff to enroll him in a welding program. DWDAL worked with Rusty to help him get a job with a local company using his developing welding skills. The Chesapeake College Foundation supplied scholarship funding that was blended with WIOA funding so that Rusty could attend class at night while working during the day.

Rusty illustrates what happens every day in the AJCs—partners work together to find a way to say “yes,” and “yes” leads to success

MICHIGAN



- Jeremiah Herp** faced many challenges in his life, starting with the death of his birth father during middle school and developing a mental impairment that impeded his confidence. His family struggled financially, impacting Jeremiah’s ability to see himself as someone who could be successful.



After Jeremiah immersed himself in the Jobs for Michigan’s Graduates (JMG) program and became the 2017-2018 Career Association Secretary at Escanaba High School, he felt that he could be successful. He discovered his passion to become a chef and decided to pursue this career path after participating in every Talent Tour and volunteer opportunity that JMG offered.

Jeremiah participated in a work-based learning experience through Michigan Works! as a Youth LEGO Robotics Camp Leader at M-TEC, to continue building his confidence and workplace skills.

As a senior in high school, he improved his GPA from a 2.5 to a 3.1. He graduated with his high school diploma in May of 2018. With assistance from his Talent Specialist in navigating the financial aid processes, Jeremiah was accepted into Northern Michigan University’s Hospitality and Tourism Management program the Fall of 2018.

- Due to some poor decisions **Daniel** had made in the past, he was having trouble getting a job. He looked to Michigan Works! Young Professionals, in hopes of turning his life around. He shared with staff, “I am honest and check yes to the question, “Have you ever been convicted

of a felony?" and I feel like I am automatically disqualified before I am given a chance. I have applied for everything from factory work to cart wrangling and it is always the same answer-No."

Over several weeks, Daniel attended job readiness workshops, created a resume, job searched, submitted applications, and worked with the Placement Specialist in an effort to obtain employment. In the meantime, Daniel's resume was submitted to Blue Water Habitat for Humanity for their construction team. He was hired for a 400 hour Paid Work Experience (PWE) as a construction laborer.

Daniel gained work skills during the PWE and showed immense improvement between his first and second job evaluations. He learned to manage his time effectively, become more hands-on and interactive with the team, and ask questions when necessary. Habitat for Humanity taught Daniel how to build a home from the ground up as well as framing, rough carpentry, and finish work; as well as what it took to work efficiently as part of a team.

Successfully completing the PWE and having gained new skills, Daniel still found his background to be a roadblock to employment. However, the Placement Specialist came across an OJT opportunity that he thought might be a great fit for Daniel with RDM Enterprises.

Since Daniel had mastered time management and multi-tasking, and had built a strong work ethic during his PWE, he had transferable skills to offer RDM Enterprises. He was hired as a Press Machine Operator under an OJT contract with training funded through the WIOA. Daniel completed 480 training hours and remains employed with RDM Enterprises.

When the Career Development Facilitator checked in with Daniel last month, the twenty-two-year-old said the job was "better than ever! I am finally on the right track!" Daniel's patience, commitment, and his good attitude helped moved him forward and got him back on track toward the life he wants.

MINNESOTA



- **Bianca** came into youth services through the Minnesota Youth Program in the summer of 2018. As the year progressed, she was identified as a candidate for the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) Youth Program. Bianca is 14 years old attends 8th grade at Frazee High School. She enjoys working with kids, so working in the Latch Key after-school program was a perfect fit! Bianca started working with the kids in activities, providing snacks and monitoring for safety. She has very much enjoyed working with the kids, is very engaged in activities, and interacts with the kids well. She is a self-starter, initiating snack preparations, clean-up, and transition onto the next activity. Bianca's worksite supervisor completed the work evaluation; she scored strong in areas of Relations, Work Site Appropriateness, and Safety. She did well in reliability, problem solving, communication, productivity, and accuracy. Bianca did a great job demonstrating a good work ethic.

In the areas of Math and Reading, she increased 2 ½ grade levels. Her teacher reports that she stays on task and never has behavior issues. Bianca is very involved with her youth group, participates in dance, and her future goal is to be an art teacher.

- **Candace** came to the TANF Youth program at Rural MN Concentrated Employment Program (CEP) the summer after her 11th grade year at Cass Lake Area Learning Center (ALC). She had been missing a lot of school and hanging out with the wrong crowd. She had never had a job before, and received training on how to develop skills for work and how to interview for a job. Her Youth Counselor connected her with the Boys and Girls Club of the Leech Lake Area and she interviewed for and received a work experience position as a Junior Staff member. She worked 29 hours a week during the summer and was able to save some money from her earnings.

Her counselor walked her through the results of her first performance review to help her learn how she could improve her skills. She stopped hanging out with the friends who were bad influences so she could be successful at school and work. She is now in 12th grade at Cass Lake ALC and will graduate this year. In October 2018, she was hired as a part time employee of the Boys and Girls Club, working about 15 hours a week as Program Staff for the club in Cass Lake. She is in charge of the volunteer staff and junior staff employees. She lives with her mother and siblings in Cass Lake and has applied to Leech Lake Tribal College where she plans to study early childhood education next school year.

- **Megan** is a junior at the Minnesota River Valley Education District (MRVED) Alternative Learning Center in Montevideo, MN. She was running into barriers with transportation to be able to get to and from work at her job as a cashier in Walmart. She was interested in earning her driver's license to address her transportation barrier but did not have enough money to pay for the training by the registration deadline. While Megan was working with the PIC for assistance earning her driver's license, she learned of the Nursing Assistant Career Pathway course that was going to be held through PIC, MRVED, Adult Basic Education, and Minnesota West Community and Technical College. Megan recently attended the Nursing Assistant training and has now successfully passed her examination and has obtained her Minnesota Nursing Assistant License. She is very excited and has applied for a Certified Nursing Assistant position at a nursing home in her hometown and is really hopeful she gets the job. She enjoys being with people and helping them. In addition, Megan passed and obtained her Minnesota driver's license to help with her transportation issues.
- **Alana** began working with youth staff in September 2017. Alana had goals in mind when she came to the program and has constantly kept the ball rolling and has never let her momentum drop. In addition to caring for her daughter Tatiana on her own, Alana has earned her driver's license, earned her GED, secured daycare after searching intensively for many months, accepted full time employment with Divine Providence in Sleepy Eye, MN as a Nursing Assistant and completed her CNA certification which was sponsored by Divine

Providence. Alana is now earning a livable wage and is no longer receiving public assistance. Alana always looks forward to days off that she can take her daughter outside and do other fun activities together. Alana is working hard gaining experience in her field and may look into pursuing LPN training in the future.

- **Page** is a 22-year-old single mother of one. She has her high school diploma and some past work experience, but has been unsure of what career field to go into. She was hoping to work in an office setting helping others so she was placed in a TANF Youth work experience through WDI as a Front Desk Assistant. Page started in early October and has excelled in learning new skills over the course of her work experience. She has significantly improved her typing speed and her ability to use Microsoft Word. She has helped clients with resumes and applications and they have shown much appreciation for her assistance. Page reports that this job with a consistent daily routine has helped her to "smooth out" some of the past difficulties with daycare and has greatly improved her budgeting and time management skills. Page says that her favorite thing about working there is that "It doesn't feel like work. It's a great environment and everybody is friendly."
- **Keyira** has been a student in the Pathways to Success Program since July 2018. She entered the program to obtain credit toward high school and learn more about career pathways while simultaneously working towards graduation. Keyira is a very motivated self-starter and displayed this when she completed a Career Readiness Seminar credit within her first month of attending Pathways. Keyira then pursued an internship through Hired and the TANF Youth Program at Four Directions Child and Family Center as a Teacher Aide. She has always been interested and passionate about working with people, and enjoyed her experience working with young children. Keyira received glowing reviews from her internship site; she was reliable, engaged well with the children, was a team player, and maintained a positive attitude. Keyira completed her internship in December 2018 and continues to work with the Pathways program on college and career readiness. She recently was accepted to Minneapolis College, and started her first semester as a Psychology Major in January 2019.

MISSISSIPPI



- Kind, respectful, and hardworking are words that her teachers use to describe **Kimberly Ramirez**, an English Language Learner student at New Albany High School. Miss Ramirez worked hard but struggled to score well on the required standardized state tests. Miss Ramirez was recommended to the Gateway youth program by her career and technical teacher who saw this as an opportunity to become proficient in English and an opportunity to learn about dental care - a field that Miss Ramirez was interested in. While in the Gateway program, Miss Ramirez earned a Silver level score on the National Career Readiness Certificate and was placed at Perkins Dental for an internship where she trained in office work and patient care. Miss Ramirez graduated high school in May 2019 and is well on her way to becoming a certified, skilled professional in the field of dentistry, thanks to the Gateway youth program, Perkins Dental, and Dental Assisting Academy.
- **Joshua Witty** was enrolled in the WIOA Gateway Youth Program and showed an interest in advanced manufacturing. He was a high school graduate who lacked work experience, communication skills, and essential job skills. Mr. Witty attended all the essential job skills and work ethics training classes, earned a Silver level score on the National Career Readiness Certificate, and was scheduled for two interviews at manufacturing facilities for the paid work experience segment of his training. Mr. Witty chose to complete the paid work experience at the Allied Group in Water Valley where he practiced the skills he had learned. The Allied Group was impressed with Joshua's work ethic and hired him as a full-time employee at the end of the paid work experience. He plans to attend evening training in welding to further his career opportunities.
- **Jeffrey Earnest's** journey is a great example of having and working an Individual Employment Plan. He wanted to be a registered nurse but had no idea how to get there. Mr. Earnest began his career path in the medical field by earning a high school equivalency in 2011. After being laid off from his job at a tire store in 2012, he enrolled in the Counseling to Career) (C2C) Youth program where he completed a paid work experience and gained full-time employment that would provide for his immediate needs. Mr. Earnest completed Phlebotomy training in 2013. From August 2015 to August 2017, Mr. Earnest completed the LPN program at Itawamba Community College. Mr. Earnest began classes to become a registered nurse in the Fall of 2019 while working part-time as an LPN. Thanks to WIOA assistance, the C2C program, and a working plan, Mr. Earnest will soon reach his goal of becoming a registered nurse.

NEW HAMPSHIRE



- **Briana** joined the Manchester Out-of-School Youth Program in September of 2017. She was frustrated with her employment situation at an area warehouse and felt that her lack of postsecondary education and court history were barriers she could not overcome without assistance. We were happy to help! Alicia, MY TURN staff, and program alumna immediately went to work identifying Briana's goals and barriers. We worked with Briana to get her driver's license reinstated, secure an SR-22 to allow her to drive with the proper insurance, and secure stable housing. We also trained Briana how to address her court history in an interview.

Briana researched careers in Radiology as part of her Career Exploration phase of the program. She learned a lot about the field, and while Radiology remains her long-term career goal, she realized that she needed a shorter-term, more manageable career goal that would allow her to earn a livable wage while she completed the course work necessary to work in Radiology. After learning of our partnership with Phlebotomy & Safety Training Centers and Dartmouth-Hitchcock, Briana settled on a short-term

goal in Phlebotomy. She enrolled in training in February of 2018 and passed with flying colors! In September of 2018, she completed an internship with Dartmouth-Hitchcock where she spent time in their Manchester, Nashua, and Concord locations. She learned a lot and took her new skills and confidence to the American Red Cross in Manchester where she gained full time employment as a traveling Phlebotomist.

After 6 months with the American Red Cross, Briana applied for a higher paying position with a more stable schedule. She is currently employed as a Phlebotomist at Southern NH Medical Center, earning \$17.00 an hour. This summer, Briana enrolled in the Health Sciences program at Manchester Community College and passed all of her courses – quite an accomplishment for a young woman who completed high school in just under 7 years and never thought college would be an option for her! Briana plans to continue working at Southern NH Medical Center while she completes her pre-requisites at Manchester Community College before transferring to New Hampshire Technology Institute to complete her degree in Radiologic Technology.

NEW MEXICO



- In February 2019, 17-year-old **Leonardo** arrived at the New Mexico Workforce Connection Center with his mother. He was a high school student at Sandia High School and struggling to keeping up with homework assignments and classwork. He had basic skills deficiencies in both math and reading. Leonardo was referred to the Youth program during a career fair that he attended at Albuquerque Public Schools. At the time of intake, Leonardo was feeling overwhelmed, carrying the load of his final year of high school and seeking

employment to help out his single mother who has been supporting him and his three siblings for years. His mother had recently lost her second job and was having a hard time making ends meet. She was supportive of his interests to work but shared with the Youth Development Practitioner that she would love to see him attend post-secondary school and pursue a career that he loved. Leonardo faced a couple of very difficult months as he learned to juggle homework, finals, high school football, employment, and bills, all

while helping coordinate drop-off and pick-up times for his younger siblings.

Leonardo was at risk of dropping out of school, but in May 2019, he conquered many obstacles and successfully graduated from high school with a 3.8 GPA. After completing career exploration activities with the Youth Program, Leonardo decided that he would love to pursue a career in the medical field as a registered nurse. The Youth Development Practitioner connected Leonardo to the Healthy Neighborhoods Program, a program/ bootcamp in partnership with the Workforce Connection of Central New Mexico and the University of New Mexico Hospital. He reluctantly agreed to attend because he knew that would mean having to coordinate dropping off his siblings to summer programs and wanted to make sure he would give his best towards the bootcamp. While attending this bootcamp organized by the Career Services staff at the New Mexico Workforce Connection in Albuquerque, Leonardo learned many skills that would help with his future employment and career goals.

He participated in mock interviews, resume writing, career exploration, and work interest assessments. Leonardo toured Presbyterian Hospital, Albuquerque Ambulance, and UNMH. He was able to witness firsthand the amount of hard work and dedication of all medical staff. He was encouraged and convinced that the medical field was the correct career path for him.

Leonardo began his work experience at the University of New Mexico Hospital as a patient transporter. He is now fully trained in HIPPA and is transporting patients with little to no supervision. He continues to excel in all areas and has proven to be a huge asset to the UNMH team. Leonardo has successfully enrolled in post-secondary education classes at Central New Mexico where he will begin his steps towards becoming a registered nurse. He will be the first in his family to graduate from college. Leonardo continues to persevere and maintain a positive outlook on life and is a role model for his younger siblings with a bright future ahead of him.

NORTH CAROLINA



- **Jordan Shoffner**, a participant in the NCWorks NextGen youth program in Randolph County, has experienced homelessness, but that has not kept him from pursuing his education and career goals. He completed his high school equivalency diploma at Randolph Community College and a work experience program with the local Habitat for Humanity

ReStore at the same time. Always willing to help others, Shoffner continues to be actively involved with leadership activities hosted by the NextGen program and in community service. While currently working part-time, he plans to continue his education through the Electrical Lineman program at Forsyth Technical Community College.

NORTH DAKOTA



- **Jordan** was referred to the WIOA Youth program by his Vocational Rehabilitation case manager. He graduated from high school with aspirations of becoming a welder. Jordan was eligible for the WIOA Youth program and was co-enrolled in WIOA and Vocational Rehabilitation.

As an impressive young adult, with short-and long-term personal and professional goals, Jordan and his case manager explored his enrollment into a 9-month Welding Technology program. Jordan was accepted at the community and technical college and began the welding program with funding assistance from both the WIOA Youth program and Vocational Rehabilitation.

While in school, Jordan received WIOA staff assisted service that taught him to proactively research welding employment opportunities for his future. Jordan was enjoying his classes and was learning so much from his internship at a local production company. When Jordan completed his welding program and received his Welding Technology diploma, he quickly found employment just 25 miles from his rural hometown, making \$17.00 per hour as a welder. The WIOA Youth case manager and Vocational Rehabilitation counselor were extremely proud of Jordan. Jordan is also proud of himself, enjoys his job, and hopes to be there a very long time.

- **Anna**, a 24-year-old, was referred to the WIOA Youth program by an American Job Center partner program. Anna and her case manager talked about her goals and Anna shared her hope to one day attain her GED so she could find full-time employment that would provide financial self-sufficiency. She was determined, had an optimistic demeanor and a drive instilled to get her GED. The WIOA Youth case manager referred Anna to the GED instructor at the Adult Education center that same day. Anna began attending GED classes very quickly upon referral and within two months she completed 3 of her 4 GED tests, with support from the AJC partner programs. Anna successfully attained her GED one month later.

With great joy and a more self-assured approach, Anna stopped into the AJC to show her case manager her GED diploma. She had already applied for a job and two weeks later, Anna attained full-time employment at a local grocery store. Through the partner programs' collaborative efforts, Anna was able to use the services available to her and successfully take a step toward self-sufficiency and sustainable employment. She is now able to provide needed support for her children. Anna's case managers are very proud of her accomplishments.

- **Curt**, an 18-year-old, was referred to the WIOA program by his Alternative High School counselor. Curt and his mother met with the WIOA Youth case manager and it was determined that he was eligible for the WIOA program as an out-of-school youth. Curt had taken a year of welding in high school, and he was interested in attending a Combination Welding program offered by a local training provider.

The WIOA Youth program covered tuition, fees, the cost of books, and support services throughout the program period. Curt successfully completed the Combination I program with perfect attendance and he received three American Welding Society (AWS) certifications by the end of the training. Prior to graduation, Curt interviewed with a local agriculture service dealership and was offered employment as a welder. Curt started working for the company at \$19.50 per hour plus benefits and bonus opportunities.

- The WIOA Youth Program partnered with the CREATE Internship Program administered by the Vocational Training Center (VTC) for **Mark**, a 24-year-old with a disability who applied to CREATE for internship assistance. Despite graduating with a bachelor's degree in University Studies, Mark was finding it challenging to obtain competitive employment. He had worked as a dog handler, animal care taker, and sanitation worker prior to participating in the CREATE Internship Program.

Mark shared his passion for history with both of his case managers. The VTC tapped into this passion and created an internship at the county historical museum. Through the WIOA Youth program, a work experience was established so Mark earned wages while on the internship and allowed him to gain skills as a collection assistant. This museum has a vast collection of 400,000 artifacts, many of which

needed identification numbers and entry of these numbers into the data management system. With Mark's assistance, they started an organizational shelf numbering project. In addition, Mark learned the proper way to handle artifacts. When Mark completed his internship, he was hired by the small organization where all members of the staff help with museum operations and special events.

PUERTO RICO



- In Northeast Local Board, **Keyskla**, who lives in a low-income community, Villa Cristiana in the Municipality of Loiza, is presented as a story of overcoming life's obstacles. This 24-year-old woman arrived at AJC, looking for information on how she could finish her high school diploma. This motherless young woman helped her father

take care of her siblings, so she was unable to complete high school. Once she obtained her diploma, she obtained a job at the food company Tony Santana and then received an ITA account to begin post-secondary education. The Local Board expected she would continue her occupational training in Program Year 2019.

SOUTH DAKOTA



- **Hero** completed his high school diploma in August 2018 through Boxelder Job Corps and came to DLR for assistance after graduation. Hero's mother passed away when he was a child and he recently came to the United States with his grandmother from Myanmar (formerly Burma). He learned to speak English but was still struggling to find employment on his own. Hero lacked a stable residence. His goal was to find a career and secure housing so he could take care of his grandmother.

Hero became a participant of the WIOA Title I program and received career exploration services which determined welding could be a field of interest. He improved his application skills by preparing a master application and

resume and completed a mock interview. The WIOA Title I program also helped him with some immediate financial needs.

Hero completed a Terex Utilities application. DLR staff reached out to the human resource contact at Terex Utilities and offered an OJT. Hero started as a 3rd shift welder making \$17.20 per hour plus a 12% shift differential. Evening shifts worked best with Hero's schedule.

DLR staff assisted both Terex Utilities and Hero through the OJT, which better prepared Hero for success. Hero completed the OJT period, earning a Measurable Skills Gain. Hero has plans to purchase his first car so he will no longer need to rely on others for transportation.

TENNESSEE



- **Caleb Harris**, a 2018 WIOA Title I participant in Fentress County, was awarded the First-ever Governor's Choice Award at the SkillsUSA Post-Secondary Welding State Competition. Caleb went on to win the Gold in the Welding Sculpture competition at the National Skills USA Championship held in Louisville, KY. Caleb

worked nights and weekends while attending the Tennessee College of Applied Technology pursuing a welding degree. WIOA Title I funds provided additional assistance with travel expenses, car repairs, and class supplies. Within one week of graduation, he attained full time employment.

UTAH



- **Parker** was enrolled with the WIOA Youth program and has autism. He is very shy and quiet, but also extremely smart and in need of some motivation to reach his goals. He applied to the program to obtain his GED, but his overall employment goal was to become a librarian. He was set up with a tutor to help him prepare to take the GED. After a year of hard work, he obtained his GED. Parker then decided to work on his communication and work skills. In coordination with his vocational rehabilitation counselor and youth counselor, he was set up with Easter Seals, volunteering at an aquarium.

His volunteer work helped him with his social skills. Eventually he felt ready to pursue his dream of becoming a librarian. His counselor and a workforce development specialist helped arrange an internship at a library. He completed his 13-week internship and it went so well they requested to have a four-week extension to the original agreement so Parker could learn additional skills. He completed those four weeks, and they hired Parker on permanently. Parker has made friends and even attends work parties.

WYOMING



■ **Cross** came into the Laramie Workforce Center on June 4, 2019 to inquire about the Laramie Youth READY (Work Readiness, Exploration, Accountability and Development for Youth) program. Cross wanted to find meaningful employment and was seeking assistance from the Laramie Workforce Center. He reported being unemployed and only having worked a short time at a fast food restaurant. We learned Cross was basic skills deficient and had struggled in most academic settings. He shared that he was on probation for some “run ins with law enforcement” and that he had recently moved in with his pregnant girlfriend. When meeting with Cross, we shared the WIOA Program and discussed the 14-Youth Program Elements. Cross was excited to begin and after becoming a WIOA participant, he immediately started the READY Program. Cross received the following services:

1. Financial Literacy Classes and through this, he opened his first checking account. The financial literacy classes covered a variety of money management topics, including setting up a personal budget.
2. Lessons on decision-making & problem-solving, including life skills training which included a parenting class for Cross.
3. Discussions on self-esteem building, positive job attitudes, and work ethic.
4. Interest and aptitude inventories.
5. Resume writing and interview preparation (dress for success).
6. Comprehensive guidance and counseling with his assigned Workforce Specialist.

During these meetings, the Workforce Specialist utilized Wyoming at Work to help Cross job search. Through the workshops, Cross participated in a mock interview with a manager of a machine shop. This manager was very impressed with Cross during his mock interview and asked about WIOA Work Experience (WEX) program. Cross started his Work Experience with AVVID Corp. as a production assistant on July 15, 2019. The Workforce Center also assisted Cross with the required safety gear for this position. Cross did very well with this experience and the manager at AVVID is now working with Cross as a mentor.

Cross recently started taking classes through ACT NOW at Laramie County Community College (LCCC), Albany County Campus, for Certified Production Technician.

Cross remains a WIOA participant and will continue to work with the Laramie Workforce Center until he completes his classes at LCCC and obtains employment.

WIOA Dislocated Worker Success Stories

ALABAMA



- **Gary** is a U.S. Air Force military veteran. He has over 40 years of experience as a mechanical design supervisor for the oil and steel industries. From 1988 to 2016, he worked as a design supervisor for KBR until he was laid off due to downsizing. On September 12, 2016, Gary came into the Alabaster Career Center requesting assistance because he found out that he couldn't re-enter the same line of work that he was doing without a degree. Gary was given local labor market information and it was determined that his previous training would work well in the robotics field so he could work in the automotive industry that is very prevalent in the area. Gary signed up with Lawson State Community College and began his college career on January 10, 2017. Gary performed exceptionally well in college and maintained an overall GPA of 3.5 or above.

However, his educational career didn't go without a few obstacles. Early in the spring, 2018 semester, Gary developed some health issues and the WIOA case manager, Janice, worked with Gary to allow him time to recover from his illness by scheduling a gap in his training program so he wouldn't lose the funding for his training program.

Gary returned to college in the summer of 2018 with his usual vigor and desire to achieve. However, another stumbling block hit in the

Spring 2019 semester when one class that is required for his training program wasn't offered. His ITA had an end date of May 10, 2019. An amendment to extend his ITA time for one semester through the Summer 2019 semester was written, allowing him the needed time to complete his training program.

Gary graduated Lawson State Community College with an A.S. Automotive Manufacturing Technology degree on August 1, 2019 and he also received Cum Laude honors for completing with an overall GPA of 3.554.

- After being laid off from her job, **Ashley** found it difficult to find employment as a software developer. During her job search, she eventually landed an interview with Rural Sourcing, Inc. (RSI). She interviewed for the position and learned via reverse referral about the OJT program. Austin qualified for the OJT program and she was offered employment at RSI.

She is thankful for the opportunity to work for RSI and the ability to enhance her skills as a software developer "The software industry is forever changing, and you can't get stagnant," states Ashley. "Software used in the 80's and 90's is non-existent. RSI encourages you to use their training to elevate your skill set and your career."

ALASKA



- **Anna Hall** came to the Peninsula Job Center and was referred to Career Support and Training Services (CSTS) for assistance to complete her Registered Nursing program at the University of Alaska-Anchorage (UAA).



Anna was working as a CNA at Central Peninsula Hospital, but found herself in need of additional funding to continue her

education. She had successfully completed her prerequisites for the RN program, was ranked number one of thirty-one applicants during UAA's vetting process, and accepted a spot into the associate's of Applied Science degree program for Registered Nursing at Kenai Peninsula College.

Anna, a single mom with three children, recently lost her primary income due to divorce, making her eligible as a displaced homemaker. Anna had already secured Pell grant funding and a grant through the Alaska Post-Secondary Education Program. Additionally, she had extensive support of family members to assist with childcare needs. CSTS assisted with tuition, meals, housing, transportation for out-of-area clinicals, and licensing fees.

Anna was excited to report her employment with Central Peninsula Hospital working as an RN earning \$33.36 per hour in Surgical Services. She stated, "Thank you so much for all of your support throughout nursing school. There is no way I could have made it through school without your help! Now I have a successful job and I am able to support my family. 'Thank you' doesn't seem sufficient for the THANK YOU deserved!"

ARKANSAS



- In January 2019, after being laid off from his job, **Bryan Hjelden** visited the Arkansas Workforce Center in Conway to apply for unemployment benefits. Afterwards, he spoke with Ashlee Ennis, Career Consultant, to discuss possible services through the WIOA Dislocated Worker Program.

He decided that a new career in the transportation industry would provide a steady income and being a truck driver would allow him to provide for his family.

Shortly after, Bryan enrolled in the WIOA Dislocated Worker Program. Being self-motivated and driven to succeed, he began his Occupational Skills Training at Level One Driving Academy in February 2019.

After the completion of his training, Bryan received his certification on April 11, 2019. Shortly after, he obtained full time employment at the City of Conway Sanitation Department as a CDL Driver making \$17.00 an hour.

In the end, Bryan was able to take advantage of the amazing opportunities through the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act and has acquired long-term, sustainable employment in the transportation industry, which is an in-demand industry in Central Arkansas.

HAWAII



- Dislocated Worker Program Participant **Francine** worked for Island Air as one of the human resource managers. When Island Air closed, she lost her job. Francine applied for and was eligible to receive unemployment insurance benefits. She had applied with various organizations for positions in her field for five months with no success, hearing over and over from employers that she was either overqualified or underqualified. She became very discouraged and worried since her unemployment insurance would run out in a month's time.

The AJC case manager informed her that a position became available with the Hawaii Employers Council (HEC) as Registrar, which was not in her field, however, she decided to apply. Although the pay was less than she earned previously, she was willingly to learn new skills and saw a career pathway to move into a supervisory position. She was contacted by HEC, was offered and accepted the position, and was placed in their OJT program (with the AJC) and completed it successfully. She is very satisfied with her new position and is enjoying the work.

- Dislocated Worker Program Participant **Cora Balocan** was laid off from Kmart Stores, which closed its business on the island of Kauai in September 2018. She was a full-time worker as a Data Integrity Associate. She attended a rapid response session. She came to seek employment services at the AJC and learned of the many programs under the WIOA dislocated worker program. Cora was enrolled in basic office skills

training for six weeks. The training included alphabetizing, business writing, computer skills in Microsoft Word and Excel, and learning different office machines. Cora completed and passed the training in December. She was glad to gain new knowledge, especially in the computer programs of Microsoft Word and Excel. Toward the end of the Basic Office Skills training, the WIOA Employment Counselor was in contact with a non-profit agency: Kauai Independent Food Bank (KIFB) for a possible work experience through the OJT. The Executive Director of the agency met with Cora and she was selected to perform the OJT at the KIFB.

Cora started the OJT on January 22, 2019 as an Office Clerk/Warehouse to organize incoming donations, make sure programs are done and ready for delivery, manage volunteers and assign required duties, assist shopping agencies with their needs, and process paperwork and general data entry. She worked full-time and received an hourly wage of \$12.00. She gained knowledge in the data entry to the agency's Excel spreadsheet. Cora completed the OJT program on September 6, 2019 and continued her work with KIFB and received a new job title as an Agency Relations/Volunteer Coordinator. Cora accepted the position and hourly pay increased to \$16.00 as unsubsidized employment. Cora is glad she got the opportunity to gain experience working in the warehouse and office at the KIFB. She is happy to be working full-time and she enjoys working with the community and the volunteers to the food bank.

IDAHO



- **Wendie** came in to the Mini-Cassia Idaho Department of Labor for an RESEA interview after being laid off from her job as work-from-home sales representative. She sold packaged food items to retail stores and scheduled deliveries of the merchandise, all via phone or the Internet. Earning \$21.00 per hour and benefits, she also supervised sales associates in the same line of work. She applied for various jobs, gaining interviews but no offers of employment. She lacked the computer skills needed to compete in the labor market area and took a temporary, part-time, on-call retail position at Walmart for \$ 9.00 per hour. with no benefits.

Discouraged and depressed, Wendie, being over 50, began to feel too old to be a viable labor market competitor since the job search assistance and referrals provided by the local

AJC were to no avail. The solution pointed to updating her computer skills. Once she enrolled in an Administrative Assistant training program, she began to regain her confidence. After completing the program with a few bumps along the way, she applied for an upper management job with the Walmart home office. Chosen for the position, she now travels throughout Washington, Oregon, Nevada, California, Montana, Wyoming, and Utah to plan Walmart store remodels, and stays in the areas to see the projects through to completion, utilizing skills she gained from her recent training. Making \$25.00 per hour. with benefits, she can fly home for the weekend or have her husband fly out to meet her at the job site. Now thriving, she loves her job and is very grateful to the WIOA program for helping her get back to full-time work.

MARYLAND



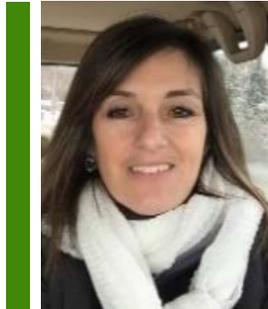
- **Abdelhady** visited The Career Center at Hunt Valley, as he was interested in a career change and inquired about WIOA training. Hunt Valley Career Consultant, Kellie Bass, assisted Abdelhady with career guidance. Abdelhady was employed as a project officer/general engineer with a federal government agency, but his position was eliminated after one year. Abdelhady held a previous contractual position with another federal agency for six years. Abdelhady wanted to pursue a career as a CDL A driver, with the goal of owning a business as a tractor-trailer operator. Kellie enrolled him in

the WIOA Adult program. With the assistance of his Career Consultant, Abdelhady developed an employment plan, which involved occupational skills training in commercial vehicle driving. He successfully completed CDL A training and passed his Motor Vehicle Administration test for tanker endorsement in February 2019. Abdelhady received his CDL A license and currently works for a local area trucking company. Thoughtful, intensive career planning and WIOA training funding helped Abdelhady to reach his destination for a career change and provided a roadmap to his dream career.

MICHIGAN



- **Heidi Truckey** came to the Michigan Works! Service Center in Coldwater after experiencing a downsizing from a company she had been employed at for ten years. Heidi had experience in proteins and agriculture, so staff from Michigan Works! Southwest discussed a variety of positions, including those available at Clemens Food Group. At the time, she was hesitant to get back into supervision but stated



that she would consider it if the right position came along.

Staff submitted her resume to the Food Safety Director at Clemens for a Food Safety Quality Assurance position. Heidi had several interviews and was even invited for a panel interview at the Clemens plant in Pennsylvania. Heidi received an offer for a full-time position as a Food Safety Quality Assurance Supervisor, making \$27.51 per hour.

“From the beginning, my experience with Michigan Works! Southwest was nothing short of empowering and positive,” states Heidi. “With Clemens Food Group coming to Coldwater, it was my ambition to seek employment with a new, successful and growing local business.” It had been several years since Heidi last interviewed for a position. Delighted at the opportunity but nervous at the prospect of an interview, Michigan Works! Southwest set up a series of mock interviews designed to practice and prepare her job-seeking skills. “They were absolutely crucial and helpful during the entire process,” continues Heidi. “Thanks to Michigan Works! Southwest, I am thriving along with my new employer. They were always encouraging and available for questions whenever I needed them. I could never imagine going through this experience without Michigan Works! Southwest and want to extend my sincerest appreciation for what they do.”

MISSISSIPPI



- **David Unruh** had been incarcerated for 27 years and had very limited financial means. A criminal background created many obstacles when he began looking for a job. Most businesses were hesitant to hire him due to his criminal history. However, Mr. Unruh found some job opportunities, but they required a CDL. He contacted East Mississippi Community College (EMCC) to see if they could help in any way. EMCC provided financial assistance through the WIOA program and Mr. Unruh

enrolled in the five-week CDL training program. He passed all the tests, earned a CDL, and was immediately hired by Prestage Farms in West Point as a truck driver.

David encourages anyone struggling in the job market to seek assistance through the WIOA program. He said that he learned from this experience that if you want to work and have a career, anything is possible when you seek out the resources available to you.

NEBRASKA



- **Matthew Hehn** is now a Certified Physical Therapy Assistant. The road to get here was not an easy one for him. At 23 years old, Matthew had a stroke, which left him unable to walk due to lack of feeling on his right side and with aphasia. He completed physical therapy to learn to walk and talk again. It was a long road; but ten years later, he has come a long way. Matthew was employed at Fiserv in Lincoln for eleven years before he was laid off in April 2017. When Matt became Trade certified in the fall of 2017, he had already started working toward his dream and had been accepted into Southeast Community College to attend their program, so he could help others receive help just as he had after his stroke. Since he was unable to secure employment in his field after layoff, Matt was enrolled in both the Trade and the Dislocated Worker program. This was a great partnership for Matt. He was able to receive supportive services, including help with the high cost of childcare while he was in school, as Trade covered the cost of his tuition and books. Later in his program, Matt's instructor was concerned with his speech and patients being able to understand him during clinicals, so again the programs partnered and assisted Matt with receiving Speech Therapy to help him better communicate.

Two years after layoff, Matt has reached his dream of helping people. Matt has completed his associate's degree, passed his state boards, and has secured employment in his field. Matt is working as a Physical Therapy Assistant at Saint Elizabeth's Hospital and Encore Rehabilitation in Lincoln Nebraska. He has an inspiring story to tell and was asked to speak during the Commencement Ceremony at Southeast Community College this spring.

- In October 2018, **Connie S.** was working for Master Care Patient Equipment as a business administrative assistant, making \$15.00 per hour. However, when Master Care moved to Fremont, her position was eliminated. Determined to return to work quickly, she came to the Columbus American Job Center to use the computer for a job search on Networks, as she did not have a computer at home. Eventually she was hired by a car dealership but was let go

after three weeks, as there was not enough work for her to do. Despite being let go from two jobs in two months, she decided to persevere with her job search efforts.

In December of 2018, Connie was referred as a dislocated worker to WIOA for intensive career services. After enrollment, she was assisted in skills assessments, resume writing, rigorous job search, individual counseling, interview preparation, and placement assistance. Then, she was hired by Paws and Claws, a local animal shelter. Unfortunately, this job was not a good fit for Connie, as her arthritis limited her work with the animals, and she had to quit the job. She continued to work with her WIOA Career Planner searching and applying week after week until she received exciting news in May 2019. She was offered an interview for the position of Platte County Election Commissioner.

Shortly after the interview, she was extended a job offer and was hired. Not only was she excited to take on the role of such an important position, but her salary started at \$22.00 per hour, a 30% increase from her original job at Master Care Patient Equipment. Connie now supervises one employee full time and has many challenging projects ahead of her. She is a great WIOA success story, one that helped Connie through a difficult job search journey.

- **Griselda Suarez** was a dislocated worker who had been working in retail for a few years when she lost her job due the closure of Herberger's in Kearney, Nebraska. After she participated in a Rapid Response event, she was enrolled into the WIOA Dislocated Worker Program. She was encouraged to apply at Royal Engineered Composites in Minden, Nebraska. She was hired by Royal Engineered Composites in Minden as a Shipping Portal Clerk. WIOA enrolled her into the OJT program and she completed her OJT with Royal. She now makes a higher wage, works full time, and works in the community that she lives. She has no travel involved and the hours she works are perfect for her as she has school-aged children. She remains employed at Royal Engineered Composites and has been working for them for 1 year.

NEW MEXICO



- **Robert** was deeply affected after his father suffered a severe stroke. His father recovered with the help of physical therapy and rehabilitation, and Robert realized the importance of therapy and how significant the life-changing outcomes can be for patients, including his father. During his father's recovery, he witnessed several physical therapy treatment sessions and soon realized that he had the skills and qualities to be a good therapist.

During this time, he was working at a salon that was struggling after many years of success. The owners, who were in the process of divorce, sold the building. There were plans and promises to relocate the business quickly, and the employees were told that it was only a temporary shutdown. The company eventually dissolved, and Robert had to file for unemployment benefits. When the fate of the salon was in limbo, Robert started researching a career in physical therapy at PIMA Medical Institute. He was accepted into the next cohort for the physical therapist assistant program shortly after the salon had permanently closed. While on unemployment,

he learned about the benefits of the Dislocated Worker Program. Eager to have his new career come to fruition, he pursued the opportunity, and Robert received tuition assistance instead of relying on student loans alone.

Robert completed his physical therapy training with a 3.56 GPA and received supportive service assistance for his license application and exam fee. He was thrilled when he passed his exam, and shortly thereafter, he received his license from the State of New Mexico Regulation and Licensing Department Physical Therapy Board. He quickly applied to his favorite extern site, the downtown Lovelace Medical Center. Lovelace offered Robert a physical therapy assistant (PTA) position with an hourly rate of \$23.00 on weekdays and a differential pay for the weekends of \$27.85. Robert is forever grateful for the assistance he received from the New Mexico Workforce 10 Connection Center and the Dislocated Worker program, which opened the door to a new rewarding career as a healthcare professional. He now has the opportunity to improve patient outcomes every day.

NORTH DAKOTA



- **Angela** worked as a child care provider in her home for more than 15 years. When she decided to return to the workforce, she found employment in an electronic manufacturing position. Just a few months after starting this job, the company announced the closure of their factories located in rural North Dakota communities. Angela knew there were limited opportunities in her local rural area, and she did not want to commute 40 miles or more for work, especially during winters in North Dakota.

There was a job opening in the rural area with another manufacturing company. Angela, however, had only 6 months of experience in a manufacturing setting and none of it even related to the work with the other company. Angela decided she would apply for the position regardless of her lack of experience. The staff at the business referred Angela to the American Job Center to see if she qualified for WIOA as a possible OJT training candidate since Angela had limited skills and experience. Angela was eligible for WIOA Dislocated Worker services. She

started her job as an Industrial Painter through the OJT program just 10 days after being laid off from her previous job. In this new position, Angela began employment at a wage more than \$5.00 per hour higher than her previous

position. She successfully completed six months of OJT and was hired into a permanent position. Although this is a non-traditional occupation for women, Angela stated she loved her job and the business is very happy with their new employee.

PUERTO RICO



- **Alberto** is a 57-year-old Arecibo resident. He lost his job as a security guard, and his only income was the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program. He was interested in an open job opportunity in a nearby textile manufacturer, with the requirements in basic computer skills. He was very frustrated since he understood that he had several obstacles to get a job, such as age and a lack of a high school equivalent diploma. AJC delivered the comprehensive services of a

short-term prevocational program in Emerging Computer Techniques, job search assistance, and Temporary Jobs. Finally, he participated in an OJT activity in a recycling company with 800 hours of training. Once he finished the training hours, the company hired him as a Plant Operator on March 20, 2019. Alberto regained his self-confidence, overcame barriers, and achieved his goals.

SOUTH CAROLINA



- **Henry** is an excellent example of the success of Transitions Works. Henry arrived at Transitions/Midlands Housing Alliance in 2018 after losing his home and employment due to health issues. The loss of his job led to poor decisions, resulting in a criminal background that posed a significant barrier to regaining employment. After joining Transitions Works, Henry was in the first group

of participants to become employed through a connection the Transitions Jobs Case Manager established with McEntire Produce. Within two months, Henry was promoted to a salaried employee, which then led to a supervisory position. As a result, Henry planned his move into permanent housing. Henry moved into his own home on November 15, 2019.

SOUTH DAKOTA



- **Teresa**, a Native American female, was a dislocated worker from the Dakotah Pride Treatment Center. She was referred to DLR through Re-employment Services. She was a licensed Addiction Counselor, laid-off due to lack of funding in October 2017. She had post-secondary education in addiction counseling but did not have a degree. She had been grandfathered in by the State to be a licensed addiction counselor and was able to continue with accreditation courses through her employment. However, after the lay-off, her license and career path were in jeopardy. Serving as the guardian for her two elementary age grandchildren, Teresa needed to maintain a stable home environment while unemployed and did not want to move from the area. She was co-enrolled into Title I Adult and Dislocated Worker, and an employment plan was developed.

Her objectives were to update her resume and search for online courses to complete by her June 2018 certification deadline. DLR provided Support Services to assist with transportation to workshops to earn Continuing Education Credits (CECs). Teresa completed the required CECs and retained her license through the South Dakota Board of Addiction and Prevention Professionals (BAPP). She also worked on Teknimedia courses to improve her computer skills in Excel.

In the fall of 2018, Indian Health Service received a grant specifically to address addiction in youth, Teresa's specialty area. She submitted her updated resume, cover letter, and application. She was hired on January 8, 2019 as a full-time Youth Addiction Counselor earning \$25.00 per hour.

TENNESSEE



- **Cheyenne Phillips** had previously lost her job and filed unemployment insurance, when she saw a flyer in the Dyersburg AJC for Youth Work Experience, and was referred to a WIOA Career Advisor Kelcey Coble. In April 2019, Cheyenne was made eligible for WIOA services as an out-of-school youth due to her barrier of being 22 and a parent of 3. Her main priority was to provide for herself and her children- so she needed to find employment quickly. She had previous experience as a patient access representative, receptionist, and CNA, but her ultimate goal is to become a family nurse practitioner. Kelcey set up an interview with Gina Johnson at the

Northwest TN Workforce Board, and Cheyenne was selected to start work as an Account Clerk for her work experience assignment in May 2019. Gina says that Cheyenne assisted in fiscal, business services, and performance. She said Cheyenne caught on quickly and was reliable and very smart. Travel assistance and resume assistance helped Cheyenne to successfully complete the program only a month later, and begin a full-time job at the Reelfoot Family Walk-In Clinic on June 25, 2019. Cheyenne says, "We all have our own determination whether we win or lose." She also shares that she loves her job and works with a great team.

WYOMING



- **Travis** was laid off from the Black Thunder Mine in April 2016 at the same time as several hundred other coal miners. He came into the Gillette Workforce Center requesting assistance with his Unemployment Insurance claim. It was during this meeting we discussed the programs offered through the Department of Workforce Services. Travis became interested in learning more about the WIOA Program and scheduled a follow up appointment with a Workforce Specialist.

During the next appointment with Travis, we learned he had started at the University of Wyoming several years ago with the dream of becoming a teacher. However, he had some family issues that made school difficult. He was forced to return to Gillette and began working a summer job at Black Thunder Coal Mine. The money was good; Travis stated he was earning \$32.90 per hour plus overtime. He had worked in the coal mine for numerous years and despite

the money, he explained that he really needed employment with more stability.

Travis gathered the required information and was found eligible for WIOA. He enrolled in college and started classes on June 5, 2017 at Black Hills State University. Travis remained in close contact with his WIOA Workforce Specialist and quickly reported that he needed a “survival job” once his UI benefits ended. Utilizing basic career services, Travis found a part-time job with the local school district, making \$13.94 per hour. Travis maintained this employment while attending college and did not need any additional supportive services.

Travis graduated with his bachelor’s degree on December 8, 2018 and was immediately hired on with the Campbell County School District #1 as a Special Education Teacher.

Other Success Stories

ALASKA



- **David Ash** is a disabled veteran. He was a Staff Sergeant in the U.S. Army who, after completing an eighteen month tour in Iraq, received 100% disability rating for Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) from the VA. David served as a U.S. Army observer prior to cross training into the Information Technology field. Aside from holding positions as Network Administrator and IT Security Analyst III, he holds a bachelor's degree in Information Security. David and his registered service dog (Luka) were nearly homeless when they came into the Mid-town Job Center for services in June 2018. David sat down with one of the Disabled Veterans Outreach Programs (DVOPs) for intensive assistance. The DVOP assisted David in developing short and long-term goals, re-structured his resume, provided housing resources (such as HUD-

VASH), introduced him to the Local Veterans Employment Representatives (LVER), and provided him job leads. The DVOP also pulled in another DVOP to offer David mock panel interviews as a way to further offer David encouragement and moral support.

David went through a few months receiving interviews without a job offer. He expressed concerns that it was because of his service dog. Then, in October 2018, David received an offer with Bering Sea Environmental as a Computer IT Security Specialist working on Joint Base Elmendorf Richardson (JBER). The starting pay was \$60,000 a year, with Cost-of-Living Adjustments and benefits. David praised the two DVOPs and the LVER who assisted him for all of the ongoing support, job leads, and encouragement.

COLORADO



- **Victoria** always wanted a career in the medical field, but did not have the financial resources required to pursue a medical career. The Frisco Workforce Center helped Victoria apply for the Medical Assistant RA position with Centura High Country Health in Frisco, CO, a seven-month program where she worked closely with an in-house preceptor/mentor and attended virtual medical assistant training with National Institute for Medical Assistant Advancement. Victoria earned her National Medical Assistant Certification and now is on her way toward her Registered Apprenticeship Certificate. She works full time as a Medical Assistant, and is considered a super star by her employer.

- **Daneshia** received the Governor's Summer Job Hunt recognition award for participation in

work-based learning at Shiloh House, as well as completion of her GED. According to the employer, "[Daneshia has] been such a huge help at Shiloh House. She has taken every task we've given her and done an amazing job. Daneshia took great initiative with the community events and fundraisers."

- **Ms. G's** homelessness, her status as a single parent, lack of employment, and a criminal record were her barriers to employment. After partnering with both human services and other organizations, the Colorado Works Subsidized Training and Employment Program (CW STEP) team guided Ms. G to critical resources that provided transportation support and funding for a deposit on a new apartment. With her home life stabilized, and in partnership with

her CW STEP specialist, Ms. G created a new resume and practiced how to answer tough questions about her background in interviews. The CW STEP business development team found a work-based learning opportunity for Ms. G at the VA Hospital; she aced the interview and began her subsidized employment. After consistently surpassing expectations in both work and attitude, she was offered permanent employment.

- **Sean M.** was an unemployed service-connected disabled Navy Veteran who was having difficulty finding employment. The DVOP worked with Sean to develop an Individualized Employment Plan with his ultimate goal to work in information technology. The DVOP reached out to Mind Springs Health on behalf of Sean for a position in information technology. Sean was hired at \$48,100 per year in February. He also applied for a federal position with the information technology department at the Grand Junction Regional Medical Center. On April 1 Sean started a federal information technology specialist position making \$82,000 per year.

- **Aida C.** was working as a telephone operator representative for \$15.60 per hour at Moneygram International and was laid off on Feb. 27, 2015. WIOA assisted Aida with the completion of her bachelor's degree in accounting. Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) paid for Aida's master's degree through Regis University. Aida graduated in October 2018 and began studying for her Certified Public Accountant (CPA) exam. Aida has since been hired by the IRS and will be promoted to a GS11 Revenue Agent when she passes her CPA exam.

- **Craig C.** is a veteran who had one of the most difficult barriers to employment - a felony. In addition to the fact that the job market was not favorable to him, Craig wanted to get back into nursing, a very technical field with a high level of responsibility. He worked with the Larimer Workforce Center and received help from both the Veterans Services to Career Program grant and the WIOA program, which paid for his extensive training: Basic Life Support, Pediatric Advanced Life Support, Trauma Nursing Core Course, and Advanced Cardiovascular Life Support. Determination, honesty, and up-to-date skills earned Craig the trust of an employer. Now he cares for cardiac patients and is thrilled by this opportunity.

CONNECTICUT



- **Taylor** enrolled at the Hartford Job Corps Center with an interest in pursuing manufacturing training. Motivated and determined to do well, Taylor participated in the Tooling U-SME pre-apprenticeship program and was then placed in an internship at a precision metal stamping and toolmaking company. She did so well in the internship that she was hired full-time. Taylor also wanted to participate in the Advanced Manufacturing



Certificate program at Asnuntuck Community College. With determination and hard work to achieve the math placement test score necessary to enroll in the program, Taylor attended tutoring, studied on weekends, and even found her own personal tutor. In less than three months, she increased her math knowledge and qualified for the college's program. Through CTDOL, Taylor became a registered apprentice with her employer upon completing the Asnuntuck training program.

IDAHO



- **Jeff** was having some issues with his balance and walking for some time, which was especially noticeable at work. The concern about these issues had his employer limit several of his tasks. After a while his employer had him visit a doctor to determine what was causing his imbalance. The diagnosis was MS. He realized he couldn't continue with his current position but he did not want to stop working. A visit to the Idaho Department of

Labor provided a direct referral to VR which offered Jeff the assistance he needed find a satisfying job that accommodated his needs.

The link below offers more information on Jeff's story.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=d7VmahQvUqc>

KANSAS



- **Ray-Lynn** visited the Pittsburg AJC seeking assistance with the Dental Assistant program. She was a single mother of a one-year-old child. Ray-Lynn had a full-time job but was unable to pay for child care while she attended classes. Because of her financial situation, she needed to work full time as well as attend school. She then had a second child and only took one week off before returning to her classes. KHPOP helped Ray-Lynn with tuition, fees, books, materials, and supplies. She also received assistance with child care and fuel assistance for her training and clinicals. They were so impressed she completed her clinicals that they offered her a full-time position upon graduation. Ray-Lynn is a perfect example of how perseverance and determination can carry you through to your ultimate training and employment goals.
- **Sean** was facing several barriers to employment in the community after his release from prison. This included diagnosed, co-occurring physical and mental disabilities. He also was convicted of an aggravated felony which adds another layer of difficulty in finding self-sufficient employment in the community. Due to the nature of the conviction, Sean would not be able

to work in the types of jobs that he held in the past. He would need to completely re-invent himself and begin a new career track.

We began working with Sean four months prior to his release from prison. We developed an Individualized Employment Plan, Vocational Profile, and other career exploration activities. We also helped him prepare a resume, soft-skill enhancement activities, and prepare for a job interview. Sean was enrolled into the End Dependence Kansas (EDK) and WIOA program while still incarcerated, which allowed us to set things up with employers in the community to be utilized immediately after release. This allowed Sean to hit the ground running immediately after release from prison. Sean was able to utilize the Vermont Progressive Employment Model (VTPE) through the EDK program. Sean participated in three company informational meetings, three company tours, and a mock interview with an employer that he hopes to work for in the future as a computer technology and communications employee. The VTPE model helped us find the best fit possible for him and the employer. This will increase the likelihood of job satisfaction and retention for Sean going forward.

We were able to help Sean secure a job as a Computer Numerical Control (CNC) Machine Operator. His starting wage was \$14.13 per hour with a full-benefits package. He has been in the position for nearly five months and doing great. After 6 months of employment, his wage will be over \$15.00 per hour. This has allowed him to utilize his love of computers in a high-demand position with upward mobility. He is learning how to program and calibrate the machine which will lead to higher wages and more opportunity in the future. Sean was thankful to have such a comprehensive plan set up before his release from prison. It reduced the amount of stress that usually accompanies being released from prison. He engaged in the pre-employment activities within the first week and began his new job within two weeks of getting released from prison.

- **Lee** was involved in a firearm accident when he was 17. In the accident, he lost one eye and had suffered long-term memory loss. His vision was 20/600 and eyeglasses did little to improve his vision. He lived in a very small town and had isolated himself since the accident which led to periods of depression. He was reliant on others for his transportation because of his visual impairment. Vocational Rehabilitation referred him at the age of 18 to Kansas WorkforceONE in the hopes that our programs could collaborate to assist this young man. He attended his first appointment with an Employment Specialist because “VR told him to.” He had no goals beyond earning his high school diploma and at that point still had three classes to complete of his junior year and all of his senior classes. He was very bright, but because of the trauma he endured, his motivation to achieve personal and educational goals was lacking.

Most appointments with Lee were held in conjunction with Vocational Rehabilitation in

an effort to provide a wraparound approach for Lee. After a few appointments, he started to become excited that we could assist him with a part-time work experience and provide him with a job coach to help him transition into employment. Lee aspired to attend college before the accident, and we helped him realize that this goal was still achievable. While finishing his high school classes, Lee started working part-time in his hometown through a work experience. After completing high school, Vocational Rehabilitation and Kansas WorkforceONE pooled resources and services together to assist him in attending the Colorado Center for the Blind for five months. During his stay, they taught him all aspects of mobility, transportation, home management, problem solving, and technology. All reports reflected that he did wonderfully and was always eager to learn.

- **Nathaniel**, a 20-year-old male with a high school diploma, was underemployed working part time as a cashier at a national chain grocery store. Nathaniel needed to find employment with career opportunities and a self-sustaining wage. He had an interest in advanced manufacturing, but he did not have any education or experience to get into the field. Nathaniel enrolled in the Kansas Advanced Manufacturing Program, an America’s Promise Grant managed by the WA. Through the program, he was able to fund his eight-week training period with Cox Machine as a Deburr Operator, earning \$13.00 per hour with benefits. Nathaniel impressed his supervisor with superior work ethic and successfully completed his training, earning a Certificate of Completion. Since then, Nathaniel has received two promotions within six weeks and is now a CNC Machinist, earning \$14.00 per hour with benefits.

MARYLAND



Apprenticeship through the Baltimore Alliance for Careers in Healthcare (BACH) proves to be the key to greater financial stability.

Ali immigrated to the United States in 1982 because of limited job opportunities in his home country of Jordan. He completed a Bachelor of Science in Electrical Engineering and worked for several years as an engineer until managing a 7-Eleven store. After 22 years, Ali sold his store, overwhelmed by the difficulties of owning his own business.

After being unemployed for three months, Ali heard about the apprenticeship program through the Anne Arundel County Muslim Council, a local community organization. He began the apprenticeship program's English as a Second Language and Essential Skills courses, where he learned how to navigate the process of finding and preparing for employment in the United States.

He was selected as an Environmental Care Supervisor apprentice at Johns Hopkins Hospital, and since beginning six months ago, he has completed the competencies and coursework required to move to the second wage level. Thanks to his increased earnings through apprenticeship, Ali and his family enjoy greater financial stability. He hopes to continue moving forward in his career with Johns Hopkins Hospital.

Business Solutions Consultant Lisa Nash helped Gwendolyn transition from volunteering to employment.

Gwendolyn had volunteered with the Mayor's Office of Employment Development at the Northwest AJC for one year. She was assisting job seekers on the computer, answering questions, filing documents, making copies, and facilitating résumés. Gwendolyn was always professional, wore a smile, and was very patient and kind to everyone with whom she came in contact. She always exhibited sincere concern and compassion for those who felt distressed due to their unemployment.

Mr. Gerald Grimes informed Lisa Nash, Business Solutions Consultant, that Child Support was hiring. On December 12, 2018, Lisa e-mailed Gwendolyn's résumé to Ms. Nakia Thomas, Operation Director of Baltimore City Office of Child Support Services, Western Office, located at 2401 Liberty Heights Avenue, Baltimore, MD.

Gwendolyn was hired as a Caseworker on January 7, 2019, and is earning \$15.00 per hour. She is very happy with her new employment opportunity!

The Baltimore Alliance for Careers in Healthcare (BACH) registered apprenticeship program changed Maureen's life.

Maureen immigrated to the United States from Nigeria in October 2017, seeking asylum after being forced into marriage. During her first year in the United States, Maureen faced many challenges. The process of filing for asylum takes many months and sometimes even years, and unable to earn an income in the interim, Maureen considered returning home to Nigeria. Shortly after receiving work authorization, she learned about BACH's apprenticeship program from Asylee Women Enterprises, a local nonprofit organization that houses and assists women who have sought asylum in the United States. She enrolled in BACH's contextualized English as a Second Language class, where she learned how to navigate the process of applying to jobs in the U.S.

After working with BACH's Career Coach for résumé assistance and interview preparation, she was selected as an Environmental Care Supervisor apprentice at Johns Hopkins Hospital. Maureen holds a master's degree in Human Resource Management and has years of experience in sales and marketing in her home country. She is now able to draw on these skills in her new role. Currently, she is earning more than \$16 per hour as an apprentice and has built up enough savings to move into her own apartment. When asked about her experience in her first four months as an apprentice, Maureen said, "The program has changed my life and still is. It's taught me and still is teaching me a lot

about myself, the people around me, and the environment where I've found myself. I see how much I've grown from the person I was and the person I am now thanks to my managers and

colleagues. They encourage me grow, do better, mentor me, and are always leading me in the right direction."

MONTANA



- In January 2017, **Shadi**, his wife, and two boys, ages 6 and 8, moved to Missoula with assistance from the International Rescue Committee (IRC). Prior to living in refugee camps in Jordan, Shadi owned and operated a barbershop in Syria. The family spoke only Arabic. Obtaining a Montana barber's license is a long-term goal for Shadi. In the meantime, he worked as a manual laborer for a landscape company until the language barrier proved very difficult to overcome. He worked as a dishwasher and later in the laundry department at Holiday Inn, until he was referred to Pathways' Subsidized Employment Program (SEP) in March 2018. SEP worked with Watershed Consulting to develop a year-round, self-sufficiency plan for Shadi; including training in areas ranging from tractor operations, tree care and arborist skills, revegetation and ecologic restoration techniques, prescribed fire application, irrigation management and repair, erosion control, bank stabilization, and tool maintenance and repair. Shadi returned to work for the landscape company and is now paid \$18 per hour. He is proud when he tells his SEP case manager that his boys are fluent in English with a Montana accent. Shadi and his case manager now meet
- without translation assistance. Thanks to the SEP program, Shadi's supervisor reports he and his staff can continue with their production-based workload and support Shadi to become well-rounded in a variety of traditional "Montana" skills suited for outdoor work.
- Just released from prison in North Dakota after serving a long sentence, **Kacey** needed another human being to care about her well-being and assist her to find food, a permanent residence, medical care, mental health support, transportation, and a job. It all started with a JSM Glendive workforce consultant who provided Kacey with a listening ear, water, and some Triscuit crackers. The consultant worked tirelessly on client intake; access to public assistance and the HiSET; health and food bank referrals; job search, applications, and interviewing; personal hygiene; and a bicycle donation from the local drug court. Kacey was hired by a local employer and it started with (in her words): "...the only one to ever invest any time into helping find a job and think about a career."

NEBRASKA



- The Nebraska Department of Labor (NDOL) was informed during the summer of 2018 about the upcoming closure of **Ariens** Company in Auburn, Nebraska, and the potential elimination of 175 jobs. Initially, NDOL worked with the Auburn Development Council to share information about Title 1 programs with potential buyers. Several meetings and conference calls were held with interested businesses. Once Fast Global Solutions came forward with their intent to buy the building and retain all Ariens employees, Title 1 program staff met with the Director of Human Resources for Fast Global Solutions to discuss potential training, including OJT.

A Rapid Response event was held on site for over 150 employees and information shared about services. All employees completed one-

on-one appointments to register on NEworks and create resumes. After reviewing needs of the new business, around 40 employees were targeted as needing assistance as dislocated workers through the Greater Nebraska dislocated worker program. Several of these employees were given onsite training as welders. Training agreements and training plans were developed to complete OJT. On September 22, 2018, Fast Global Solutions purchased the Ariens Company building and property in Auburn, and the OJT began. Supportive services were provided as needed. Based on follow-up with Fast Global and the program participants, this was a great move for the employees and Auburn community. Employees receive great benefits and an opportunity for over-time and are happy with their new employer.

NEW HAMPSHIRE



- **Sue** originally came in to file for UI benefits and expressed interest in training. She had a family member that was an addict and she always wanted to enter the medical field. She was referred to the NH Works and started meeting with the Career Navigator. She was found eligible for WIOA through the National Health Emergency (NHE) Grant. There was a new Medical Assistant Apprenticeship through White Mountain Community College (WMCC) being developed with Littleton Regional Healthcare, Weeks Hospital and Androscoggin Valley Hospital. She interviewed with representatives from the hospitals and staff from Learn NH (WMCC) in hopes of being chosen to be a student in the program. She was ultimately chosen, and was sponsored by Littleton Regional Healthcare.

She started her eight weeks of classes and within the first week, her husband left her. She then had emotional stress along with the financial stress she was experiencing. The NH Works Career Navigator, Learn NH, and a representative from Littleton Regional Healthcare all worked together with this customer to assist her financially and emotionally so she was able to continue with the apprenticeship. She has completed her 8 weeks of classes, received her certificate, and is now working her practicum/OJT with Littleton Regional Healthcare full time and receiving health benefits. She has told her Career Navigator from NH Works how grateful she is to have been given the opportunity to join the apprenticeship program and live one of her dreams.

NORTH DAKOTA



■ **Tom** came to Job Service North Dakota as a convicted felon who was on probation. The only employment he had been able to find was helping on a family farm. He received services from the veteran's representative and he indicated he had a goal of becoming a CDL driver. As he had no financial resources, Tom was referred to the WIOA Dislocated Worker program for possible assistance with training. During the assessment, some concerns came up regarding his ability to travel due to his parole requirements. The WIOA case manager communicated with Tom's probation officer to work through these issues. Tom attended CDL

training funded by the WIOA Dislocated Worker program and attained his CDL license.

It took some time for Tom to find his first driving position, but he did find employment as a truck driver locally. He's done so well that his probation officer has removed some of his restrictions and, after one year of employment, he will be allowed to seek an over-the-road position. Veteran's staff continue to provide guidance and advice to help Tom stay on track with keeping his job and meeting his probation requirements. Tom is working hard toward a brighter future.

SOUTH CAROLINA



■ **Sandy** was forced from her home due to the impacts of Hurricane Florence and learned about SC Works services at the FEMA disaster site. A Workforce Consultant assisted Sandy in evaluating her work history, strengths, and needs. While Sandy had a temporary roof over her head, she required food, clothing, and additional resources. The Workforce Consultant was able to connect her to resources through

the local Chamber of Commerce. A resume was created for Sandy and she was advised to target her network for job leads, as she was noted as having a strong network of supporters. She followed through with this advice and was able to secure a private home health aide job that was in her acceptable income range within a week of meeting with the Workforce Consultant.

TENNESSEE



- A first job is a major accomplishment for everyone, but for some it can mean a lot more. **Jacob P.** has his first job and what makes this success story special is the journey he took to get there. When Jacob was young, he was diagnosed at a high level on the autism spectrum. The cognitive and communication barriers Jacob faces are extremely difficult to overcome. Fortunately, the support from his family, service providers, and his own strengths have enabled him to succeed.

Jacob could not tell you where he was born, nor could he tell you much about when he was young. His mother was ill-prepared for a child with special needs. Many of his needs growing up were provided by schools he attended. He graduated high school with a Special Education Diploma and was enrolled in Vocational Rehabilitation (VR). Soon after, his mother decided that she could no longer care for him and his care was transferred to his aunt Jennifer. She knew he had more to offer than his aptitude scores reflected. Jacob was referred by VR to the Tennessee Rehabilitation Center (TRC) to receive training for custodial and housekeeping services. As they described Jacob, “He won’t just do the work how you show him, he’ll do it better.”

Following his training at TRC, Jacob’s next goal was to apply what he learned. VR referred Jacob to the American Job Center to speak with a career specialist about potential employers. An opportunity to place him in a paid work experience came through Mr. George Thacker, the Rhea County Executive and business owner for the Howard Johnson Hotel in Spring City, TN. When approached with the opportunity, Mr. Thacker was proud to give him a chance. The skills learned during his training at TRC were apparent. Jacob’s manager, Ms. Freeman, was

praising him for his work ethic. She said he put so much effort and detail into his job that she began to tell the other staff members that he set an example for them. Ms. Freeman said “If it wasn’t for this program, we might never have had the chance to work with Jacob. It’s crazy because he truly is one of the best workers we have had.”

Jacob completed a twelve-week work experience assignment in July 2018. In August, he was offered permanent employment at the hotel and his support team couldn’t be prouder of him.

- **Jearom Obas** wanted to follow in his father’s footsteps as a truck driver, but needed assistance to attend training. He came to the American Job Center-Camden, unemployed, ready to enter the workforce and obtain full-time employment. Jearom participated in the WIOA approved training program, and received a training voucher and travel assistance. After enrolling in the Truck Driving/CDL training with Drive Train in Jackson in November 2018, he completed it later that month at the top of his class and received his CDL, excited to be entering employment with a skill. Jearom is now employed full-time and able to support himself. Jearom was hired by Roadliner/Union Transportation out of Bakersfield, California, earning \$27.00 per hour, with the possibility of co-driving with his father in the future. He says he is very grateful for the opportunity and to WIOA for the assistance and encouragement.

TEXAS



- In summer 2018, TWC awarded seven grants totaling \$593,356 for Camp Code to focus on increasing middle school girls' interest in computer coding and computer science through participation in summer camps. Camp Code offers hands-on coding experience that teaches students innovative concepts and provides experiences in learning, problem solving, and using analytical skills, while fostering an interest in STEM-related careers with a focus on computer science.

According to the US Census Bureau's 2017 American Community Survey, only 24 percent of employees in computer and mathematical occupations in Texas were women. The grants awarded to independent school districts, universities, and higher education institutions are designed to spark girls' interests in careers in

computer programming from an early age and encourage young women to consider careers in these fields.

Creating summer camps that offer computer science projects that incorporate art and storytelling with robotics, video games, websites, and applications can also further interest students in the coding field. Coding education includes the most in-demand and popular computer science languages, such as Java, SQL, C++, Net, Perl, Ruby, and JavaScript.

Camp Code provided students with activities and lessons that encouraged their interest in high technology, including working in teams to use programming languages to build games, web pages, and robots.

UTAH



- **James** enlisted in the United States Air Force in January 2009. After completing basic training, he started his military education as a fueling apprentice and after two years and ten months, he became a fuel journeyman where he specialized in transporting fuel for the different vehicles used in the Air Force. In 2013 James, deployed in support of Operation Enduring Freedom where he was deployed to Afghanistan where he completed a successful and challenging deployment. James met with a counselor at Workforce Services where James was applying for Unemployment Insurance after being laid off from his previous job. They began to discuss the current situation that James was in and what obstacles he faced while searching for a new job. Since the majority of James's work history had been with the military, James felt the biggest barrier to employment was being able to

convert his military experience into the civilian workforce. Another obstacle James faced was using computers and the internet to job search and create an image that would impress an employer enough to hire him. James continued to stay on track with his employment plan and focused his efforts on modifying his resumes and improving his job seeker profile. All his hard work paid off when James was offered an interview with a company that he found on Workforce Services job postings. James was offered a job transporting fuel with a starting salary of \$32.00 per hour. James is grateful for the assistance and services he was offered at Workforce Services.

- **Brad** was a high school dropout, living in an unstable living situation without much direction. His counselor felt that Brad had the potential to go far if he had some direction.

After several meetings utilizing some motivational interviewing techniques to identify Brad's goals, he decided to participate in the YouthBuild22 program. He hit the ground running and did very well in high school academics as well as the construction technology portion of the YouthBuild program. He earned his National Center for Construction Education and Research

(NCCER) and Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) certifications within a short time. Brad had perfect attendance in YouthBuild and earned his high school diploma while also graduating from the YouthBuild program. Brad subsequently joined the United States Marine Corps where he plans to make a career serving his country.

WASHINGTON



- **Leona** started her career development journey at WorkSource Okanogan a year ago. She was homeschooled most of her life. After the Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE) assessment and planning workshop, she started the high school completion classes. She took the Job Hunter and Strategies for Success workshops, learning goal setting, interviewing, résumé writing, and job search skills. Leona's work history consisted of six months of ranch and orchard work.

Soon after starting class, Leona was placed at the WorkSource Center as a clerical aide. The workforce investment-funded experience taught her new skills applicable to other jobs too. Leona excelled at work, staying busy, showing excellent attention to detail, demonstrating effective communication skills and great attendance.

She also benefitted from the Basic Food Employment and Training (BFET) program, where staff practiced mock interviews. She attended the TANF Strategies for Success, a six-week series of four-day workshops. Strategies

for Success teaches the life skills and soft skills necessary to get ahead.

Leona eagerly attended Rotary Club luncheons where youth are matched with employer mentors. This led to an interest in law enforcement and an all-day, ride-along experience with the Washington State Patrol.

Leona passed the GED tests in April 2019 and started looking for employment. Armed with a portfolio of new skills and abilities, she applied for a position with the Okanogan County Juvenile Corrections Department. She researched the agency and practiced interviewing with staff. She interviewed for a Juvenile Corrections Officer position, was hired, and started work in June of 2019. High school equivalency diploma in hand, a positive work record, and a new job, Leona has certainly completed chapter one of her career development journey.

WYOMING



- The Sheridan Employment and Training Division (E&T) partnered with Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) to assist a client that graduated from the University of Wyoming in May. DVR had worked with **John** and assisted him with counseling and guidance services, and paid for his tuition, fees, and books throughout his bachelor's degree. As John began to look for employment, his DVR Counselor referred him to a WIOA Workforce Specialist. John received Wagner Peyser services and later was enrolled in WIOA. John worked with his WIOA Workforce

Specialist and received help with Basic Career Services, which included creating a resume, completing job applications, and preparing for 24 interviews. During this time, the WIOA Workforce Specialist also learned that John did not have proper interview attire, so we moved forward in purchasing him the necessary clothes for his interview. John interviewed with the University of Wyoming and was offered employment on September 17, 2019. WIOA will assist John with relocating to Laramie to begin employment at the end of the month.