

WORKFORCE INVESTMENT ACT

# STATE SUCCESS STORIES

Program Year

# 2013



EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING ADMINISTRATION  
UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF LABOR

State Annual Reports:  
[http://www.doleta.gov/performance/results/AnnualReports/annual\\_report.cfm](http://www.doleta.gov/performance/results/AnnualReports/annual_report.cfm)

# **WORKFORCE INVESTMENT ACT STATE SUCCESS STORIES**

**Program Year 2013**

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# FOREWORD

Each year states prepare and submit annual narrative reports on accomplishments under the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) training and employment programs to the Employment and Training Administration, similar to that of an organization's annual report to its stockholders. In the reports, many states highlight participants, employers and other "success stories" that focus attention on achievements of different programs. These personal stories illustrate how states have responded to unemployed participants; providing tax dollar-funded services that have made a difference in the lives of many individuals.

The success stories are excerpted directly from the Program Year 2013 States' WIA Annual Report Narratives, which are located on the Department of Labor's (DOL) website at:

[http://www.doleta.gov/performance/results/AnnualReports/annual\\_report.cfm](http://www.doleta.gov/performance/results/AnnualReports/annual_report.cfm).

In general not every state includes individual participant success stories in their annual reports. This explains why some states are not included in this compilation and is in no way an indication that these states did not have noteworthy individual participant successes throughout 2013. Furthermore, some states submitted numerous stories across various programs, and only a small collection was selected to highlight the unique successes achieved by the programs.

These stories focus on WIA Adults, Dislocated Workers, Youth (ages 14-21),

and Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) participants, who have benefited from program services such as assessments, the development of an individual employment plan, classroom training, on-the-job training, job search assistance, and emergency support because of natural disasters. Some stories are from sector specific programs for at-risk youth, such as YouthBuild. Youthbuild provides job training and education to recipients ages 16 to 24, while they construct housing for low-income or homeless families. Additionally, there are some stories highlighting services targeted toward veterans. Thus, there are a number of stories from the range of programs supported by the DOL, included in this compilation.

The highlighted success stories are pulled directly from the States' WIA annual report narratives. They have been minimally edited as needed for clarification and consistency. These stories are presented as the states present them in this aggregate form, as a point of access to the success stories resulting from the Workforce Investment System.

DOL plans to continue to compile and disseminate WIA participant success stories from States' Annual Report Narratives as an added way to put a face on performance—participants benefiting from these programs as well as to showcase to the public the significant impact of investments made in WIA training and employment programs.

# WORKFORCE INVESTMENT ACT

## Adult Program Success Stories

### ALABAMA

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#### Wanda's Success Story

For over eight years Wanda worked as a central receiving clerk at a distribution center. Her days consisted of processing packages, organizing distribution orders and entering data into the system. "It was a lot of paperwork," states Wanda. However, Wanda wanted something different. She got the opportunity when she relocated to Mobile to be closer to her family. As she began looking for work, she heard about the training programs through Mobile Works and decided to enroll in Premier Truck Driving Academy. Within months she had successfully completed the training. "I had some tough moments. Alley docking was hard. But, my love for trucks gave me the motivation to push through the tough spots," Wanda said. She credits the training staff at Premier for constantly pushing her to succeed. "Mr. Danny was awesome," she said. "He believes in you and he gave me the motivation to keep going. If I didn't grasp a task, he would have me repeat it. "Prior to graduation, Wanda was offered a job with Stevens Transport as an over-the-road driver. She now travels the U.S. and Canada. "I get to travel to places I've never seen and get paid to do it," she states. Wanda is most proud that her family is supportive of her new career. She encourages others to follow their dreams.

#### Willie's Success Story

Willie is a husband and father of 3 young children. Willie had grown accustomed to working low wage (usually minimum wage) jobs with little to no opportunity for advancement. He had always been interested in a career rather than working job to job with no real direction. A Jefferson County Workforce Development employee had been encouraging him to stop by the office to inquire about the services offered. After several months of dialog, Willie paid a visit to the Birmingham One Stop Office. While there he crossed paths with the director of one of the training agencies, and they had an opportunity to talk. Before Willie left the office that day, he was extremely encouraged. He continued through the eligibility and case management process and eventually enrolled in the electrical training program at the Construction Education Foundation of Alabama. He completed Level I and is finalizing Level II Electrical Training. He has gained employment with a local electric company and is well on his way to fulfilling his new dream of becoming a master electrician.

## Darius' Success Story

Darius came to the Sheffield Career Center seeking assistance from WIA after working several outages as a laborer at local power plants. He decided based on what he had observed from working outages that he would like to pursue a program of study that would enable him to find a permanent job in a nuclear facility. The only program of this type was offered through Chattanooga State Community College in Tennessee. After gaining permission for him to attend an out of state institution, Darius began his studies at Chattanooga State in the Fall Semester of 2012. His program of study was the Engineering Technology Program-Nuclear Power Option. 30 Darius quickly made a name for himself on campus. He was interviewed by the Times Free Press of Chattanooga during his first month on campus. Later on in his college career he was elected as President of the American Nuclear Society. He traveled to the American Nuclear Society Conference at Penn State as a representative for Chattanooga State. He was also inducted into Phi Theta Kappa and was asked to serve as President of this organization. He was responsible for organizing events on campus for Phi Theta Kappa. He was also selected to travel to Orlando for a

Leadership Conference to represent Phi Theta Kappa. Throughout his time at Chattanooga State, Darius continued to work outages and had the opportunity to complete an internship with the Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA). He was able to balance all of his activities on campus, work, and still graduated with a cumulative GPA of 3.415. Darius also received the Presidential Award. This award is the most prestigious award on campus. Candidates for this award are personally reviewed and selected by the President of Chattanooga State. Darius also received a Leadership Award during his time at Chattanooga State. In addition to his academic success on campus, he took and passed the Edison Electric Institute (EEI) exam while still balancing his class load and a work schedule. Darius graduated on May 10, 2014 and obtained employment at TVA's Sequoyah Nuclear Plant just north of Chattanooga, Tennessee.

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## ALASKA



### Martin's Success Story

Martin Shumate came to Career Support and Training Services (CSTS)

in Kenai in February 2013. He had been part of a mass lay off from an oilfield company and dislocated from his position as a crane operator. CSTS determined Martin was eligible for Trade Adjustment Assistance services through a prior layoff with a different oilfield company. He was also eligible for services under the WIADW

Program, State Training & Employment Program (STEP), Vocational Rehabilitation and the Veteran's Reemployment Assistance Program (VRAP). After extensive coordination between the eligible programs, an individual employment plan was finalized. Martin's goal was to obtain a Commercial Driver's License and Heavy Equipment Certifications needed to go back to work. Although Martin was already a certified crane operator, most employers preferred or required a Class A CDL and other heavy equipment credentials. Martin trained at Northern Industrial Training in Palmer. Tuition was paid for by TAA. The VRAP Program provided a stipend while Martin was in training. He used these benefits to cover his mortgage. The training provider is 200-miles from Martin's home, so arrangements were made for housing,

meals and transportation while he attended training. These costs were paid by WIA. Martin successfully completed his program and obtained his Class A CDL with an X endorsement and five heavy equipment credentials. Additional support was provided by STEP to help Martin obtain his oilfield credentials and specialized gear to work on Alaska's North Slope. After training, Martin was offered a position with an oilfield company as a crane operator/heavy equipment operator/commercial driver. The wage offer was \$35 per hour, 84 hours per week on a rotational four weeks on, two weeks off schedule with health and retirement benefits. This package well replaced the wages lost during his layoff, job search, and training. Martin was exited from the TAA, WIA and STEP programs November 2013

## ARIZONA



### Luis' Success Story

Luis, a young adult with a poor work history and little or no work experience, was determined to need training in order to become marketable for employment. His goal was to become a pharmacy technician, and he enrolled in an Occupational Pharmacy Technician Program in a college in Tucson. The local area provided Luis with transportation assistance, and he obtained

his Pharmacy Technician Certification with excellent attendance and a 3.81 grade point average. Luis gained employment in his field and remains employed.

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## Oscar's Success Story



Imagine being laid off from a high paying job in the oil field industry, then living only on unemployment benefits while you look for another job. It happened to Oscar

Oregon. As a single parent with two daughters, Oscar needed to take action immediately. While at the Fayetteville Workforce Center, Oscar asked the Unemployment Interviewer about his options. Encouraging him to consider retraining opportunities, the Interviewer immediately referred him to the Workforce Investment Act training programs in the Fayetteville Office where he received additional information. Oscar researched the medical field and applied to the Registered Nursing program at the Northwest Arkansas Community College (NWACC); however, since English wasn't his first language, he had to overcome the language barrier. NWACC required that he first take additional classes to get his language skills up to college level, which did not deter him. He completed his pre-requisites and was accepted into the nursing program. A WIA scholarship was awarded to help pay tuition books, and fees, plus supportive services. Oscar also worked part time as a Certified Nursing Assistant to support his family while in school. He graduated from NWACC in

December 2013, and is employed at the Veteran's Hospital in Fayetteville earning \$28.00 per hour. Oscar is currently enrolled in the Bachelor of Science Nursing program at the University of Arkansas Fayetteville. Oscar is always encouraging others to pursue their dreams. His motto is "Anything you want to do and are willing to work hard for, you can achieve".

## Kristina's Success Story

Kristinia Eason is a single mother of two minor boys. When she came to WIA for training assistance she was living off the remnant of her Unemployment Insurance and monthly food stamps benefits. She needed financial assistance with her last semester of Vocational Nurse training, books, supplies and NCLEX fees. On December 20, 2013 Kristinia completed her clinical and classroom training at Texarkana College in Vocational Nursing. She went on to successfully pass her State Board LVN Certification Licensure exam on January 2014. Currently, she is working fulltime at Bailey Creek Health & Rehabilitation Center and as a Licensed Practical Nurse, earning \$15.50. She also works as a part-time PRN for Texarkana Nursing Center at a pay rate of \$15.75 an hour. Kristinia said, "I did without so much while going to school; I am now trying to make up for lost time by working and saving as much money as I can." Kristinia has successfully transitioned from public assistance dependence to gainful, self-sufficient employment.

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## Caitlin's Success Story



Caitlin Ragland grew up in Marshall, a rural community in Searcy County, where job opportunities are few. She was pursuing her dream of becoming a Licensed Practical Nurse when someone told her

about the WIA program. Caitlin was 21 years old with a one year old daughter and experiencing family difficulties during her training. Not only is the LPN program hard to complete while having a one year old she also was commuting 110 miles, five days per week to training. Being a young mom

with family difficulties and long commutes did not stop Caitlin from succeeding. She finished the program and has accepted a job in a Rural Health Clinic with plans to pursue a Register Nursing (RN) degree in the future. The following is what Caitlin wrote to Karen Henry, her case manager. "Ms. Karen Henry, I would like to thank you and the WIA program for all of your help throughout the last year. I would not be where I am today without it! I am beyond grateful for the tuition and book assistance that was provided to me – but the biggest help of all was the encouragement and support. Karen, thank you so, so much for the words of encouragement and for pushing me to be the best I can be!"

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# DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA



## James' Success Story

James Smith visited the AJC for assistance with finding employment in his current field. While at the AJC, the Employment Specialist revealed the various services and trainings available, and Mr. Smith decided to upgrade his professional capabilities through agency occupational skills training. Mr. Smith enrolled in the Emergency Medical Technician (EMT) training offered by Westlink Career Institute, Inc., a WIC-

approved training provider. He successfully completed the training in 2013 and received accreditation from the National Registry of Emergency Technicians/American Heart Associations. Subsequently in September 2013, he received full-time employment as an EMT driver with LifeStar Response. This employment opportunity has allowed Mr. Smith to fulfill some of his life goals, and he anticipates additional growth and opportunities in the future with the company.

## Janet's Success Story

Janet Clark earned her bachelor's degree but needed assistance obtaining sustainable employment opportunities. The AJC Employment Specialist conducted an assessment of Ms. Clark's skills and determined her employability would be increased if she were to enhance her computer skills and obtain certifications in

the IT field. Because Ms. Clark was WIA eligible, she was able to enroll in training offered through Byte Back – a WIC-approved training provider – to obtain her A+ Network Certification. In August 2013, Ms. Clark received full-time employment as a Cyber Security Analyst with Kingfisher Systems, Inc., earning an annual salary of \$40,000.

## IOWA



## Tom's Success Story

Tom was permanently laid off from Quad Graphics in Dubuque in February 2013 due to a business closing. Tom decided, with the help of the Workforce Center, to take a CNC course because it was a high demand occupation in Dubuque and he did not want to relocate. In October Tom began a CNC class with NICC. In addition to his CNC class he inquired about an Internship through the Workforce Center to gain some experience. He was accepted into an Internship at Dyersville Diecast. Following graduation Tom was hired at AY McDonald in Dubuque on May 19th. He is currently working 3rd shift making \$15.85 an hour.

Skills area, she was referred to several workshops to brush up on job seeking skills. Although Tracy possessed an Associate's degree, she learned about the National Career Readiness Certificate (NCRC) and how it could help her to demonstrate her potential to a new employer in a field that typically requires a Bachelor's degree. Tracy did well on the assessments, earning a Gold NCRC. The following week, in a re-employment services workshop, Tracy learned more about Skilled Iowa internships and was introduced to the business marketing specialist (BMS) to pursue this program in hopes of getting a foot in the door with a local company. The BMS recommended some changes for her resume and they identified a couple of companies in the area that were interested in hosting a marketing intern to provide training and insight into the industry. An internship plan was developed with a regional 24 broadcasting company and Tracy successfully completed a two-week internship in addition to further soft skills development through the Career Ready 101 training program. As a result of this internship experience, Tracy received an interview for a marketing position with the broadcasting business, along with

## Tracy's Success Story

Tracy visited the IowaWORKS North Iowa office after relocating to the area from Colorado. Although she had solid work experience, she was having difficulty finding work in her desired field of marketing and wasn't seeing many job openings in that sector. She was unfamiliar with the business community and didn't have a strong networking base that could help her develop job leads. After visiting the Center and receiving assistance from staff in the

interviews with two other businesses that the BMS contacted during this period. She ultimately accepted a full-time position with

one of the companies and is happy to have settled into a job in her career field.

## KANSAS



### Conny's Success Story

Conny was referred by the nursing director from Seward County Community College. Conny and her family were struggling financially. She, and her family, was uncertain if she would be able to continue her nursing degree given the circumstances. Conny submitted her application for legal residency and was granted a work permit, which would be temporary until her application was completely processed. Although she possessed legal documentation, she was not eligible to receive financial aid from the community college. Conny had just been accepted into the nursing program, but did not possess the financial resources needed to complete the program. Conny was enrolled as an adult in the KHPOP WIA program. She accepted her award letter from the nursing program and successfully completed the LPN program with Magna Cum Laude which means "with great praise" earning a 3.84 GPA. She was able to seek part-time employment while continuing in the program in pursuit of an associated degree in nursing. Conny completed the career success workshop, job search workshop and financial literacy workshop. Conny obtained her associates degree from Seward County Community College in May of 2014 "with great praise" and successfully obtained her registered nurse license July 2014. She is currently working full time as a registered nurse making self-sufficient wages.

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### Jane's Success Story

Jane came to the WFC as an older worker facing several physical challenges which limited the type of work she could do. Employed part-time as a cook, Jane was looking for help in finding full-time employment which offered more stability as it was likely her current employer would be out of business soon. A referral from the food assistance program with the Department for Children & Families, Jane connected to the FACET program at the WFC. Jane's FACET Employment Specialist worked one-on-one with her in job search activities. They developed a resume, created a cover letter and worked together on submitting online job applications. The WFC also connected Jane with a local clothing bank to get proper interview attire. With the help of the FACET program, Jane was able to quickly find another job when her part-time work ended due to a business closure. She remained in the food service industry and her Employment Specialist reports Jane was "thrilled with this kind of work."

# KENTUCKY



## Alyssa and Maryssa's Success Story

Alyssa and Maryssa Duncan are identical twin sisters. As is often true with twins, they are inseparable. They arrived together at JobNet to register in Focus Career before meeting with a WKWIB participant services specialist to inquire about funding assistance to complete their training in the registered nurse program at Madisonville Community College in Madisonville. While attending MCC, both ladies worked part-time at a local nursing home performing CNA duties, which cut substantially into their study time. Having each other's

support worked well, as they both graduated in December 2013 with GPAs of 3.4. The twins more than “doubled” their previous wage of \$10.75 an hour when Baptist Health hired both ladies as registered nurses at approximately \$21.50 per hour. Maryssa recently reported that they both work the same shift on the same floor, but on opposite ends.

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# LOUISIANA



## Happy's Success Story

Happy is a resident of Calcasieu Parish and the proud parent of one son. Happy attended McNeese State University in the two-year Nursing Curricula and become a participant of the WIA Adult Program on January 18, 2011. At the time of enrollment into the WIA program, Happy was employed part-time as a babysitter earning \$100.00 per week and receiving \$200.00 per month in food stamps.

While in training, WIA assisted Happy with books, childcare, meals, uniforms and supplies. In the month of March 2012, Happy gave birth to a premature baby boy and had to exit training because of complications with her baby. Her baby was transferred to the Children's Hospital in

New Orleans, LA. Happy is planning is planning to return to school and complete training.

During the time of Happy's absence from training, she continued communicating with the WIA counselor, updating her on the progress of her son. Happy exemplified extraordinary faith during her baby's illness. Through prayer and with Happy's knowledge of medical terminology, she persevered and he's doing well.

In January 2013, Happy returned to school, graduating in December 2013 with an Associate's Degree in Nursing. After completing training, she secured full time employment at West Calcasieu Cameron Hospital as a Registered Nurse with a starting pay of \$18.35 per hour. Happy is now self-sufficient.



## Soniya's Success Story

Soniya D. came into the Waldorf American Job Center on a mission to find employment. Beginning her job search process, Ms. D. seemed to doubt her ability to effectively complete an online application. Soniya began to build a relationship with the Job Service Specialist team as she searched for assistance using the Resource Area. She was eager to learn and the staff was passionate about empowering her in return. Considering her lack of computer skills, Soniya's biggest challenge was clear. Ms. D. devoted an impressive amount of time to the Waldorf American Job Center ensuring she would reach the goals she and the staff member set. By becoming a consistent customer, Ms. D. was able to develop a strong résumé and gain assistance with successfully completing applications. Job Service Specialists also encouraged Ms. D. to become organized by keeping records of all usernames, passwords, and positions for which she applied. As the application process became easier, another wall of discouragement was built by the challenge of landing an interview and then actually getting the job. With the motivation and support from her Job Service Specialist, Soniya stayed positive and kept pushing forward. Currently, Soniya holds both full and part-time positions in the medical field and is very appreciative for the help received. At her full-time position located at Genesis of Waldorf, Ms. D. works in the Rehabilitation Department as a Geriatric Nursing Assistant (GNA). She assists patients recently released from surgery and those suffering from injuries. She has even

earned the distinction of being named, "Employee of the Month." At her part-time job, Soniya works at Fort Washington's Rehabilitation Facility as a home nurse.

## Mr. Johnson's Success Story

When Mr. Johnson visited the MCC, he received various informational resources as well as receiving assistance with résumé review and job search. He re-enrolled in the Maryland Workforce Exchange Virtual One Stop (MWE-VOS), as he had not utilized the system since 2004. Mr. Johnson was provided an overview of DWDAL and MWE-VOS services and was encouraged to stay involved with the American Job Centers. With a detailed critique and a revised functional résumé in tow, Mr. Johnson had been given a solid foundation to essentially eliminate the time-gap (caused by his work separation) on his résumé. Mr. Johnson eventually obtained an Associates of Arts (AA) Degree during his employment layoff and subsequently pursued a Bachelor of Arts (BA) Degree. After having successfully completing four (4) rounds of interviews, Mr. Johnson accepted an employment offer from Toyota Financial. Although Mr. Johnson originally interviewed for a Customer Service Associate position, human resources personnel determined during the course of the interview that Mr. Johnson's extensive experience would be suited for their Collections Department. As a direct result, he was offered that position instead. Mr. Johnson's sentiments and gratitude were best expressed in a thank you letter singing our praises, "After many job fairs, hundreds of résumés sent and rejection letters, Maryland Workforce

Development was a godsend! You and your colleagues need to know that you are helping to perform a valuable service and I am a success story. I will never forget this experience and will tell all about this wonderful service being offered.” Mr. Johnson began work in April 2014.

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*You and your colleagues need to know that you are helping to perform a valuable service and I am a success story. I will never forget this experience and will tell all about this wonderful service being offered.”*

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## MICHIGAN



### Consuelo’s Success Story



Consuelo Poland, also known as Coney, moved to St. Ignace from Grand Rapids after graduating from the Kendall College of

Art and Design in May 2012 with a Bachelors of Fine Arts in Functional Art. She spent her summer working on Mackinac Island as a sales representative in “Paintings by Marlee” Gallery in the Grand Hotel, gaining some hands-on experience in sales. In September 2012, determined to figure out a direction for her art career, Coney met with Michigan Works! to discuss going back to school for welding. After being approved for training, Coney returned to Grand Rapids to attend Grand Rapids Community College’s Tassell Michigan Technical Education Center (M-TEC) for an 18-week welding/fabricating job training program. While attending the M-TEC, the dean approached Coney about sponsoring her during Artprize 2013, which meant all expenses would be paid for by the Tassel family. After thinking it over, Coney decided it was an offer too good to refuse and the “Arboleda Maya Urbana” (Mayan Urban Arbor) was born. Completing all course requirements a few weeks ahead of schedule, Consuelo was able to work on the

structure during the duration of the training program. After completing school, Coney was offered a welding position at DeWys Manufacturing. While at DeWys, she was one of the only women to receive additional education at “DeWys University,” which gained the interest, financial and media support from the business owner, making him an additional sponsor. After Artprize, Coney was offered a job at Joseph Jeup, Inc., a contemporary high-end furniture company, as a finisher in charge of tulle, staining, glazing, and doing touch up work on furniture.

### Suzette’s Success Story



Suzette deGraaf had years of experience and skills working as an office manager,

secretary, bookkeeper, business process supervisor, as well as with warehouse shipping and receiving, but she dreamed of becoming part of the fast-growing medical field, making a difference in people’s lives. In June of 2011, Suzette came to Michigan Works! Seeking funding for training to get started on a new career path. She completed Work Keys to earn a silver National Career Readiness Certificate and

began investigating training programs. New Horizons had a Healthcare Information Management training program that offered training in additional skills needed for a career in medical information. Suzette's training began at the end of June with Michigan Works! Funding the cost of her classes and training materials. She successfully finished her training in September of 2012, and then completed an internship at St. Mary's Hospital in December of 2013. She earned her American Academy of Professional Coders (AAPC) certification and the National Health-Career Administration (NHA) certification, to become a Certified Medical Administrative Assistant. Fresenius Medical Care in Holland offered Suzette a position

as a medical secretary after interviewing her in January 2014. Her new job began in February and she loves it. She says, "My life started to change in June 2011 when I received a Michigan Works! Grant to be able to go to school in the medical field. The journey has been worth it all. There is a light at the end of the tunnel if you are willing to do what it takes to make a change in your life."

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## MINNESOTA



### Crystal's Success Story



I was a high school dropout. While I was growing up, school wasn't my first priority. I ended up taking a bad road in my life and quit school at the age of 15. It took many years to

get my life back on track. I never had a dream until I had my first child. I decided it was time to go back to school and complete my education. I worked for almost four years to complete my GED. During that time, I had my second child. I was asked if I would like to go to school at Rochester Community and Technical College with a grant offered through the Bridges to Health Care. I was uncertain about it because I never imagined myself being able to graduate from college. I decided this was

something that I needed to do, not only for myself but also for my kids. I started school in January of 2014, with an amazing counselor, Ruth Borsheim. She has helped me in so many areas in my life. She informed me of the WIA Adult program, which offers help to college students. I wouldn't be where I am today if it wasn't for programs like this one. I'm a full-time student with a 3.6 GPA. I made the dean's list and graduated August 5, 2014. My life today is amazing, and I now have a dream. I want to thank all who have helped make this program possible, not only for myself, but many others.

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*I wouldn't be where I am today if it wasn't for programs like this one. . . . My life today is amazing, and I now have a dream. I want to thank all who have helped make this program possible, not only for myself, but many others.*

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# MISSISSIPPI



## LaPorscha's Success Story

LaPorscha Pratt was enrolled in the Nursing Academy program through Meridian Public Schools. She was a two year Allied Health Nursing Student at Ross Collins Vocational Center on the Meridian High School campus. Her Allied Health instructor felt that the nursing academy would be great for LaPorscha. In order to qualify to take the Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA) Exam, participants have to pass the health care assistant class with at least a 70 average. At

Meridian Community College (MCC), the class is taught in a complete semester; however, WIA students are allowed to take the class in a three-week time frame. LaPorscha completed the 16-week nursing academy program successfully and passed the class with a 91 average. She took the CNA exam in August and passed the test. Currently, she is scheduled to attend orientation at East Mississippi State Hospital where she will be employed as a CNA in her first step toward self-sufficiency

# MONTANA



## Kari's Success Story

Kari recently landed a position in her field as a graphic designer for the Powell Tribune! Kari worked previously for the Billings Gazette and Alpha Graphics but experienced lay-offs due to changes and downturn in the area of print media. She retooled her skill set by taking an Administrative Assistant certificate program at Montana State University Billings' Garfield Community Resource Center. We were able to coordinate a co-enrollment for Kari with the Dislocated Worker program at Job Service. Because of that partnership and Kari's newly gained administrative assistant skills, we coordinated a paid Work Experience through Job Corps. Kari took part in all phases of our employment and training program. She faithfully attended our job seeker support group, Job Club, and the YWCA coordinated and paid for two

computer classes offered through Entre Technology. Job Service was able to help with some wonderful payments to help Kari relocate from Billings to Powell and get settled in a new apartment. Kari went through significant grief and hardship having been unemployed for some time. We are thrilled about her new career opportunity.

## Betty Jean's Success Story

Betty Jean continues to seek opportunities to expand her repertoire. She is now in follow-up, having been enrolled as a WIA participant for several years during which time she completed her radiology therapy program. She excelled while dealing with major personal hurdles- finishing a very difficult course of study that included a rigorous yearlong residency program. Following this, she secured a position with

Rogue Valley Medical Center in Oregon and has now retained this position through her probationary period at \$35.07/hour. I just got a call from her and she said she has a second interview for a like position here in

Bozeman at Bozeman Deaconess Hospital. She never wanted to leave but did so to pursue her profession and now it looks like she'll be able to return- with a fiancée I am told!

## NEBRASKA



### Jeremy's Success Story



"In March I was let go from my job due to an injury, which was pretty hard for me because my wife and I just had a baby and we also have a six year-old-son. So, I didn't know where I was

going to go or what I was going to do, so I went to Dept. of Labor and was introduced to the WIA case manager who really encouraged me to go back to school. So now I chose to get an associate degree in emergency medical technician. Because of the WIA program, I now have the opportunity to work in a field of my choice, which is a really a big deal to me. I am super excited about my future and I couldn't be more thankful or more blessed."

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***Because of the WIA program, I now have the opportunity to work in a field of my choice, which is a really a big deal to me.***

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### Matthew's Success Story

"My name is Matthew. When I first came to the Department of Labor, I tried to get into the Synergy Program, but I'm a recovering drug addict and I relapsed and went back to rehab. After that I came back to the Department of Labor but, I didn't have a resume, no job experience, nothing. They helped me put together a resume, get a job and now I'm in school – my life is better than it ever has been because of WIA. I work full time over nights and go to school during the day. I have an amazing job. Because of the help from WIA I'm getting ready to finish my associate's degree. My life has changed tremendously. I am proud that I am able to get a job without having to lie on the application. I don't have to work at a fast food restaurant the rest of my life. I actually have a job that pays me very well. All I can say is that without these programs, a lot of people suffer, especially those of us who want to do it, but can't find a way or the means to do it ourselves. I couldn't have done it without the help and courage WIA gave me. I just appreciate everything WIA has done for me."



## John's Success Story

Foundation for an Independent Tomorrow (FIT) John came to FIT as a 21-year-old, single male, working as a part-time retail associate with a local shoe store. John, earning minimum wage and struggling to get enough hours to survive, was urged by his mother to develop his cooking skills further. John applied for tuition assistance to attend the Culinary Academy of Las Vegas, and was awarded the funding for vocational training, ultimately completing the course with a score of 96%. After graduating, John was given a one-on-one appointment with our in-house resume writer and attended FIT's weekly Job Club to conduct his job search. Three weeks after graduating, he received a call from a local hotel and casino who offered him a full-time position as a Kitchen Assistant at a wage of \$13.75 an hour. John has now been working for seven months with the company and has been able to obtain his own apartment, car, and has even been able to begin investing for his future.

## Lenny's Success Story

Goodwill of Southern Nevada Lenny came to Goodwill in a situation he never thought he would be in. Having found steady work in the construction industry most of his life, he was shocked to find himself unemployed. Lenny did not have a HS Diploma or GED as it wasn't required in the construction industry. But now, the lack of a GED was becoming a huge barrier to employment. Lenny wanted to receive HVAC training because he felt that it would always be in demand. However, it was determined he had many barriers to obtaining a HVAC job. We felt that with determination all these barriers could be overcome. 48 Lenny was approved for HVAC training with WIA funds. He also enrolled in a GED program so that he could not only apply for better jobs, but also so he could show his kids what he had accomplished and set a good example for them to finish school. After his HVCA training was complete, there was a noticeable difference in Lenny's tone and demeanor, and he was eager to apply for jobs. Within a month, Lenny was hired as a HVAC Technician.

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# NEW HAMPSHIRE



## Christopher's Success Story

Christopher is a 29-year old married father (with the couple's second baby on the way) newly arrived from Kentucky, where his only work experience was in low-skill, low-pay jobs – stock clerk, forklift driver, fast food prep. Christopher and the family tried to get by on food stamps and Christopher's job at a gas station earning \$8.00 an hour. It wasn't working. And with the pregnancy, Christopher knew he had to do something different to provide for his family. Urged by his NH Works counselor to consider a new training program in advanced manufacturing, Christopher thought about how he had always enjoyed working with his hands and making things. He scored very well the Realistic on the O\*NET Interest Profiler, and read the literature given to him describing the Advanced Composites Manufacturing (ACM) training program at Great Bay Community College. Christopher needed to lay some groundwork for this big change in his life. He agreed to enroll in the WorkReadyNH program offered by a NH Works partner, the Community College System of NH. WorkReadyNH offers soft skills training along with a national work-readiness certificate. His testing on work-readiness was high in both math and reading, which was very encouraging. Christopher also received transportation assistance to attend classes. At times, the new experience of school and training (he had been accepted into the advanced manufacturing program) proved too much, but Christopher wanted it bad enough that he accepted extra counseling and tutoring. Christopher graduated from the advanced manufacturing training in May 2014. He

immediately started work at Safran Aerospace Composites (in fact, the very next day after graduation!). Employed full-time as a Quality Inspector, earning \$15.50 per hour with full benefits.

## Jeffrey's Success Story

Jeffrey, a 51-year old father of two lost his job in August 2013 with a refrigeration company. It was steady work for three years, and Jeffrey hoped he could collect benefits while looking for work, and keep things together. He soon realized that unemployment benefits didn't cover all the bills. Jeffrey's phone was disconnected, making a job search even more difficult. The electricity was about to be shut off at home. In October 2013, Jeffrey, eligible for WIA, asked for some counseling and guidance assistance. Working with NH Works partners, Jeffrey was able to get the phone turned back on, and he received some help with the electric bill. Most importantly, Jeffrey got help that was essential in becoming a marketable job seeker.

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***By obtaining a gas fitter's license with the help of NH Works, Jeffrey was able to enter the job market with skills employers needed.***

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By obtaining a gas fitter's license with the help of NH Works, Jeffrey was able to enter the job market with skills employers needed. Hired as a fulltime Service Technician by a local company, ARC, Inc., Jeffrey earns \$28.75 an hour for a 40- hour week with full benefits. The future looks a lot brighter for Jeffrey and his two children due to the help of NH Works.

# NORTH CAROLINA



## Brandon's Success Story



Brandon Bond came to Asheville to attend the University of North Carolina at Asheville. In 2011, he graduated with a bachelor's

degree in history and since had worked in a variety of businesses, including a restaurant owned by his family. Bond was interested in brewing and was hired as a brewer trainee by Hi-Wire Brewing. The owners of Hi-Wire Brewing heard about the OJT program and wanted Bond to participate as an incumbent worker. Bond would train as a Level II brewer. Bond was also enrolled into a welding class at A-B Tech Community College through the WIA program. Bond successfully completed the OJT training and the welding class and is now a Level II trained brewer. He is also able to use his new welding skills at the brewery. Bond continues to build his knowledge base and skill-sets related to brewing beer and is now fully equipped to continue in his chosen occupation.

## Donna's Success Story



A mother of two, Donna Stevens had worked as a teacher's assistant for seven years and was responsible for more than 500 children each week. Due to budget cuts, she was told her job would be temporary at best, and Stevens

knew she needed to pursue more stable

employment. Stevens had previously worked as a certified nursing assistant 18 years prior to becoming a teacher's assistant, but she had never completed her goal of becoming a nurse. She took classes part-time for three years and received Pell Grants to help cover the cost of her education. She was admitted into the nursing program at Caldwell Community College, which she would begin the August after finishing her last school semester as a teacher's assistant. She applied through the WIA and found the workforce staff in her area helpful and informational. The WIA paid for her tuition for the first semester, and a Pell Grant covered the cost of her books. Recently, Stevens accepted a position as a registered nurse at Catawba Valley Medical Center, with a starting pay of \$19.76 per hour. "I feel I can provide a more stable future for myself and my family," Stevens said. "Completing this degree has shown my children the power of hard work and it has inspired them to excel in school as well. Both the boys are honor students."

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*"I feel I can provide a more stable future for myself and my family," Stevens said.*

*"Completing this degree has shown my children the power of hard work and it has inspired them to excel in school as well."*

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## Jennifer's Success Story

In 2012, Jennifer Mbugua found herself being overjoyed and deeply saddened at the same time. She had been accepted into Southwestern Community College but had learned that financial aid would only cover one semester. A single mother of two with

limited income, Mbugua couldn't afford to pay for the program on her own. She learned about WIA through a co-worker. The WIA covered Mbugua's tuition, books, uniforms, supplies, additional classes, and even the cost of gas to and from classrooms and practical clinical classes. Her case manager was extremely supportive, regularly kept in touch with her, and told her she could succeed. Mbugua is now employed as a registered nurse at Harris Regional Hospital. "If it weren't for this

program, I would have never been able to make it through nursing school," Mbugua said. "This program gave me the assistance I needed to better myself. Now, I will be able to work as a registered nurse and provide for my children, and I owe it all to WIA."

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*"This program gave me the assistance I needed to better myself. Now, I will be able to work as a registered nurse and provide for my children, and I owe it all to WIA."*

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## NORTH DAKOTA



### Darren's Success Story

Darren came to the Grand Forks Customer Service Office looking for financial assistance to begin a computer and networking course. Darren had been a JSND customer in the past and was enrolled in an On the Job Training (OJT). Staff reviewed his file and learned that there had been problems with dependability and work ethic. The case manager visited with Darren about these concerns and helped him work through the issues. His training request was then taken to the Selection Committee and approved, so Darren started the computer and networking course in January 2012. Darren received funding for tuition, books and fees for the duration of his training. He also received support services to ensure his success. He was very successful in school and achieved a 4.0 GPA. Because he worked very hard, he was able to graduate a semester earlier than anticipated and completed the training in December, 2013. Darren secured a job as a Network technician for a business in GF. This is exactly the type of work he wanted to do and he is getting the experience he needs

to grow in his career. He is very excited and very appreciative of the assistance he received.

### Jane's Success Story

Jane initially applied for WIA classroom funding August 2009, but did not have the grade point average (GPA) needed to be accepted into the nursing program. She improved her GPA and was accepted to the nursing program one academic year later. She re-applied for WIA in June 2010. Jane was a 43 year-old single mother of three children. She worked as a CNA/CMA at a nursing home, made \$11.05/hour and drove nearly 100 miles round trip to work three days per week. She was receiving food stamps and also helped out at the local Cenex C-Store. Her occupational goal of Registered Nurse met the governors' additional target industry criteria and was an in-demand occupation that would lead to self-sufficiency. Jane was approved to receive tuition, fees, and books using WIA Adult funds. Jane had a very demanding college schedule, which required her to drive almost 90 miles round trip, five days per week, in addition to clinical rotations.

She successfully completed the Practical Nursing Certificate and passed her state boards that same summer. She immediately started the Associate Degree Nurse (RN) program. Jane drove to Devils Lake 5 days per week for classes, but added trips for clinical rotations nearly every weekend. Jane stayed in contact with her WIA Case Manager and had a strong support system in her family and fellow nursing students. She graduated with an Associate in Applied Science - Associate Degree Nurse and received an RN license. Jane started working as a nurse in a clinic and was paid \$14.04 per hour with full benefits. The physician she worked for left the clinic, but Jane was hired as a Medical Surgical Nurse,

earning \$21.00/hour. She is now employed as a Registered Nurse at a VA hospital and earns \$23.00/hour with full benefits. She will graduate from Minot State University in the spring of 2015 with a Bachelor of Science in Nursing. Following graduation she plans to become a Nurse Practitioner or earn a Master's Degree in Nursing and become an educator. We received the following message from Jane, "Just wanted to thank you all for believing in me and helping me out as I pursued my lifelong dream and college degree. Couldn't have done it without you."

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## OHIO



### Tempest't's Success Story



Tempest't applied for WIA funding in June 2013. She was pursuing a bachelor's degree in construction management at Kent State University. She

had only two semesters remaining but needed financial assistance to complete her education and become self-sufficient. Tempest't chose a nontraditional occupation that involves public safety, time management, cost management, quality management, decision-making, mathematics, drawing and human resources. She received her degree in May 2014 and became employed at Simon Roofing in Youngstown. Because WIA helped fund her last two years, she will not

have student loan debt and will be able to concentrate on becoming self sufficient or, as she stated, "to grow up."

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"Traditionally, women do not study in the areas of STEM or science, technology, engineering and mathematics," Tempest't said. "Most women are usually reluctant to go in a traditionally male-dominated field and stick to 'clean jobs' because they are considered acceptable by society. This makes many women feel less confident and have low self assurance, even though they may exceed in a chosen career. When you have self-confidence and drive, you can do anything you set your mind on."

# SOUTH CAROLINA



## William's Success Story



William holds a Bachelor's Degree in Chemistry and a Master's Degree in Education, but needed some additional assistance with searching for and

obtaining full-time employment. He was the sole provider of his household and had exhausted all his savings. He was willing to try out any job opportunity that was available. Workforce Solution The Camden

Business Services Representative (BSR) reviewed William's resume and thought he would be a great candidate for the On-the-Job Training program, which is offered to local employers. The BSR took William's resume to Martech Research, a local employer in Bishopville, SC, who hires Lab Technicians and Chemists. Outcomes & Benefits Martech contacted William the next day to set up an interview. He was offered a Process Chemist position through OJT. He has successfully completed his OJT program with Martech and has continued as a full-time employee.

# SOUTH DAKOTA



## Daniel's Success Story



Daniel Brown was a 19-year-old high school graduate from Huron. He had attended one semester of college at Northern State University, but quit because he didn't know what he wanted to do

for a career and money was tight. His work history was limited, only working a couple part-time jobs at fast food establishments. Daniel was enrolled into the WIA program as an adult. Cornerstones Career Learning Center was able to assist Daniel with the cost of a manufacturing course through a Community Development Block Grant. The class trainers said Daniel was smart, a great student, and showed a lot of potential in

learning manufacturing. Local office staff met with the Human Resources Professional at Terex about on-the job training for Daniel. As a result, Daniel was then hired as a Fabrication Machinist B and started at Terex on January 6, 2014, making \$15.24/hour. He trained for a month on the day shift before switching to the night shift to complete his training. When he started working the night shift, his pay went to \$17.07/hour. His training supervisor, Teri Zwieg, told WIA staff Daniel still had a lot to learn about the job, but he was impressed with his desire to learn. He said although Daniel's progress was going slowly, he was very meticulous in the work he produced. He asked questions when he needed to, but liked that he tried to figure the measurements, blueprints, and schematics on his own before asking for help. Mr. Zwieg said he rarely had to make any

corrections to Daniel's work. The training contract came to a successful completion on February 25, 2014, to be a Fabrication Machinist.

## Trent's Success Story

At 23 years old and on his own, Trent wanted a stable career where he could make a living wage. With help from WIA

funds, he started at the Southeastern Lineman Training School. While in school, he earned his climbing certification, his OSHA card along with CPR, AED and First Aid certification as well as his CDL. He graduated with an achievement award for Best All Around out of 400 students! Trent found a job right away working for Mas Tec North America Inc. and is getting to do what he really loves.

# VERMONT



## S.'s Success Story

I was first introduced to S., age 30 and a father of three, as his TANF case manager. He had been unemployed since January, 2014 with experience working at a local supermarket and as a furniture laborer. Timeliness and dependability were not initially his strong suits. What stood out most about S. from the beginning was his persistence. In various instances, S. overcame homelessness, substance abuse, and re-obtained his driver's license. In April, 2014, as a result of his hard work and determination, S. became ready to begin his transition to employment. He was determined eligible for the WIA program. Through the use of an O'Net interest profiler, personal assessments, and some labor market research, it was determined that a position as a CNC Machine Operator would make a lot of sense for him. With funding provided by the VT Department of Labor, S. was able to enroll in an Intro to CNC course offered by Lyndon State College and the Northeast Kingdom Manufacturing Program. He completed 120+ hours of practice and training over the course of four weeks. On June 13, 2014, S. received his certificate symbolizing successful

completion. He was then offered a 3 month On the Job Training (OJT) opportunity in the sheet metal department at Northeastern Precision (NEP). S. completed his OJT in October, and remains employed full time with the company. He looks forward to continuing to develop his skills as he progresses with his career at NEP.

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## S.'s Success Story

S. was referred to me by her Reach Up Case Manager for WIA services. She is a single mother of two. The father of her children is in prison on drug charges. S. was scheduled to participate in Cornucopia, a training program for women in transition to learn food service industry skills, from the ground up. The first five weeks of the training program saw a partnership between cornucopia and Northeast Kingdom Learning services. While participating in the soft skills training, participants' reading and math skills are assessed, and remedial education is provided if necessary.

Fortunately for S., this was not an issue. This portion of the training also includes communication and job search skills. In addition to the classroom training, numerous field trips are arranged for the trainees to visit establishments to learn about and see every aspect of food service first hand—CSA’s senior meal sites, bakeries, and fine dining establishments. It is quite a learning experience where the participants can also begin to differentiate between “front of house” and “back of house” responsibilities. Upon successful completion of the soft skills training, S. began her WIA subsidized Work Experience working 30 hours per week at the Cornucopia site. Cornucopia provides Meals-On-Wheels food production for over 400 recipients. In addition, the site offers a senior meal site every Friday. The participants learn from experienced Chef/Instructors, and participate in ServSafe training and credentialing as part of the 14 week work experience program. S. quickly proved

herself in the commercial kitchen environment and became a go-to person for other participants when Chef was assisting others. She did such a good job in the work experience that the Cornucopia Director, realizing a need for more hands in the kitchen, created a 15 hour a week paid position for Sonya to work in a Production and Chef Assistant capacity.

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*She did such a good job in the work experience that the Cornucopia Director, realizing a need for more hands in the kitchen, created a 15 hour a week paid position for Sonya to work in a Production and Chef Assistant capacity.*

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That number was quickly increased to 30, and S. is earning \$10.00 an hour. Six months after starting her unsubsidized employment, she is still going strong and doing great things at Cornucopia. I am proud to have played a small part in her success.

## WISCONSIN



### Wilniesha’s Success Story

After working at Frontier Airlines in Milwaukee for seven years, Wilniesha Smith was part of a mass layoff in 2012. As she considered new careers, she was inspired by Milwaukee’s emergence in the water industry and her family. Her dad is a Master Plumber and instructor at Milwaukee’s Bradley Tech, and her grandmother is a lifelong gardener. She enrolled at Milwaukee Area Technical College, where she is currently working toward her associate’s degree in Environmental Health and Water Quality Technology. She is also working toward her Water Technician

Certificate, a certificate developed by The Water Council, MAWIB and Milwaukee Area Technical College. Additionally, she was able to get experience in her new field with an internship at the Milwaukee Metropolitan Sewerage District as part of MAWIB’s DOL accelerator grant.

### Anthony’s Success Story

Anthony Irby first connected with the WorkSmart Network (the South Central Wisconsin WDB’s program provider) and its WIA adult services in January 2014 because he was tired of working limited time jobs that required long hours for little pay. He had been working temporary jobs making

\$10 per hour when work was available. His hope was that the WorkSmart Network team could help him pursue a long-term career to support his family, rather than just stringing together short-term jobs. By February 2014, Anthony began working with his WorkSmart Network (WIA adult program) case manager to find work in the construction and utilities industry—as he already had some background and prior experience within the field, but little training. His case manager informed him of an upcoming training centered on construction concepts to help him improve his skills and connect with local construction employers that were hiring. Anthony enrolled in the winter 2014 cohort of the Foundations for the Trades Academy—an apprenticeship readiness program designed to help participants prepare for career pathways in the construction and utilities industry. This program, supported with WIA funding, not only allowed Anthony to see what types of trade jobs were available and build on his trades skills, but it also gave him hands-on experience working on a residential build site, as well as help with work readiness and soft skills needed to be employable. “This

program has really helped me get my good foot forward and keep on going. It gets you ready for everything,” said Anthony.

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Anthony graduated from the Foundations for the Trades Academy on April 4, 2014, and began networking with local construction employers and preparing for apprenticeship exams to become a steamfitter. During this time, his WIA case manager and the other Foundations for the Trades Academy partners helped him navigate the application and exam process and connect to companies that were seeking apprentices for the trade. Anthony was hired by General Heating and Air Conditioning in July 2014, and is preparing for the steamfitter apprenticeship program offered by the company. As an apprentice, Anthony will continue to learn the trade while on the job and in the classroom while earning a paycheck far higher than \$10 per hour.

## WYOMING

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### Jenny’s Success Story

Jenny Baldes is a single mother of one, who lost her job with Wal-Mart about two years ago. She searched for work on her own for about a year and then signed up for the program, Personal Opportunities with Employment Responsibilities (POWER), through the Department of Family Services (DFS) and the Department of Workforce Services (DWS). Terri Hays, her POWER case



manager at the Riverton Workforce Center, worked with Jenny on her job search skills, resume development and other soft skills. Weeks lead to months, but Jenny continued to complete items she was assigned to do for POWER and applied for literally dozens of jobs over the next several months. Jenny also did an on-line medical billing course during this time but, without experience, that didn’t help much either. In January, Terri approached the Riverton Workforce

Center team and was allowed to let Jenny do an unpaid work experience at the workforce center to help her build skills and have work to show on applications. The staff at the workforce center found Jenny to be very willing to learn, and that she learned quickly. Everyone assisted Jenny in her job search and gave her feedback on items she did need help with. Soon an opportunity came for possible job placement, but there were several candidates in the interview process and the employer hired another person for one opening. The employer said that she would like to work with Jenny, but needed some help until she got her trained. WIA case manager, David Hill came to the rescue and offered to set Jenny up as a WIA participant, so he could assist the employer with an on-the-job (OJT) training agreement, to offset part of Jenny's wage until she was up to speed.

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***WIA case manager, David Hill came to the rescue and offered to set Jenny up as a WIA participant, so he could assist the employer with an on-the-job (OJT) training agreement, to offset part of Jenny's wage until she was up to speed.***

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The employer decided he would give Jenny the opportunity to come to work for her, in customer accounts, on the OJT. After two years of non-paid work, one year on the POWER Program, and about three months on the unpaid work experience, at the Riverton Workforce Center, Jenny is employed by a local employer. She is enjoying going to work, and being paid for it! Jenny is back on the road to self-sufficiency.

## Kristin's Success Story



Liz Chicos, Cheyenne POWER case manager, worked with Kristin Sierocki for 6 months, beginning in November 2013. Kristin has three small children, and the

father of the children is currently incarcerated. Kristin and children have been going through a lot of depression but they are seeking counseling. She felt very depressed due to the personal situation and also the feeling of being under qualified for many jobs for which she had applied. Kristin was referred to WIA Career Advisors, Trent Webb and Terri Wells, at the Cheyenne Workforce Center, in order for her to pursue a career interest. She followed through with WIA program eligibility requirements, assessments, evaluations, and Job Research Worksheet. Kristen's eligibility determination packet was presented to the eligibility review committee at the end of January 2014. She was determined eligible, and that she would benefit from the WIA Program and services. In the beginning of February she was able to start her certified nursing assistant (CNA) training at a local training provider, HealthCare Provider Education, Cheyenne, Wyoming. After her training was completed she had used up all her POWER career readiness and job search hours, so it was decided it would be best to have her continue in a work experience component. She followed through with her appointments and preparation, and was placed with Life Care Center of Cheyenne, in a work experience, and absolutely loved the employer she was placed with. In April she passed her CNA board exams and finished her work experience. She was hired, full time, by Life Care Center of

Cheyenne. She has been making \$11.05 an hr and was very proud to have a fresh new start.

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***In April she passed her CNA board exams and finished her work experience. She was hired, full time, by Life Care Center of Cheyenne. She has been making \$11.05 an hr and was very proud to have a fresh new start.***

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She came in and told Liz that she was excited to be enrolling for benefits with her new job and could not wait to see what her next accomplishment would be. She also

looked into tuition reimbursement through her new employment to further her education and become a registered nurse and is considering strategies that would enable her to obtain that goal. Liz and Kristin talked about the possibility of building up her work history. She would eventually like to work at the Cheyenne Regional Hospital. For now, she is very happy at where she is working and enjoys all the people there. It truly is awesome to see how these programs provide the temporary assistance to help individuals achieve long term self-sufficiency

# WORKFORCE INVESTMENT ACT

## Dislocated Worker Program Success Stories

### ALABAMA



#### Andrew's Success Story

Andrew always wanted a job that would allow him to work with his hands and provide a decent wage. He thought going to a four year college was the answer. Reeves enrolled in the University of West Florida and found that it was not for him. "The classroom work and time involved to obtain a degree was not conducive to my goal of seeking a challenging and action filled career. My goal was stable employment that provided income to support my family," said Andrew. "I researched several welding programs and determined that Bishop's welding program was the best." Prior to entering the welding program, Andrew worked various odd jobs in labor and construction for a temporary agency. He was pleased that Bishop seemed interested in his success and thankful that Mobile Works' WIA training scholarship provided him the opportunity to get the skills needed to position him for employment in the shipbuilding industry. Andrew did extremely well with his studies and in fact graduated in the top of his class. He was inducted in the National Technical Honor Society and now works for Ingalls Shipbuilding making over \$40,000 yearly with benefits. He's happy with his career choice and being able to provide for his two year old son.

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#### James' Success Story

James, who is married with one child, was recently laid off as a pastry chef. Despite his best efforts, he could not find work as a pastry chef in the Birmingham area. After meeting with his case manager and completing his own research, he determined that a degree as a Heating, Air Conditioning and Refrigeration Mechanic Repairer was the most expeditious way for him to gain employment in a career oriented profession. He decided to pursue this degree at Lawson State Community College. Faced with mounting bills, James took a part-time job while training. Through it all, James' perseverance paid off. After graduation, he was immediately employed by the University of Alabama-Birmingham (UAB) in its Campus Maintenance Department. James has now completed his 90 day probation period and is eligible for promotions. James expressed satisfaction with his current employment situation and future opportunities. He credits the Jefferson County Workforce Development Office with helping him find success.

# ALASKA



## Justin's Success Story



Justin Weatherby was referred to Career Support and Training by Plumbers and Pipefitters Local 367. He was indentured as a first-year apprentice to specialize in HVAC. He met with his case manager at the apprenticeship school and was identified as a dislocated worker seeking a new career. DLW assisted with tools and other support services. Justin became discouraged when his long-term dispatch turned out to be intermittent work and there was not enough work for all the HVAC apprentices. Justin's spouse had also been laid off from her job and they were struggling to make ends meet on unemployment benefits. He did some research and found that it was possible to study on your own and get certified as a waste water treatment operator. With this certification and a commercial driver's license, he could be dispatched through the union to the local water utility. He discussed his situation with his case manager and she agreed to fund his CDL

with DLW-NEG funds after he passed his other certification tests. He passed his tests and the apprenticeship coordinator agreed to postpone Justin's second year of apprenticeship school so he could attend CDL training. After completing both CDL training and second year school, Justin waited, hoping to be dispatched to the water utility. He was about to leave for a regular dispatch to Shemya when he saw a missed call on his phone. He called and learned he was finally dispatched to the water utility as a temporary worker. According to his research, it was necessary to take the temporary dispatch in order to get a permanent dispatch and he leapt at the chance. A few weeks later, he called to announce that he was now permanently dispatched to the water utility making \$31.43 per hour. Justin is now able to support his family and is hopeful about his future.

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# ARKANSAS



## Carey's Success Story

Carey Knowlton understands how it feels to be a dislocated worker. He worked

as a Honda sales representative until he was laid off from the company. Uncertain about his future, he visited the Forrest City Arkansas Workforce Center inquiring about center resources and assistance for school. Carey had always wanted to be a teacher but couldn't afford to continue his

education without assistance or a job. Heather Pipkin, WIA Career Advisor, began working with Carey in 2012. He was enrolled into the WIA program placed in occupational skills training. Since Carey had expressed a desire to be a teacher, he enrolled at Arkansas State University (ASU) and began his studies in Middle Level Education. The Middle-Level Education program is designed to prepare teachers to teach mathematics and science. After completing his educational requirements, Carey graduated and signed a contract with the Palestine Wheatley School District in St. Francis County and is teaching 9th grade Physical Science. With desire, drive and his degree -- Carey has now achieved his goal to teach others and to be the best he can be.

## Jerry's Success Story

Jerry Luna has always worked and provided for his family. When he was laid off from his job his world tilted. After some research he decided to earn an Energy Control Technology Certificate. He consumed his financial resources during spring and

summer semesters. He did not qualify for aid except loans which he did not want to do. With one more semester to go and no way to pay for it he had to apply for a small student loan. He had heard about the WIA program at school and decided to complete a prescreening form and was found eligible as a dislocated worker. He is very thankful for the WIA program and the assistance that was provided. He was able to pay tuition with WIA assistance and use the loan to pay bills.

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*He is very thankful for the WIA program and the assistance that was provided. He was able to pay tuition with WIA assistance and use the loan to pay bills.*

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Jerry received a Technical Certificate in Energy Control in December 2013, and began employment with a local company at \$20.00 per hour. Jerry said that it makes a person humble to sit down at a table and eat; knowing that they weren't able to help provide what was on it. With his attitude and a new job, he is well on his way to once again being able to provide for his family.

# DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA



## Tracie's Success Story

Having lost her job with the Washington Hospital Center, Tracie Simpson visited the AJC Northwest seeking assistance with obtaining employment in the medical field. At that time, Ms. Simpson's only income was her unemployment benefits, and she was having a difficult time obtaining a position in her field. Although she had experience, she did not have any current and relevant medical-related certifications

to increase her employability. Ms. Simpson was assessed as an eligible WIA participant and enrolled in the Medical Office Assistant Program with the Technical Learning Center, a WIC-approved training provider. Ms. Simpson completed the training as well as the required externship in June 2013. Subsequently in December 2013, she was offered and accepted a full-time position as a Personal Assistant with Grace Home Health Care, earning \$9.25 an hour.



## Lea's Success Story

At home in the Philippines, Lea Guysayko put every drop of energy and brain power she could muster into a college education. She was in school for what seemed like forever, finally graduating in 2007. Unfortunately, the employment opportunities she thought would be there did not materialize and she wasn't earning enough to keep her family afloat. Therefore, in 2010, she packed up, relocated to Honolulu and secured work as a Pricing Associate at Sears Roebuck at Ala Moana Shopping Center. Lea was looking forward to her third year of employment when the store closed in June 2013 and she became a Dislocated Worker. At the rapid response presentation, she received information about the resources and training options available through the WIA. She decided that she would find the silver lining in the tragedy of losing her job and took advantage of classroom training. WIA funding paid for her tuition at Caregiver Training School where she completed Nurse Aide training and received two certificates of completion and state certifications for Nurse Aide and Phlebotomy. After attending workshops at Dillingham Oahu WorkLinks to increase her marketability and receiving Job Search assistance from her Employment Counselor, Lea secured full time employment as a Hospital Aide with Kaiser Permanente. Lea now earns double what she made working at Sears and three times more than she collected as a Technical Support Representative back home in the Philippines.

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*Lea now earns double what she made working at Sears and three times more than she collected as a Technical Support Representative back home in the Philippines.*

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She appreciates the training, staff assistance and support services that made her success possible. Her employment has been a dream come true especially because it allowed her to finance her husband's relocation to Honolulu. She will celebrate her first year employment with Kaiser in January 2015 and have her husband at her side.

## An NEG Success Story

A new business called Hawaii Kids Club, Alaka'i Academy was opening in Kailua Kona and recruiting for a Preschool Director. WDD staff met with the owners of the school and promoted the NEG On-the-Job Training (OJT) program which can reimburse an employer for up to 90% of the wages during the training period. Pablo Penalzoza, the president of this company, was very interested in utilizing this program. A dislocated worker who had the necessary educational background but needed additional training in the areas of human resources management, benefits administration, licensure requirements, and other USDA program regulations was referred and hired by this employer. The employer was able to provide the required training and they were quite satisfied with the productivity of the employee. The employer felt that the program was very

beneficial and would highly recommend the OJT program to other employers and would

like to utilize this program for other positions in the future.

## ILLINOIS



### Doug's Success Story

Doug Longstaff had worked in shipping and receiving for a manufacturer in Ohio for 8 years before relocating to Springfield for his wife's employment. Doug is a veteran who had been deployed to the Middle East several times and attended training while in the Air Force. Even with Doug's varied experience, he had difficulty finding employment in the Springfield labor market. Doug came to the Springfield workNet Center to attend the Back-to-Work workshops and learned about the Transportation, Distribution and Logistics (TDL) training program. He enrolled in the program and was successful in receiving certificates in Logistics Associate, Logistics Technician and Forklift Operator, in addition to his Commercial Drivers' License. Doug credits the TDL certifications as opening employment doors for him. Doug is gainfully employed with FedEx in the TDL industry. When asked if he believed the training helped him find employment, Doug responded that "prior to the TDL training, I was lucky to hear back from maybe one employer a month. Afterwards, I received 4 job offers!"

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*When asked if he believed the training helped him find employment, Doug responded that "prior to the TDL training, I was lucky to hear back from maybe one employer a month. Afterwards, I received 4 job offers!"*

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The training and certifications really helped employers take notice of him. In addition, during training, Doug was recognized as a respected class leader who offered insightful suggestions. His previous shipping and receiving experience and positive demeanor led the college to offer Doug a trainer position with the TDL program. He readily accepted the offer, loves teaching the class and opens the first class session by asking students "Why are you here?" Doug Longstaff's success is a result of the NEG DWT grant program, which provided Transportation, Distribution and Logistics training to long-term unemployed individuals in LWIA 20.

### James' Success Story



Mr. Cannon described the Workforce Development program as part of a team that helped him

to rebuild his life in collaboration with Veteran's Administration intensive counseling programs. Long term unemployment lead to homelessness and also triggered a health condition with no clear path to change his situations. He learned of the National Emergency Grant (NEG) Dislocated Worker Training (DWT) program through an advertisement and was surprised by the various services that help people to reinvent their career paths. He quickly learned that he needed to add skills

to leverage his education and work history to compete in today's job market after 10 months of unemployment. LWIA staff indicated, "Passing the Professional Commercial Truck Driver course was not easy, however he knew this opportunity was vital to re-employment and the phones have not stopped ringing since." Initially, he faced a few employment rejections due to a

criminal conviction 28 years prior. He accepted a position which includes advanced truck driver training that almost doubles his past annual income. James said, "Although times were rough, the WIA program provided hope during a very bleak time in my life and helped me to defeat those challenges and I am very optimistic going into the future."

## IOWA



### Kay's Success Story

Kay became a dislocated worker when Thermo Fisher Scientific (TFS) closed in Dubuque; she co-enrolled in the WIA Dislocated Worker Program, TAA, and TFS NEG, graduated from classroom training funded by TAA, and is currently employed full-time in the office at Callahan Construction in Dubuque.

### Diane's Success Story

Diane was a dislocated worker from Rockwell Automation in Sumner in December 2010. She struggled a lot with the idea of going to school and actually started school a little later than some of her peers. Her final decision we reached together was to go into Early Elementary Education as a Teacher. She chose to attend classes at UIU in Fayette. On May 10, 2014 with the financial assistance of Trade and moral support of WIA Staff she graduated with her degree in teaching.

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***On May 10, 2014 with the financial assistance of Trade and moral support of WIA Staff she graduated with her degree in teaching.***

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Diane has secured a job at Turkey Valley School for the fall of 2014 part time that could work into full time. In addition, she was offered a possible position in the Oelwein School System, recommended by one of her instructors that she had to turn down since she teaches every day in Turkey Valley.

### David's Success Story

When David first came into IowaWORKS, he had been displaced from his job at Smithway Motor Express in Fort Dodge and was not sure what to do next. He was a Veteran and a single parent with a young son. He searched for employment for several months but was not successful in finding a job. He made use of two assessment tools in Skills Development and visited with a Workforce Advisor. Their discussions began to be directed towards more training for David. The training program David selected was the Electronics Technician Program at ICCC. David completed this program, graduating in May 2014. He received job search assistance and job referrals through IowaWORKS. He was hired at Hog Slat Inc. in Humboldt IA as a maintenance mechanic. He started on

06/02/14. His starting hourly wage is \$16.00 per hour but after a 60-day probation period, he will go on salary. David has found

full-time employment at self-sufficiency wages with excellent benefits.

## MICHIGAN



### Angel's Success Story

Angel Conan earned an Associate Degree as a Medical Information Specialist in December 2011. Eligible for the WIA Adult training program, she obtained assistance with tuition, child care, and auto insurance. Upon graduation, she became employed, putting her degree to use at a health clinic in Alpena. Unfortunately, in November 2013, Angel noticed the focus of her employment was changing and the need for her skills and training was less. Concerned about losing her job, she took a proactive approach and visited the Resource Room at Michigan Works! where she knew from prior experience help was available. Working with the Talent Specialist who enrolled Angel in the Job Pool, Angel received tips about job search and was given leads matching her skills to employers' needs. As a result of the services, Angel was hired in April 2014 at Alcona Health Center Dental as a front desk receptionist. She appreciates the services she received telling staff, "I am very grateful for the help I received. I have started a new job with excellent benefits and expect to move up within the business."

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***"I am very grateful for the help I received. I have started a new job with excellent benefits and expect to move up within the business."***

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### Marsha's Success Story

Perseverant. This is one word to describe Marsha Short. Marsha was laid off from her press operator position with PME in May of 2009 and came to ThumbWorks! shortly after to look into the possibility of training for a new field. In the fall of 2009, Marsha enrolled into the Associate of Applied Science Veterinary Technician degree program at Baker College of Port Huron. Marsha applied to the competitive Veterinary Technician program in the spring of 2011 with a GPA of 3.5 in all of her general education and pre-requisite classes. Despite her good grades, Marsha was not accepted to the program. She was disappointed, but didn't give up. Marsha continued to take classes that would be applicable to both the Vet Tech program and an alternate degree path, and reapplied to the Vet Tech program in July of 2011. She was admitted and started in her core classes that fall. Marsha found her first semester in the program highly challenging, and despite her best efforts, Marsha's GPA dropped. As a result, she was dismissed from the Vet Tech program. It was another set-back, but Marsha persisted. She applied, a third time, to the Veterinary Technician program and was admitted in August of 2012. Marsha's perseverance paid off, as she completed her Associate of Applied Science Degree to be a Veterinary Technician in June of 2013. Within 3 months of graduation, Marsha secured

employment as a veterinary technician at Lake Huron Veterinary Clinic in Port Huron.

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*Marsha's perseverance paid off, as she completed her Associate of Applied Science Degree to be a Veterinary Technician in June of 2013. Within 3 months of graduation, Marsha secured employment as a veterinary technician at Lake Huron Veterinary Clinic in Port Huron.*

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## MINNESOTA



### Lorrae's Success Story



My name is Lorrae, and I have changed my life through hard work and determination. In August 2010, I was laid off from my job as an executive housekeeper at a large hotel.

Without a job, I could no longer support my family, which included an 8-year-old and an infant. I learned about the Dislocated Worker program, which helps people like me return to school to get a college degree. I started by taking a three-week certified nursing assistant course at Central Lakes College and was accepted into the Licensed Practical Nursing (LPN) Program. After completing the 15-month LPN Program and passing my state boards in April 2013, I was accepted into the accelerated Registered Nursing Program at the college in August 2013. The hard work eventually paid off. I completed the program in May 2014 and passed my state nursing boards in June 2014. I am now working as a private duty nurse. I take care of a 5-month-old baby and earn more than double what I was earning four years ago. With hard work and determination, anything is possible as long

as you believe in yourself. I would not be here without my job counselor's support. When I was struggling, I could call Amber and she would talk me through the hard times. I would like to give a huge THANK YOU to Amber and Rural Minnesota Concentrated Employment Program, Inc.

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### Tracy's Success Story



I worked as a painter for more than 20 years before finding myself unemployed due to company cutbacks. I collected unemployment insurance for six months while searching for a job. I visited the Minnesota WorkForce Center in Brainerd, where I received career counseling, planning and resources to assist with my job search. I achieved a silver level of the National Career Readiness

Certificate. I needed a change of pace, including a new career. Staff assisted me in exploring schools and financial aid packages to obtain my commercial driver's license (CDL). Rural Minnesota Concentrated Employment Program Inc. approved Dislocated Worker Program funding for my schooling. I successfully completed courses at St. Cloud Technical and Community College, passed my CDL exam that same day and joined the world of transportation professionals. Two days after I received my

commercial driver's license, I accepted an over-the-road truck driver position with South Bay Transport of Mankato. I log miles from coast to coast and feel optimistic about my future. The company treats me well, and I am enjoying my new career. I want to thank Rural Minnesota Concentrated Employment Program, Inc., the WorkForce Center and St. Cloud Technical and Community College for helping me achieve my career goal.

## MISSISSIPPI



### Gregory's Success Story

Gregory Keith is a WIA participant who was placed in National Emergency Grant On-the-Job Training at Hunter Engineering as a welder on October 21, 2013. He completed OJT on April 14, 2014, was certified as a welder by the company, and received a raise for his performance. Mr. Keith said that he was inspired by his trainer, who instilled this nugget in his head: "Weld these parts as if you are selling them for yourself." He added, "Those words stuck

with me. I know I want my parts to sell; therefore, I perform like the business is my own. I plan to be here a long time." Hunter Engineering's Human Resource Assistant Manager, Rebecca Mikell stated, "The company is benefiting from having such an outstanding worker as Mr. Keith."

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## MONTANA



### Christina's Success Story

Christina had been terminated from her previous position and assumed she was ineligible. Staff immediately began working with participant to create a resume that minimized the gaps and short duration of her work history and promoted the Computer Technician degree she had obtained on her own through student loans.

Her family was open to relocation so she applied for an entry level job in Idaho for a company that was willing to train her and offer wage increases from \$8 per hour to \$15 per hour plus commission when she completed the certifications they required. When she was determined eligible for UI, Christina was enrolled in the DWT NEG grant and enrolled in the online classes that will allow her to test and secure the needed

certifications. WIA Adult and WIA DW funds were used to provide work clothing and transportation to employment until she is able to earn the higher wage and relocate.

## Racquel's Success Story

Racquel N. had been unemployed since December of 2012 after she was laid off from her job as a Personal Care Attendant. She came in to our office in desperate need of work since her unemployment benefits were running out and she was very eager for the chance to get back on her feet. Because of her Dislocated Worker status and the fact that she had been unemployed for 27+ weeks, her CNA tuition at Bitterroot College was funded by the DWT NEG with the supportive services she needed paid for

with WIA Dislocated Worker program funds. Even before her training was completed, she was offered a full-time job as a PCA/CNA at a local nursing home and because of her professional background and good reputation, the employer paid her the CNA wage even though she was not yet able to perform all of the duties of a CNA. She is very happy in her job, has found much-needed financial stability and is indeed a success story!

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*Even before her training was completed, she was offered a full-time job as a PCA/CNA at a local nursing home and because of her professional background and good reputation, the employer paid her the CNA wage even though she was not yet able to perform all of the duties of a CNA.*

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## NEBRASKA



## Greg's Success Story



Greg, a dislocated worker from Columbus, completed his Commercial Drivers License (CDL) training course. Prior to entering

this training, Greg had actually been dislocated twice in one year! First from a local cab company and then from a local hotel. Upon completion of his CDL training and certification, Greg was offered full-time employment with a commercial trucking company.

## NEW MEXICO



## Dominique's Success Story

Dominique is an example of a successful co-enrollment from the WIA Youth Program transitioned into the Adult WIA program. Dominique dropped out of high school in the 10th grade. One year later, she entered

into the Youth Provider's GED program which she successfully completed. Dominique was determined to make a better life for her and her young child. As a single mother at age 18, Dominique decided to make a career choice that would allow for growth specifically in the healthcare

industry. Through the youth WIA program, she successfully completed the dental assistant program. The dental office where she performed her clinical internship liked her positive attitude and work ethic and decided to offer her permanent

employment. The Adult WIA program facilitated an on-the job training contract with Celebrate Dental where she will be working and training to advance her skills and move her career opportunities forward. Her ultimate goal is to become a dentist.

## NORTH CAROLINA



### Melinda's Success Story



In October 2009, Melinda Fox enrolled in WIA after losing her job as a part-time cashier/manager. She had always held lower-wage jobs that were not enough to support her

family. As a married mother of three children, she wanted to obtain the skills necessary to gain employment that would allow her to support and provide for her family. Fox completed phlebotomy training in January 2010. She enrolled in the licensed practical nursing program at Mayland Community College and completed it in July 2012. Fox then started her associate of applied science degree in nursing through the advanced placement program at the community college. In May 2014, she completed her registered nurse degree and immediately began to work full time in the Neuro/PCU step-down unit at the Johnson City Medical Center. She works the night shift, making \$22.00 per hour, and is considering several options for earning her Bachelor of Science degree. She now has security in the fact that she will always have the skills necessary to support and provide for her family.

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### Jason's Success Story



In 2011, Jason Wilson was laid off from the N.C. Department of Transportation and found himself at a crossroads in life. He learned about the

Dislocated Worker program and enrolled in December 2011. Wilson decided to pursue the electronics engineering program at Southwestern Community College. While in training, Wilson was a member of the National Technical Honor Society and Phi Theta Kappa Honors Fraternity. He made the Dean's List every semester. Wilson participated in a work study, during which he worked for Ron Poor, an electronic engineering tech instructor. During his work study, Wilson often graded papers for Poor and helped organize the classrooms. During one semester, he created a purchase order for lab items that were needed, acquiring valuable work experience. In December 2013, Wilson graduated with honors with an associate's degree in electronics

engineering. He was hired before graduation and began working as a maintenance technician in Georgia.

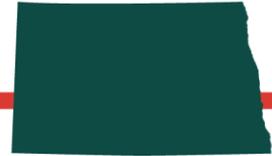
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*In December 2013, Wilson graduated with honors with an associate's degree in electronics engineering. He was hired before graduation and began working as a maintenance technician in Georgia.*

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## NORTH DAKOTA

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### JB's Success Story

Jack graduated from high school in 2001. He had completed some computer related college courses, but never attained a degree. He worked short-term jobs until May 21, 2006 when he obtained employment as an Inventory Control Clerk in a processing business. He worked his way up from that position to Purchasing, Shipping and Receiving, and finally Office Manager, earning \$30.00/hour. On December 5, 2012 the company closed its doors and Jack was unemployed. He attended the Rapid Response session provided by the Devils Lake Customer Service Office staff and learned about WIA. Realizing that he needed secondary education to get a job with comparable pay, he decided to complete his education in Information Technology. He applied for WIA funding to assist with education expenses and a full assessment was completed. His career choice met the criteria of an in-demand occupation with a wage of at least \$14.10 per hour. Jack was approved to receive WIA funding for an Information Technology program at a state college, and started full-time classes in January 2013. He was also approved to receive Unemployment Insurance benefits while he attended school. Jack was diligent about attending classes. When there was a course that did not provide him with the learning level he expected, Jack and his advisor

requested funding for the same course through another state college (via IVN) instead. All this diligence paid off, he maintained a 4.0 Grade Point Average (GPA) both semesters and graduated with an Associate in Applied Science degree in December 2013. He was hired prior to graduating. In March 2013 he worked part time as an Information Analyst with a starting pay of \$17.60 per hour. He became a full time employee immediately following graduation with a wage increase to \$18.12 per hour. To date he remains employed with full benefits and retirement.

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*He was hired prior to graduating. In March 2013 he worked part time as an Information Analyst with a starting pay of \$17.60 per hour. He became a full time employee immediately following graduation with a wage increase to \$18.12 per hour.*

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### Mika's Success Story

Mika came to the Grand Forks Customer Service Office to ask for training. Due to a layoff from a power company in Minnesota, he qualified for WIA as a dislocated worker. In his previous position, he was earning \$14.47 per hour, but had been out of work for two years. He received resume writing assistance. Staff showed him how to access Labor Market Information and do a job search using the Job Service ND website. He

was approved for training and attended a community college for the customized Commercial Driver Operator class. He passed the written portion, but failed his first attempt at the driving portion of the test. WIA funding provided an additional 4 hours of truck driver training which helped him pass the driving test and obtain his Commercial Drivers License (CDL) Class "A" License on 8/23/2013. He felt that obtaining a CDL was a way to provide for his family's needs. Mika was very pleased with the WIA services he received. Once he completed

training, relevant referrals to various job opportunities were sent to him. On September 5, 2013, Mika obtained full time employment as a delivery driver earning \$15 per hour and would receive a raise and benefits after 90 days.

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*Mika was very pleased with the WIA services he received. . . . Mika obtained full time employment as a delivery driver earning \$15 per hour and would receive a raise and benefits after 90 days.*

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## OHIO



### Tibi's Success Story

Tibi came to his local OhioMeansJobs Center after he lost his job in August 2013. Resource room staff recommended that he enroll in the Career Advancement Program. He enrolled in this two-week job seeker seminar, which offers intensive job readiness and job search training via role-playing, mock interviews and lessons that improve personal confidence. After the seminar, one-on-one coaching, follow-along services and job clubs were offered to participants as they searched for jobs and began new employment. Tibi completed the program and expressed interest in computer-assisted design training to help him become more marketable. He was approved for a training scholarship, and in February 2014 he obtained certificates in

CAD210Solidworks Advance Part Modeling, CAD215 Solidworks Assembly Modeling and CAD110 Solidworks Essentials. Within a few weeks, he became employed, earning a starting wage of \$28 per hour. "During my recent extended unemployment situation, I found excellent support and encouragement among your entire team," Tibi said in a letter to the WIA executive director. "With the help of your group, I have accomplished what I needed most, and that is to return to work."

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*"During my recent extended unemployment situation, I found excellent support and encouragement among your entire team," Tibi said in a letter to the WIA executive director. "With the help of your group, I have accomplished what I needed most, and that is to return to work."*

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# OKLAHOMA



## Aron's Success Story



Aron Miller lost everything in the May 20, 2013 tornado: his home, his truck, his tools and equipment, and his job. He had been a heavy equipment operator

for most of his life. After the disaster, he moved to Shawnee and stayed at the Salvation Army until he could find a job. Aron applied for the Disaster Related Employment program through the East Central WIB. He was placed at the City of Shawnee with the drainage crew removing debris from the city's creeks and water systems. Aron worked as a chainsaw

operator for seven weeks when the city encouraged him to apply for a position opening with the street department. Aron was hired for the full-time position. He has now been employed with the city for ten months. The final two months of the debris crew, the city of Shawnee moved Aron to supervise the debris clean-up crew for the Parks Department. Aron has come full circle. He has experienced the Oklahoma disaster from beginning to recovery and has rebuilt his life while repairing our community.

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*Aron has come full circle. He has experienced the Oklahoma disaster from beginning to recovery and has rebuilt his life while repairing our community.*

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# SOUTH CAROLINA



## Robin's Success Story

Robin Alston came to the WIA Program in September 2013. She had been unemployed as a dislocated worker since October 2012. She had received many interviews and had submitted even more applications. Although Robin held years of experience and an Associate's Degree in Computer Science, the positions she was applying for required an upgrade in her current skills and certifications. SC Works Trident staff explored relevant IT programs and schools with Robin. She decided the

Comp TIA certification would provide her the most marketability. She began the program at Productivity Solutions & Training (PST) in November 2013 and completed February 2014. Robin was offered employment as the HR/Business Manager at Elizabeth Stewart Design Company in Mt. Pleasant beginning November 28, 2013, with the option for benefits after her 30-day trial period. Robin has since reached out to SC Works staff and referred family members to the program for similar assistance.

# SOUTH DAKOTA



## Michelle's Success Story

Michelle was an unemployed mother of two children, who lost her job in March 2011. She was referred to the WIA Program by the Unemployment Insurance Reemployment Program. Over 10 years ago, she had attended Dakota State University for Health Information Management, but dropped out. She started an Associate Degree at Lake Area Technical Institute in Banking and Finance and dropped out when she found full-time employment. Her goal was to find full-time employment in order to support herself and her children. Michelle had expressed an interest in earning a National Career Readiness Certificate. The Key Train results showed she had the capability to earn a Silver or higher. Less than a month later, she tested on Work Keys and became the first person in Watertown to achieve a Platinum certificate. Based on her self-described interests and the results of the interest inventory, she was able to establish short- and long-term goals. WIA staff encouraged her to investigate the options of completing a degree at one of several post-secondary institutions in the Watertown area. Michelle's focus was on her employment goal and the on-the-job training portion of the WIA/NEG program. Several companies were contacted on her behalf, but she was not hired. The discussion returned to completing a post-secondary degree. She contacted Lake Area Technical Institute to see what credits would transfer and if she would qualify for FASA. In May 2012, Michelle was accepted at LATI and would be able to complete an Associate degree by

May 2013. Over the summer, Michelle worked at a day care in her church and served at a restaurant while she took one required class. She began LATI in the fall of 2012. WIA provided financial assistance for her tuition, books, and fees. In April 2013, Michelle began a paid internship as a Human Resource Assistant with Aerotek Staffing and was placed at Sparton Manufacturing Company in Watertown. She was awarded an AD degree in Business Associate – Human Resources Associate Option from Lake Area Technical Institute in May 2013. Michelle maintained a 4.0 GPA every semester at LATI. As of December 9, 2013, she had been offered a permanent position with Sparton Manufacturing Company as a Human Resource Assistant.

## James' Success Story

James was a dislocated worker that all of his adult life has worked in a warehouse. Due to cut backs in the business he was laid off. He was in his 50s wondering where he could go and do at this point in his life. He was referred to WIA, and through interviewing and assessments found that James really wanted to learn to be a carpenter and build houses. He had done some tinkering on his own house but nothing professionally. James was enrolled into the WIA program and within a short period of time had sold the on-the-job training to a small construction company. James completed his on-the-job training and has learned a great deal about constructing a house from scratch to finish. He fits well with the company as most of his coworkers are close to his age. Both the

employer and James were happy about the benefits WIA offered for training and securing a long term working relationship.

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*Both the employer and James were happy about the benefits WIA offered for training and securing a long term working relationship.*

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## Hailey's Success Story

Hailey was a divorced, single mom of a 10-month-old son. She was working fulltime as a sewer at EPI, a manufacturer of ammunition bags. She was miserable and looking for a better job to support herself and her child. She was making minimum wage with no benefits or health insurance. Hailey and WIA staff discussed what types of careers could support herself and her family without spending too much time in college. She completed assessments and

showed interest in the medical field. They explored local training programs where she could earn her CNA Certificate. Along with assistance from the local office, Hailey completed her Hailey's Story application, and she was accepted into Avera Education Nursing Assistant Training Program. She started her CNA classes and worked fulltime while she completed her online classes. Hailey was able to earn her CNA Certificate and also a Silver NCRC Certificate. After applying for several jobs, Hailey was offered a job at Sanford/Dakota Hospital in Vermillion, SD making 9.75/hr plus benefits. Her goal is to work a year then apply to nursing school at The University of South Dakota to obtain her LPN. She discovered her employer offers education assistance, and they are willing to help her pay part of her tuition to obtain her LPN! Hailey is thrilled to start her new position.

# TENNESSEE



## Stephen's Success Story

Stephen, an Army veteran, experienced a layoff. While drawing unemployment, he came to the Tennessee Career Center seeking assistance towards getting HVAC training. As a dislocated worker, Stephen was able to receive WIA educational assistance toward his dream of starting his own business and HVAC training. Stephen graduated, obtained his business license, and started his HVAC business.

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*As a dislocated worker, Stephen was able to receive WIA educational assistance toward his dream of starting his own business and HVAC training. Stephen graduated, obtained his business license, and started his HVAC business.*

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He is now partnering with the TVA Bright Energy Program and is approved by Carrier Corporation for sales and service which allowed him to hire 2 employees. Stephen is the illustration of the pay-it-forward concept, going from a dislocated worker to a successful businessman, he shares his hard-earned knowledge with other students in similar situations that hope to better themselves with WIA assistance.

# VIRGIN ISLANDS



## Edward's Success Story



The program that assisted me, as a displaced worker, has proven to be successful! I was afforded the opportunity to attend truck driver training school, which I passed with flying

colors, and graduate with a Commercial Driver's License. I am now employed with Paschall Truck Lines (PTL) as a full-time company driver.

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***I was afforded the opportunity to attend truck driver training school, which I passed with flying colors, and graduate with a Commercial Driver's License. I am now employed with Paschall Truck Lines (PTL) as a full-time company driver.***

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Throughout the process of relocation, finding an appropriate educational setting and completion of the program, Ms. Rogers assistance has been invaluable! Her on-going support and willingness to help in any way made my transition much easier. I am extremely grateful to her and the program that supported me.

## Marcellin's Success Story



Following the closure of Hovensa oil refinery in March 2014, I decided to retool by returning to the University of the Virgin Islands to pursue studies towards

certification in education. Since I already had two degrees, I needed the necessary courses in education that would qualify me for a teaching position. With assistance from the NEG program (Labor Department) I was able to successfully complete the requirements for certification. While pursuing my studies towards certification I taught as a substitute teacher at the St. Croix Educational Complex High School. During the summer of 2014, I also taught in the Credit Recovery Program to help studies who failed certain courses during the regular school year fulfill the requirements for a passing grade. Most recently, I interviewed with the Virgin Islands Education Department for a full-time teaching position. While I await word from the Department, I am very confident that I will secure a position when the school year commences. I am very grateful to the NEG program for providing the financial support as I transitioned into a different profession following the closure of HOVENSA.



## Forrest's Success Story



Forrest Whitney is a man who doesn't like idle hands. So, when he lost his job in the closure of

Radford's Grede Foundry, he was anxious to find a new opportunity. That's when he discovered that he was eligible for Trade Adjustment Assistance program (TAA) funding that would help him become a student in New River Community College's (NRCC) PluggedInVA industrial maintenance program. TAA is a federal program that assists U.S. workers who have lost their jobs as a result of foreign trade. It provides those workers with benefits and services to help them obtain skills to become reemployed. PluggedInVA programs are specially designed to prepare adult learners with the knowledge and skills needed to succeed in education, training, and high-wage contemporary careers. After years in the U.S. Navy, Whitney went on to work for various industrial companies and became a truck driver. His entrance to NRCC in

January is the 50-year-old's first experience with college and he hopes the skills he's learning will help him find a job close to home and his wife, two children, and five grandchildren. Today, Whitney is anything but idle. In addition to keeping a busy schedule that includes electricity, industrial safety, fluid power and machine shop classes, he's also brushing up on his general academic and computer skills. Despite the hard work, time and energy required, Whitney is a vocal supporter of the TAA and PluggedIn programs. "I'm awfully grateful for this program – I didn't think I'd ever be able to go back to school."

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***"I'm awfully grateful for this program – I didn't think I'd ever be able to go back to school."***

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The infectious sense of joy surrounding his schooling has family members interested in furthering their education. His son-in-law has joined the college's welding program and his wife has her eye on pharmacy courses. After he finishes the industrial maintenance program, Whitney would like to continue his education with another certificate or by earning a degree.

# WORKFORCE INVESTMENT ACT

## Youth Program Success Stories

### ALABAMA



#### Vanessa's Success Story

*"DESI Career Training Center was not only a great opportunity, but an awesome experience,"*

"DESI Career Training Center was not only a great opportunity, but an awesome experience," stated Vanessa a recent graduate of DESI Career Training Center, a project funded through a Mobile Works, Inc. WIA grant. Vanessa became a mother in high school and found that it was impossible to try to work part time and go to school full time. "Things were hard and I couldn't fit high school into my schedule with being a mom and working," Vanessa said. Vanessa decided to leave high school and enroll in DESI Career Training Center. She described DESI as a regular high school but with a twist. Class met 5 days a week. However, she had the option of taking day or evening classes. Her schedule allowed her to complete her class work in the evening and hold down a part time job at the animal shelter. She is most appreciative of the job readiness classes offered through DESI. The classes helped prepare her for job interviews. "They taught us how to talk, how to dress for an interview and just how to be formal, Kelly said. "In this program, we were given the opportunity to experience more, and the opportunity to be more!" She credits DESI for changing her life and preparing her for the next step.

"The staff was patient and motivating and treated us like family. After completing a test, if a person didn't pass, (the staff would say) it was okay and we were given another chance!" Vanessa has bright future ahead now that she has her GED. After graduation, she accepted a position with Renaissance Riverview Plaza Hotel and has started the enrollment process to enter Bishop State Community College. She plans to study nursing. She will always remember the things learned at DESI- giving second chances, working hard and believing in yourself. "We were taught that giving up is not an option," Vanessa said. "We are successful graduates. We are the DESI class of 2014, who chose not to give up!"

#### ChaQunta's Success Story

ChaQunta Bonner entered the Jefferson County Workforce Development Office as a parenting youth who wanted to earn her Patient Care Technician (PCT) Certification. Her initial assessment indicated that she was basic skills deficient in Math. After working hard and attending tutoring classes, ChaQunta overcame her deficiency and enrolled in the Dannon Project's PCT Certification Program, a WIA funded project. Just as ChaQunta was scheduled to start training, she became ill and had to be hospitalized. Because doctors experienced difficulty in determining what was making her ill, she experienced an extensive

hospital stay. Once ChaQunta was released from the hospital, she began her training and earned her PCT Certification. ChaQunta experienced numerous hardships but remained undeterred. The Dannon Project not only helped her earn her certification, but also assisted her with utility bills, transportation, and obtaining medical insurance. One month after completing her PCT training and certification, ChaQunta enrolled at Lawson State Community College. Because she feels so passionate

about helping others and enjoyed everything she learned during her WIA training, ChaQunta is now working to become a Registered Nurse to provide a better life for her and her daughter.

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*Because she feels so passionate about helping others and enjoyed everything she learned during her WIA training, ChaQunta is now working to become a Registered Nurse to provide a better life for her and her daughter.*

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## ARIZONA



### Wade's Success Story

The Coconino Career Center serves many youth every year who are in need of the opportunities for success that are provided through WIA resources. One of the success stories is Wade, who began working as a WIA participant at the beginning of his senior year. In October 2013, Wade began at Ponderosa High School in an internship at Terra BIRDS, a non-profit organization started by local Flagstaff resident and Harvard graduate, John Taylor. As he began to learn more about his internship, he became more confident and sure of himself. Unfortunately, as with many disconnected youth, Wade's home life made it difficult to

avoid an arrest that could have resulted in incarceration and homelessness. His WIA caseworker, the principal of Ponderosa High School, and John Taylor worked together to help Wade be successful. By convincing a judge to give him work release so that he could continue to attend school and complete his internship responsibilities, Wade graduated with the Class of 2014 and completed his internship. Since graduation, he has been hired at Terra BIRDS and continues to make a difference in his community by being the example that the acronym BIRDS stands for, "Being Innovative Resourceful Dedicated Stewards."

# ARKANSAS



## Charles' Success Story



Charles came into the Workforce Center in May 2009 seeking to gain work experience. He was 14 years old at the time. In April of 2012, Charles came into the Workforce Center wanting information on the year-round Y.E.S. Program. He was 17 years old and attending the 11th grade at Wonderview High School. Charles participated in the stimulus funding work experience in 2009 and 2010. He did not return to the Workforce Center until April 23rd, 2012, when he was introduced to the WIA Youth Program. Charles attended leadership and development workshops and was enrolled in Work Readiness Skills to help him acquire the tools to gain adequate employment and maintain employment. He developed positive work habits and ethics while participating in the WIA Youth Program.

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***Charles attended leadership and development workshops and was enrolled in Work Readiness Skills to help him acquire the tools to gain adequate employment and maintain employment. He developed positive work habits and ethics while participating in the WIA Youth Program.***

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Charles graduated from Wonderview High School on May 17th, 2013. He is currently working as a Jailer at the Conway County

Detention Center. He works 40 hours per week and his salary is \$22,750 per year.

## Destiny's Success Story



Destiny was enrolled into the DEI Summer Program during the summer of 2013. She was enrolled into the WIA Youth Program on 10/18/13. At that time she was a senior at Hector High School with an IEP for a learning disability. She was excited about the WIA Youth Program and all of the possibilities that it offered her. Destiny has been an active participant with the WIA Youth Program, attending all of the monthly workshops. She worked well with the other participants and was willing to help them when needed. She graduated from Hector High School on 5/17/14. Because Destiny is a very creative individual, she was asked to do artwork in the children's section of the Hector Library while she worked there. Destiny worked at the library during the DEI Summer Program and was able to get twelve weeks of Work Experience before she began Summer Employment Opportunities there. Her supervisor, Ednita Condley, the branch director, said that Destiny has done an exceptional job with them and they had enjoyed having her there. Destiny is currently working at the Atkins Nursing Home in housekeeping earning \$7.25 per hour. She plans on attending college in the future to study art and eventually teach an art class to high school students. Destiny has the

determination and enthusiasm needed to be successful in everything that she does. She has been a delight to work with in the WIA Youth Program. I am sure that she will succeed in life and reach all of her personal goals.

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*Destiny has the determination and enthusiasm needed to be successful in everything that she does. She has been a delight to work with in the WIA Youth*

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## CONNECTICUT



### Nastassia's Success Story



The only female in this WIA manufacturing program, Nastassia Scott was one of the success stories during Program Year 2013. Nastassia earned a certificate in Machining at Asnuntuck

Community College, as well as credentials in Customer Service and OSHA. Following an internship with a company in Farmington, the business hired her full-time. Based on her success, Nastassia was nominated as a Capital Workforce Partners' Youth Workforce Star for PY13.

## DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA



### Robert's Success Story

Robert Mackey was a WIA Youth In-School Program participant assigned to AutoZone for summer employment. While there, he exhibited determination, tenacity, and professionalism which resulted in his receiving an excellent recommendation for a full-time position as a Sales Associate with AutoZone.

Administrative Services (OAS) after successfully completing an internship with that office.

### Cynthia's Success Story

The District's Summer Youth Employment Program (SYEP) can attest to a wide-array of success stories, to include Cynthia Marsh, a participant who gained full-time employment with the DOES Office of

### Todd's Success Story

The Pathways for Young Adults Program (PYAP) provides District residents 18-24 years of age with opportunities to earn specialized occupational certification in high demand fields, such as allied health and information technology. Through PYAP, Todd Thomas, a YouthTech Program participant at the United Planning Organization, was offered and accepted fulltime employment with Koniag Technology Solutions as an A+ Help Desk Specialist.



## Destination Graduation

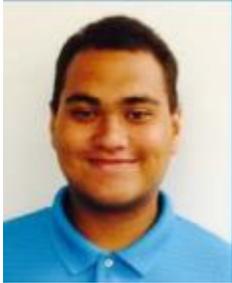
Destination Graduation was started in Cape Coral and Dunbar High Schools in Lee County in 2009. The program is a comprehensive mentoring and academic intervention program that targets high school students who are at-risk of dropping out of school. High school principals welcome workforce staff into their schools to mentor students with multiple barriers to graduation. The program offers students the opportunity to receive work-readiness training, one-on-one mentoring, individualized academic assistance, and incentives to attend school regularly, improve grades and graduate. The program operates through a unique partnership between education, business and CareerSource Southwest Florida. The program is funded through Workforce Investment Act (WIA) funding. Student participants are expected to demonstrate progress toward graduation and are eligible to receive incentives that included, summer jobs offered by area businesses. Destination Graduation has:

- Grown from 2 schools in Lee County to 15 schools in all five counties of Southwest Florida;
- Enrolled just under 300 students with multiple barriers to graduation who were on a path to the juvenile or adult correctional system or are reliant on social service subsidies;
- Achieved an astonishing plus 94% success rate;
- Received \$500,000 from the 2014-2015 state budget to expand the program; and,
- Changed the dynamic of hundreds of individual's lives (students and peers) from the negative aspect of draining social services and correctional system resources to positive tax-paying contributing citizens.

The Destination Graduation Project has demonstrated impact of providing individual and personal attention required by some students to successfully complete secondary education programs. In addition, the program encourages students to associate education and training with lifelong career aspirations and work towards improving future earning potential.



## Andrew's Success Story



Andrew Stewart worked with the WIA Youth Program from February 2012 till he received his diploma on June 24, 2013. Prior to entering the program he was in special education

classes at Kaimuki High School where he was short on credits and advised to consider alternative education that if he wanted to graduate sooner. Once in the program, Andrew benefitted from one on one tutoring through the EPIC Foundation. This helped not only with basic skills but with building self-confidence. Andrew exceeded expectations, improving his test scores to the point where he was no longer considered basic skills deficient. He was dually enrolled into Youthbuild Honolulu to earn his High School diploma and receive preconstruction training through Building Industries Association Hawaii. Upon completing services he landed a job with The S.H.A.K.A Foundation Inc. where he works as a beach boy at Surf Rental stand in Waikiki. He assists in renting out equipment and providing surf lessons to customers. He has currently been employed for almost a year and enjoys what he does and plans to keep working there for at least another year. He has future aspirations of continuing his education and eventually becoming a Plumber.

## Kawehi's Success Story

Kawehi had already overcome the homeless barrier before joining University of Hawai'i, Maui College's Ku'ina Youth Program with hopes of resolving other financial barriers in her life. Through Ku'ina Kawehi became aware of various financial aid opportunities and was helped to access Pell grants, scholarships, and WIA funding for tuition and books. Doors to internships and college tours were opened and there was ongoing support from her counselor and fellow Youth Program participants. Kawehi loved her internship with Nā Pua No'eau, working with gifted and talented Native Hawaiian children, so much so that she sought other internship opportunities. These experiences validated her career choice to be an academic/personal counselor for native Hawaiian college students or to prepare Hawaiian Immersion high school students to go to college. In spring 2014, Kawehi received two Associate of Arts degrees in Liberal Arts and Hawaiian Studies. Ku'ina staff helped her understand degree requirements and the transfer process that allowed her to move to the University of Hawai'i West Oāhu where she now pursues a Bachelor's degree in Social Sciences. Kawehi summed it up this way: "There were some points in my life where I gave up on college, but talking story with Ku'ina, getting advice, or just having a laugh with them helped me realize that I can have a future that I want if I just apply myself and IMUA (keep moving forward). To be honest, they are my family now and I will never, ever forget what they have done to change my life"

# ILLINOIS



## Tashae's Success Story



Tashae is a 20 year old youth who came into the local workforce office after hearing about the SYEP program. She was looking for a job in childcare, but

didn't have a lot of work experience. After meeting with her, staff knew she would be a great asset to the SYEP and set her up with an interview at YWCA. After she met with the supervisors at the YWCA, they instantly knew she would be a great fit with their team. Her supervisor said she was mature, helpful and became an important part of the team. His supervisor said that, "Luis takes initiative and completes assigned tasks from start to finish, shows an effort to communicate in a manner and language appropriate for the workplace, uses supervisor's feedback to improve his work performance and works well with co-workers. When the program ends, I am going to offer Luis a full-time job in the Samples Department."

part of the classroom very quickly. They enjoyed her and felt she did such an outstanding job, they are going to hire her on as a regular employee once the grant ends. Tashae said with this experience, she gained knowledge of the rules and regulations in the child care industry and built experiences to put on her résumé. She is very appreciative of this experience and looks forward to joining the YWCA team as a regular employee.

## Luis' Success Story

Luis was a participant in the SYEP program with the Youth Job Center of Evanston. He worked at the Maya Romanoff Corporation.

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*When the program ends, I am going to offer Luis a full-time job in the Samples Department."*

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Luis really enjoyed his experience and learned a lot during his time at the Maya Romanoff Corporation and with the Youth Job Center of Evanston. He is very happy to be leaving the program with not only a bunch of new knowledge and skills, but also who a full time job!

# IOWA



## Cassandra's Success Story

When Cassandra started the Youth Employment Program in April of 2013 she was 17 years old and had dropped out of

two different high schools. She began work on her GED in May of 2013 and completed it in June of 2013. The Youth Employment Program paid for her to complete the test, which would have been too cost prohibitive

for her to do herself. After completing her GED, Cassandra struggled during the month of 32 July to find a job although she was completing applications and going on interviews. Her Youth Development Specialist suggested that she meet with the YEP Program Supervisor to go through a mock interview. It was discovered during the mock interview that she needed considerable help with her interviewing skills. We helped Cassandra to develop some more appropriate answers to interview questions and she landed a job after an interview two days later. In August of 2013, Cassandra's Youth Development Specialist helped her to enroll in a Health Care Occupations class. Through the class Cassandra completed resume building activities, the NCRC, and her CNA classes. In December of 2013, Cassandra took the CNA State Licensure Exam and passed it on the first try.

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She then applied for and got a job at Friendship Haven, a retirement community in the area. Cassandra started classes in January of 2014 at Iowa Central Community College to work towards becoming an RN. The Youth Employment Program continues to support her by providing funds for tuition and books as needed that are not covered by her financial aid.

## **Evan's Success Story**

Evan was enrolled in the Youth Employment Program in September 2013 as a 14 year old in the 8th grade. Ian's Objective Assessment found that he was basic skills deficient in both math and reading. During the first few months of his enrollment, Evan's Youth Development Specialist attended a number

of IEP meetings at the school in order to serve as a support to both Evan and his grandparents, who are his legal guardians. The school struggled with placement for Evan and moved him from the middle school, to the high school, to an alternative school setting for children with behavioral problems, all in less than two months. Evan's Youth Development Specialist met with him weekly at the school to work on building social skills and to tutor him in reading. Evan continued to struggle in school, being removed from the bus, and often being placed in "isolation" for acting out in the classroom. Evan was looking forward to summer because he hated school. His Youth Development Specialist coordinated services with other professionals involved with Evan including his mental health therapist, his skill development counselor and the school. At the end of the school year, Evan re-took the TABE Reading test and improved his grade level by 1.5 equivalencies. In June, Evan started attending the YEP Summer Program. Despite Evan's history of disruptive behavior in a classroom, the YEP Staff decided to give him a chance to participate like any other youth. He participated well during the Bring Your A Game to Work classes, attended the Adventure Learning Center, and completed numerous Vocational Exploration Programs. Evan showed no negative behaviors during the Summer Program and developed friendships with a number of his peers. Evan's self-esteem has improved considerably even to the point of reading out loud in front of his peers, something he would never have done in the past.

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***Evan's self-esteem has improved considerably even to the point of reading out loud in front of his peers, something he would never have done in the past.***

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He recently told his Youth Development Specialist that he is looking forward to school starting and he has goals and plans

to improve his behavior and grades this year.

## LOUISIANA



### Myron's Success Story



The fresh age of 16 produces thoughts of endless possibilities and wonder. In 2002, life for Myron Wright was just how anyone would hope it would be: the 16-year-old Thibodaux, LA, resident had supportive loved ones, was making great grades, and playing varsity football. That is, until November 8, 2002, a day Myron will never forget. While playing the game of football that he loves so much, he was hit in such a way that left him unable to move his body. With friends on the field and fans in the stands, he was rushed to the hospital for immediate medical attention. After surgery and much time in inpatient rehab, Myron was left with a significant physical disability - quadriplegia. From the beginning of his new life, he knew and made it clear to others that he was going to continue with his goals and not let his physical limitations stand in his way. Myron started working with LRS in 2003. He graduated from Thibodaux High School in 2005 and from Nicholls State University with a Bachelor of Science in Business Management in 2010. He was 2013 WIA Annual Report 29 considering opening his own sports apparel store, and attended training on starting his own business in 2011 through UNO EXCEL. After careful consideration and realizing the expenses of running his own business, he decided to apply for and obtained

employment with the Spine Center at Thibodaux Regional Medical Center. He uses his position as a data entry clerk and motivational speaker with the hospital to reach out to teens and others who have experienced spinal cord injuries, and raises awareness of the possibilities available to others who may be faced with similar challenges to keep their morale high and never give up. Myron's energy and desire to keep living life on his terms has not been limited to education and career goals. His eyes are always open for more spinal cord injury treatment options and he continues to work to get his body strong so that he can gain independence. In 2007, he founded the Myron Wright Foundation to raise money for participation in the Project Walk rehabilitation program in California. His foundation is responsible for uniting the community and raising money through many events with his initiative, creativity, and resourcefulness. Since 2010, he has been able to participate in three rounds of rehab at Project Walk. Presently, Myron continues to work toward higher goals. He enjoys his job at the Spine Center, feels welcomed into their work family and is preparing to begin his Master's in Business Administration. Myron was this year's recipient for the 2013 Man of the Year Award for the Lafourche Committee on Disability Issues. He was also recognized at the GOLD Award Ceremony held by the Governor's Office of Disability Affairs in Baton Rouge on November 6, 2013. Myron

was the winner of the Ken Vince Memorial Award.

## Anna's Success Story

Anna first came to the WIA Youth Program in November 2010 as a 19-year-old single mother with very few credit hours at Northwestern State University. With the help of the WIA Youth Program, Anna has participated in the Summer Youth Employment Program to get exposure and gain experience with the Natchitoches Parish Art Guild.

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*With the help of the WIA Youth Program, Anna has participated in the Summer Youth Employment Program to get exposure and*

*gain experience with the Natchitoches Parish Art Guild.*

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She also graduated from Natchitoches State University in December 2013 with her Bachelor of Arts degree, and attended Louisiana College's summer fast track TEACH program. Anna has already been alternatively certified to teach secondary education in Louisiana and was hired by Natchitoches Central High School as of August 2014 to teach Civics and an ACT Prep course. Next year, Anna will take over teaching art after the incumbent teacher retires in May 2015. She still does commission artwork on the side and is trying to get exposure in various museums in the state for her amazing nature scene art.

# MARYLAND



## Marcus' Success Story



As a small child, Marcus always dreamed of working in the Science and Mathematics fields. He graduated from high school and enrolled in the community college but soon found that it was not a good fit.

Instead, Marcus applied for retail and security jobs but experienced difficulty in even securing an interview. He floundered for a bit. Eventually, a family friend recommended Youth Opportunity (YO) Baltimore which works with young people who are disconnected from school and often the workforce. Marcus showed up to enroll at the Eastside YO Center in a suit and tie and jumped right into job readiness

workshops – learning about résumé writing, time management, and the importance of having a good attitude. Through YO, he landed an internship at Morgan Stanley through a program called “Year Up.” After he completed his workshops, Marcus landed a string of temporary assignments that ultimately resulted in him being recruited for his current position as a full-time research Program Assistant with the Johns Hopkins School of Public Health. Marcus works hard and loves what he’s doing, but has not stopped looking to the future. His next step is applying to several local colleges and eventually earning a degree in Finance. Marcus adds, “YO has given me a great foundation to build upon. When I came here, I knew I had skills, but YO has given me opportunities to prove myself.”

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*Marcus adds, “YO has given me a great foundation to build upon. When I came here, I knew I had skills, but YO has given me opportunities to prove myself.”*

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## Benica’s Success Story



After graduating from high school, Benica’s only source of income was as a part-time Banquet Server with a sporadic weekend schedule. She wanted and needed a full-time position, but wasn’t having any luck finding

one. A friend, who was a member of the Westside Youth Opportunity (YO) Center, invited Benica to YO one day and the rest as they say — is history! Benica would up enrolling in YO and started taking advantage of job readiness classes and workshops. She worked closely with her YO advocate who helped her explore career pathways that best fit her talents, abilities and interests. “I’m very detail-oriented, and I like figuring out better ways of doing things,” she said — which turns out —

makes Benica a good fit for administrative roles.

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*“I’m very detail-oriented, and I like figuring out better ways of doing things,” she said — which turns out — makes Benica a good fit for administrative roles.*

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In an effort to give Benica an opportunity to showcase her administrative talents, the advocate referred Benica for a six-month paid internship with the Baltimore City Office of the Labor Commissioner. Benica was indeed selected and performed SO well that the internship was first extended and then subsequently evolved into a full-time position. Today, Benica works full-time with the Labor Commissioner’s Office. After work, she heads to the Community College of Baltimore County, Catonsville, where she attends classes until late in the evening. She is diligently working toward an Associate’s Degree in Office Management/Executive Administration and still holds down hours as a Banquet Server on weekends. Benica sums it best by saying, “I like my job; it’s very challenging...no, my life isn’t perfect, but I’ve come a long way.”

## MICHIGAN



## Nate’s Success Story



Nate was a high school junior when he enrolled in the WIA Youth Program. He had no work experience and a disability that made getting a job difficult. He was in need of job

search assistance and work experience. His

desired career is in Electrical Engineering. Nate received employment training through the summer work experience program and a three-month job placement at Mel Trotter Industries with wages paid from WIA funding. In addition to valuable work skills, he also received a portfolio for his professional documents to take on interviews and a USB for digital storage of his documents. Nate graduated in May 2014 and used his interview skills to obtain

an apprenticeship with a local company. He began a paid apprenticeship as an electrician immediately after graduation with Buist Electric. He plans to attend Grand Rapids Community College in the fall of 2014. "I want to thank Michigan Works! for the job training and for helping me get a job at Mel Trotter two years ago through the work experience program."

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***"I want to thank Michigan Works! for the job training and for helping me get a job at Mel Trotter two years ago through the work experience program."***

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The company I currently work for is a Christian company that is well established and is growing every year and it's what I've always wanted to do and I like it a lot. I am working in the electrical field."

## Larissa's Success Story



Larissa's goal was to graduate from high school, become a certified nursing assistant (CNA), and gain employment in the medical field with future plans on attending college for nursing.

After graduation, she was referred to a local hospital's CNA training where she applied and was accepted into the program. After obtaining her CNA license, the MWA assisted Larissa with updating her resume with her new skills and an interview was scheduled at the Hillsdale County Medical Care Facility. Through the Youth program's work experience program, Larissa completed a 180-hour paid work experience and was offered and accepted employment with the Hillsdale County Medical Care Facility upon program completion.

## Lavie's Success Story

Lavie Ferrell enrolled in the WIA Youth program with several barriers. She was a high school dropout who moved to Kalamazoo from the east side of Michigan. She was basic skills deficient and unemployed with an unstable housing situation. Lavie was seeking help with enrollment in a GED program, tutoring services, employability skills training, job search techniques, and paid work experience. She was provided referral information to Housing Resources, Inc. and the Kalamazoo Gospel Mission to assist with finding stable housing until placement in a paid work experience. Lavie was very motivated to succeed. She overcame her barriers and followed through on completing goals that were established for her, including enrollment in a GED program. She also completed employability skills training and faithfully attended Job Search Club. Wanting to get a better idea of college life and possibly enroll in college once she completed her GED, Lavie excitedly participated in a college tour to Michigan State University. Lavie was placed at Senior Services as a Kitchen Aide through the WIA Youth paid work experience component. While working there, Lavie completed ServSafe training through Youth Opportunities Unlimited (Y.O.U.) and earned a credential for food handling which made her more marketable. As a result of her strong interpersonal skills and great work ethic, she was hired in at Senior Services, Inc., earning over minimum wage and working over twenty hours per week. Her manager stated, "Lavie has come a long way since she originally started working here. She has overcome issues of trusting others and relying on people to help her. Lavie is a great asset to the company and a productive member of the team who

displays excellent abilities in all areas of the group.” Lavie worked hard and was able to obtain her own apartment and earn her GED. She is very dependable and outgoing with a personality that is full of life. She was also given an opportunity to speak at a Workforce Development Board meeting and attended a Community Conversations Forum at Y.O.U. that was hosted by the Center for Michigan. Lavie also won a Kalamazoo Regional Educational Service Agency Foundation Scholarship and is looking forward to attending Kalamazoo Community College and then transferring to

Western Michigan University. Lavie recently commented, “Y.O.U. encouraged me to further my education and provided opportunities for me to get my job. It also allowed personal growth in community settings and working with people with different attitudes and personalities.”

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## MINNESOTA



### Casey’s Success Story



Casey entered the Southwest PIC youth program as a 16-year-old single mother. Because of her high intelligence, she was not challenged academically in high

school. Casey’s support team at school felt she should work toward her GED (general educational development) degree and enter post-secondary school early. Casey was interested in the nursing field and could participate in nursing assistant classes until she entered post-secondary school. Casey obtained her GED, followed by a certified nursing assistant (CNA) license a few months later. She was hired at Avera Marshall Medical Center and worked as a CNA for more than a year, when she decided it was the right time for her to enter post-secondary school. Casey moved

out of her mother’s home and into her own apartment, where she now lives with her two little boys. After vocational interest and occupational assessments, a career plan was created for Casey to obtain her associate science degree as a dental assistant. Casey has been working toward this goal for almost a year and is on track to finish her degree in May 2015.

### Alexea’s Success Story



I lost my once reliable after-school job at the age of 18 when the business where I worked closed. I was referred to the Washington County Workforce Center’s Youth Program to

participate in training and workshops and to gain more skills through short-term job placement. I was placed in a student intern position in the administration department

at the city of Woodbury. I finished high school six months early by attending day and night school before starting the job with the city. I gained a tremendous amount of work experience and received a lot of support in the administration department. Even after starting college, I could fill in at city hall during school breaks. The Washington County Youth Program has helped me in ways that I never could have imagined. They made it their mission to see me succeed by providing educational guidance, resources to build work ethics, workshops, assessments and so much more.

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*The Washington County Youth Program has helped me in ways that I never could have imagined. They made it their mission to see me succeed by providing educational guidance, resources to build work ethics, workshops, assessments and so much more.*

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I continue to go to school and will soon obtain a degree in human services to accomplish my career goal of working in that field. I plan to focus on social services for Minnesota families, children and at-risk youth.

## MISSISSIPPI



### Michael's Success Story



Nineteen year old Michael McCarty was determined to chase his dream of attending college on a baseball scholarship. He played for Pascagoula High School as a pitcher and was offered several

scholarships. The biggest obstacle was passing his state SAT P Biology test. Without this test he would not be able to graduate high school. He joined the CARES of Mississippi CORE program and attended classes all summer, studying Biology for the SAT P retest and for his GED test simultaneously. In addition to attending GED classes, Michael worked part time at Wal-Mart in the automotive department. Michael pushed himself, taking the GED test, retesting on the SAT P, and receiving a Bronze level on the Career Readiness

Certificate (CRC). He was able to earn his high school diploma and is now attending East Central Community College in Decatur, MS.

### Joby's Success Story



Joby Hall, a 2014 graduate of Gulf Coast Community Action Agency's Working on Winning Program, completed her Job Shadowing at Certified Medical Testing. She has also completed the Phlebotomy Certification classes and is awaiting her test results to become a certified Phlebotomist. Her hard work and effort have given her the opportunity to continue working at CMT and acquire additional experience with venipuncture for DNA and Drug Testing. The owner has stressed how impressed he was with her attitude and enthusiasm to learn, and has

offered her the opportunity to continue working at his site until she starts nursing school at the University of Southern Mississippi Gulf Coast Campus in the fall of 2014. GCCAA paid Joby's educational fees for the Phlebotomy classes. As a result of Joby's hard work and determination to change her life, she was awarded the 2014 Boot Strap Award.

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## MONTANA



### Kerry's Success Story

Kerry entered the WIA Youth Employment program at 17 years of age, attending high school. Her world fell apart when her Grandmother, and primary care giver, passed away. She subsequently dropped out of school, became involved in destructive behavior, and making poor choices. Throughout she was responsible and reliable in attending and exhibiting good work skills at several WEXs. She turned the corner after having a daughter and, though it took time, she was able to gain independence, earned her GED, found permanent housing, gained unsubsidized employment (at a recent 6 month evaluation she received a \$2.00/hr raise) and is active in maintaining a healthy environment for her and her daughter.

### Shelby's Success Story

Shelby enrolled in the ARRA youth program when she was fourteen. She displayed a remarkable work ethic from the beginning of her work experience. She transitioned to the WIA Youth program and continued to work with case managers during her high school years. She participated in various extracurricular activities while maintaining an excellent GPA in school. Shelby has always had a great interest in working with children, but also thought she might be interested in the field of medicine. Shelby participated in a work experience every summer during her high school years. She graduated with honors from her high school, earning the position of salutatorian. She was exited from the Youth program in October 2013 and attended MSU Bozeman focusing on elementary education and music.

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*Shelby participated in a work experience every summer during her high school years. She graduated with honors from her high school, earning the position of salutatorian.*

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## Dreshawn's Success Story

In the summer of 2013, Dreshawn 18, and his 17-year old sister were homeless. Their mother had kicked them out of the house. They ended up at their grandmother's home, but they could not stay there long term. Although bright and motivated, Dreshawn never thought about attending college after high school. At Goodwill, he enrolled in our WIA youth program, ELITE (Education, Leadership, Independence, Training and Employment) Program which serves youth with disabilities. With Goodwill's help, Dreshawn is pursuing education at the Las Vegas Professional Institute of Technology and Accounting, where he is learning to repair and work on computers. When asked how his life has changed as a result of working with Goodwill, Dreshawn said: "This last month is the best month I've ever had in my life. I'm taking steps to better myself

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***When asked how his life has changed as a result of working with Goodwill, Dreshawn said: "This last month is the best month I've ever had in my life. I'm taking steps to better myself instead of having people dictate my life in a bad way.***

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instead of having people dictate my life in a bad way. I'm ready to do whatever it takes to take my life to the next level." Dreshawn is just one of one hundred youth assisted by Goodwill of Southern Nevada this year. His story reminds us how important it is to hold students with disabilities to high

expectations while acknowledging their aspirations, interests, talents and desires.

## Ms. Woods' Success Story

GNJ Family Life Center continues to positively impact their participants. One, in particular, is Ms. Woods. In February 2014, Ms. Woods enrolled in our youth program. She's 19 years old, very shy, unemployed, and had no clear direction or next step. Fortunately, Ms. Woods had a dream, a dream to work in the medical field. GNJ's staff and Ms. Woods developed a strategic plan to assist her in achieving her career goals. She attended GNJ's academic classes, employability workshops, and leadership seminars. Through determination she elevated her basic skills, computer skills and workplace basics knowledge. In addition, she attained a certificate for green technology training by 49 demonstrating her knowledge of the importance of "Clean Air & Environment" associated with today's technology. Ms. Woods' desire to succeed has afforded her an opportunity to develop some work experience with a prominent law firm in Las Vegas as a Front Desk Attendant. After completing her work related training, she expressed the desire to further her education. She is currently in her 6th week of a 13 week certification program for Phlebotomy. When Ms. Woods entered our program, all she needed was clear direction and now she is well on her way.

# NEW HAMPSHIRE



## Jehona's Success Story

Jehona was a member of the MY TURN Program at Manchester's Central High School during the 2007 – 2008 school year. She was a standout in the classroom and took advantage of every opportunity presented by the program. Jehona and her family fled the war in Kosovo in 1999 eventually settling in Manchester. When Jehona started school in the US she could not speak a word of English but by the time she was in high school she was a high honor student. MY TURN staff encouraged Jehona to go to college upon graduating from high school and helped her complete the application and FAFSA process as her parents were not native English speakers and had difficulty understanding the enrollment and financial aid process. Jehona started her college career at Manchester Community College before transferring to UNH Manchester where she graduated with a Bachelor's Degree in Biology. During her college years Jehona

worked at the Eliot Hospital where she started out as a dietary aide and worked her way up to an LNA on the surgical floor where she continues to be employed today. Jehona has applied to Massachusetts School of Pharmacy and Health Sciences where she hopes to earn her Master's Degree and become a Physician's Assistant. Over the seven years since Jehona graduated from the MY TURN Program she has stayed in touch with staff and volunteered at several events. Most recently Jehona received MY TURN's Outstanding Alumni Award and has committed to mentoring current MY TURN students who are interested in pursuing careers in health care. We are so proud of everything Jehona has accomplished and look forward to being there when she receives her Master's Degree.

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# NEW MEXICO



## Timothy's Success Story

19 years old and a high school graduate, enrolled in the youth program very motivated to work and pursue his goals. Timothy was fresh out of high school without much direction or work experience. He was living with his parents and was eager to get out on his own. After completing the Basic Employability Skills

Training (BEST) class, Timothy obtained work with Animal Control in Edgewood, where he started off as a cage cleaner and dog walker. Around the same time, exercising his own initiative enrolled in CNM classes with hopes of getting his degree in Liberal Arts. The WIA program assisted Tim with a transportation stipend to get to and from school and he was always grateful for this assistance noting, "It

was a great incentive to stay-in-school". Tim completed his 450 hours of Work Experience at Animal Control and became very interested in the field. Due to his excellent work outcomes, the Town of Edgewood decided to hire him on as a full-time employee in June of 2012. Tim continued to attend CNM and received his Associate's Degree in Liberal Arts in December of 2013. Soon after that, Tim was promoted to an Animal Control Officer, assigned a company patrol vehicle to work in and take home. His job duties, as an Animal Control officer, include dispatch to homes to settle disputes, search and rescue, adoption of animals, and visits to schools to educate children about animal care. Tim continues to work at the Animal Control in Edgewood, giving him close to two years' worth of great work experience. The WIA youth program was a great resource for Timothy providing work readiness training, paid work experience, transportation assistance, tutoring,

occupational skills training and case management. As a result of Timothy's dedication and commitment to the program, he now has a full-time job and an Associate's Degree that will assist him with future goals and endeavors. Timothy is very happy and grateful with the result of his participation in the WIA youth program. He feels as if he has greatly benefitted from his community's resources and now hopes he can perform his job better in order to give back to those who have given to him. He continues to set goals and pursue dreams, but for now, he seems content and happy in reaping a few of the rewards that come to those who work hard.

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## NORTH CAROLINA



### Anisha's Success Story



Anisha Sharp has overcome many obstacles in her life, including being homeless for most of her childhood.

Despite her challenges, Sharp has pursued her goals with determination. As a participant in the Team Work program, Sharp determined a career pathway and gained valuable skills through the paid

Work Experience component as she worked to complete requirements for high school graduation. Even during her participation in the Youth program, Sharp faced serious obstacles to overcome due to her decision to drop out of high school. She decided to return to school at Madison High Early College. The WIA staff and Madison Team Work provided Sharp with a network of guidance, counseling, and tutoring. They also helped her with her transportation, food, clothing, and personal hygiene needs.

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Sharp received extra support through the one-on-one mentoring component. She also benefited from the WIA-funded paid work experience component of Madison Team Work. She was employed at Mars Hill Early Childhood Education Center, which led her to direct her career goals toward working with children in some capacity. While she met all of her high school graduation requirements in June 2013, Sharp continued to attend Madison High Early College in order to take online classes through A-B Tech Community College. Currently, Sharp is in follow-up, working as a call representative at a local call center. The WIA continues to provide Sharp with support services, including attire for work and referrals to community resources.

## Jeremy's Success Story

Jeremy Morris, 17, is a second-semester freshman at Rowan-Cabarrus Community College in Salisbury. In May 2013, Jeremy enrolled in the WIA Youth program through the Salisbury-Rowan Community Action Agency (SRCAA). Jeremy was very timid and shy. He was viewed as an outsider with his peers, and so he entered the Career Education Training Service Program through

SRCAA. His goal was to complete his GED in less than a year. The program proved to be the right environment for him. Through leadership development sessions, limited internships, confidence-building activities, and daily encouragement, Jeremy became one of the best students to enter the program. He set high standards for his fellow classmates. He earned a certification in Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) and his Career Readiness Certification. He completed the GPS to Success course offered through the community college and Computer Fundamentals. Jeremy has participated in Work Experiences, and his job evaluations state that he is a strong individual with exceptional work ethics and spectacular attendance and attitude.

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In December 2013, Jeremy earned his GED. On March 20, 2014, Jeremy enrolled into the mini semester offered through the community college to study automotive technology. He is excelling in the program, having completed the past semester with exceptional grades. Jeremy has accepted himself and is an excellent example of the WIA program.

## NORTH DAKOTA

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## Jordan's Success Story

Jordan is a youth with a disability and resided in a county designated as an area of

substantial unemployment. He came to the Grand Forks Customer Service Office to request assistance with employment. Jordan was enrolled in WIA. He participated

in a work experience program over the summer which helped him gain valuable work readiness skills. He was funded by WIA to enroll in the Heating, Ventilation, Air Conditioning (HVAC) program at a community & technical college in the fall. While enrolled in WIA, Jordan obtained his high school diploma and graduated from the HVAC program in May 2014.

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*While enrolled in WIA, Jordan obtained his high school diploma and graduated from the HVAC program in May 2014.*

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He is employed full-time in Grand Forks and is enrolled in an apprentice sheet metal training through the Department of Labor. His starting wage is \$13/hr.

## Cody's Success Story

Cody was referred to the Minot Customer Service Office in June 2012 by his Voc Rehab case worker. He requested assistance to complete his nursing degree. Cody was attending a state university and had one and a half years left to finish the Registered Nurse (RN) program. He had been working at a hospital as a casual CNA during college breaks and vacations. Cody had many barriers – physical disability, learning disability, and was an offender with a

misdeemeanor. He was eligible for the WIA program and approved for funding in August, 2013. Cody completed his assessment and made this statement when asked 'What is the one thing you will do that makes you feel proud?' He stated "I am currently in the process of donating my hair to the 'Locks of Love Foundation'. This says a lot about of who Cody is. While in the WIA program Cody received assistance with books, tuition, and fees as well as support services for uniforms and shoes. WIA also paid for a class that prepared him to take his nursing boards. Cody completed a Summer Internship with a hospital in Rochester, MN. Cody graduated in December 2014 with a Bachelor of Science in Nursing and a minor in Psychology, Magna Cum Laude and on the President's Honor Roll with a Grade Point Average (GPA) of 3.89. Within 3 days of graduating Cody was offered a nursing position with the hospital in Rochester. He is employed in the Cardiovascular Surgical Progressive Care Unit making \$31.89 per hour. Within 3 days of graduating Cody was offered a nursing position with the hospital in Rochester. He is employed in the Cardiovascular Surgical Progressive Care Unit making \$31.89 per hour.

## OHIO



## Zach's Success Story

Zach moved to Ohio from West Virginia early in the fall of 2012. He moved to live with his father because he abused prescription drugs and alcohol, got into trouble with the police, was suspended from school, and got kicked out of his grandparents' home. He stepped into the

office of a Medina County youth service provider, Jobs for Ohio's Graduates, to get information about getting a General Educational Development (GED) diploma. A staff member sat down with him to discuss the program and what he wanted to do in the future. Zach began attending GED classes so he could refresh his memory and

form good habits. He was hoping to enroll in a local high school to earn the 10 credits he needed to graduate, but he worked toward his GED as a backup plan while he waited for his transcripts to transfer. During this time, Zach and the Jobs for Ohio's Graduates staff focused on developing strong work habits, basic employability skills, and helping him better market himself in applications, resumes and interviews. A few months later, Zach was offered a job immediately after an interview. A month later, he also was accepted at a local high school to finish his credits. Zach continued to visit the office for various reasons. During one visit, staff helped him develop a plan for his future. Although he still was not sure what he wanted to do, he knew he needed to graduate and go to college. He also wanted to consider the military as an option to help pay for college. Staff invited him to participate in a career development conference and suggested that he compete in a public speaking contest; he placed first at both the local and state competitions. Zach graduated from high school, enlisted in the Army and is now stationed in Hawaii.

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*Staff invited him to participate in a career development conference and suggested that he compete in a public speaking contest; he placed first at both the local and state competitions.*

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## Beth's Success Story

When Beth first enrolled in the youth program, she had recently graduated from high school and was living in a tent in the woods. Because of ongoing family troubles, she had no place to live and no help with job searching and the college application process. Her local OhioMeansJobs Center staff helped her enter the local shelter and apply for a transitional housing program. After her housing crisis was stabilized, the focus switched to work readiness and job placement. Beth was placed in a WIA worksite, received a significant amount of praise from her supervisor and was offered a position. Unfortunately, she was unable to take it because of transportation issues. However, she secured employment outside the program at a location within walking distance of her new apartment. Center staff also helped her apply to college. She was accepted and is scheduled to begin classes in spring 2015.

## OKLAHOMA



## Darrel's Success Story

Approximately 60 youth, who range in age from 16 to 21, spent their summer gaining skills in their prospective careers-as well as soft skills needed to find and keep employment. They were employed through a summer youth work program through the Eastern Workforce Investment Area. One

such youth, 19-year-old Darrel Dugger, is on the job at the Wilma P. Mankiller Clinic construction site. He is tasked with making sure employees sign-in each day, determining if they are a Native American worker, checking on safety regulations and making sure workers do things in a safe manner. The construction company is able to give Dugger hands-on training in the

construction field while also receiving a laborer free of charge, since Eastern Workforce pays his salary. Amber Burroughs, youth case manager at the Stilwell Workforce office, said she is proud of the work Dugger is doing. She says that he is staying on track and is meeting his goals. The Workforce office provides steps to help participants get where they want to be in their career. Those steps include life skills-learning to show up on time, calling in when they are sick, etc. and career guidance. Dugger said he plans to begin a

six-month internship soon in commercial construction with Crosslin Construction and looks forward to a long career in construction and possibly owning his own company someday.

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## SOUTH CAROLINA



### Regina's Success Story



Regina had a plan for her future but lacked the resources and support to make her plan a reality. Workforce Solution Regina was certified as a WIA participant in the

YouthStop program in the fall of 2013. YouthStop staff provided assistance for Regina to enter a Certified Nursing Assistant program at RD Anderson Applied Technology Center. In addition, she achieved the National Career Readiness Certification. Outcomes & Benefits In May 2014, Regina was awarded her high school diploma and earned her license as a CNA. She was hired by Spartanburg Regional Healthcare System (SRHS) as a floater focusing on patient care and administrative duties. Regina will begin nursing classes at Spartanburg Community College in August 2014.

### Rebecca's Success Story



Rebecca is a 20-year old mother, student, and employee. A year ago, she was living in government housing and raising her son, who was born with Downs Syndrome. She was also pregnant with another

child. Workforce Solution Rebecca enrolled in Oconee County Adult Education's GED program. In addition to GED classes, Rebecca also started the Palmetto Youth Connections program. She earned many incentives while in the program and was referred to the Ripple of One mentoring program. Outcomes & Benefits Rebecca is currently pursuing an Associate Degree in nursing at Tri-County Technical College (TCTC) while working part-time at the Tribble Center where her son receives therapy. "I have come so far in my life thanks to Palmetto Youth Connections and the Oconee Adult Education Center. They have helped me to achieve my GED and

enroll in TCTC to get my Associates in Nursing. My life would not be going this great if it wasn't for them."- Rebecca

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*"I have come so far in my life thanks to Palmetto Youth Connections and the Oconee Adult Education Center.*

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## SOUTH DAKOTA



### Angela's Success Story



Angela was a high school dropout, and a single parent receiving Temporary Assistance for Needy Families and Supplemental Nutrition Assistance. When she was referred to the WIA

program, Angela was working towards her GED® with AEL at Southeast Job Link. Angela's long-term goal was to upgrade her Certified Nursing Assistance certification into a Licensed Practical Nurse or Registered Nurse, but she needed to earn her GED® first. WIA case manager, Jodi, supported Angela's goal of attaining her high school equivalency diploma with financial assistance to cover childcare while Angela attended GED® classes, as well as providing the funds to cover the cost of the GED® test. Despite raising her son and receiving temporary custody of her nephew, Angela persevered and was able to increase her basic skills, receive a Literacy and Numeracy gain and earn her GED®. Angela took a position as a CNC operator to help pay the bills. With the goal of LPN or RN in mind, Angela moved to be closer to the post-secondary school of her choice. WIA staff assisted Angela with a mock interview, which Angela earned a monetary incentive for. This mock interview was just the preparation Angela needed to land a

CNA position at Bethany Lutheran Home making \$10.50 an hour.

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WIA assisted Angela financially by purchasing clothing and gas for this position. This position offers flexibility for her to attend classes once she starts advanced training. Angela's WIA team looks forward to continuing to assist her with her postsecondary goals.

### Ka Bar's Success Story



Ka Bar is a Burma Refugee who has been a resident of the United States since August 2005. During his time in the US, Ka Bar earned his high school diploma and an electrical certificate from Job Corps. With no

applicable work experience, Ka Bar came to the Huron Local Office to learn more about employment opportunities. Ka Bar's limited English skills allowed him to meet the Additional Assistance Barrier and secured eligibility for the WIA Youth Program. Ka Bar's WIA specialists, Judy and Donna,

promoted Ka Bar's talents at various electrical businesses in the community. Ka Bar interviewed with Ferguson Electric and was offered a WIA Summer Opportunity Work Experience as an Electrician Apprentice. WIA provided supportive services to assist Ka Bar with work related clothing. While on the job, it was evident that Ka Bar needed eye glasses and his limited spelling skills were impacting his job. When not able to find a community program to offer medical assistance, WIA assisted Ka Bar with an eye exam and

glasses. A referral to our Adult Education and Literacy providers was made and Ka Bar now attends English as a Second Language classes through Cornerstones Learning Center. During his Summer Opportunity Work Experience, Ka Bar took advantage of the Job Search Assistance Program offered through the DLR Local Office. Ka Bar wrote a report about what he learned in this class and earned a monetary incentive. As a result of a positive work experience, Ka Bar has been hired on as a permanent, full-time employee by Ferguson Electric.

## TENNESSEE



### In-School Youth Success Stories

Over sixty-five (65) youth participated in college tours, career fairs, business tours, mock interviews with employers, and community service projects this year. Forty-nine (49) youth earned an average of \$1177 in summer work experiences. Twenty-five (25) youth were high school seniors during 2013-2014; they had entered the program as low-income, "at risk of dropping out of high school." 100% of these participants graduated in spring 2014.

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From this class of graduates, three (3) were in the top 10% of their class; one of which was salutatorian at her school. 92% (23/25) of those graduating seniors went on to post-secondary programs or obtained jobs. 13 of these are attending 4-year postsecondary schools and nine (9) are attending two-year post-secondary schools.

## VERMONT



### A Franklin County Success Story

We have a young lady who is from Richford, Vermont. She and her mother were living

with an individual who was making and selling drugs, not a good environment, so her mother decided to move out. Prior to this happening all of their paperwork documents were destroyed. They reached

out to the Vermont Department of Labor and the WIA Youth Development Facilitators were engaged. In order to qualify for help, they needed assistance in obtaining new social security cards, and birth certificates. The Franklin County Internship Program stepped up along with the Vermont Department of Labor to assist in getting the needed documents. Once accomplished, this young lady was successfully enrolled in the WIA Program. She did some work experience at The Crossing Restaurant near her home, so that

she could walk to work. The WIA Program assisted in providing suitable clothing for interviews and work. The young woman insisted on doing odd jobs to help pay for the clothing that she received. During her senior year, the school guidance counselor and the Franklin County Internship Program found a tutor who assisted with her learning disability. They drove her to visit Castleton and Johnson State Colleges and helped her apply. She was accepted at Johnson State College where she is currently a freshman.

## VIRGIN ISLANDS



### Raheem's Success Story



Student, Raheem Bonnie, began Project Link (an alternative high school which uses the American School (a home school program fully accredited by Middle States

Association of Colleges and Schools) in February 2014. He is completing his high school diploma and projected to graduate in December 2014. In August 2014, Raheem was hired for a temporary work experience, as a File Clerk, with Marshall and Sterling Insurance in Gallows Bay, St. Croix.

### Jemmalee's Success Story



2013 Link graduate, Jemmalee Alexander, is attending Florida Technical College and pursuing a Bachelor of Arts degree in

Business. Jemmalee completed her high school courses and graduated in December 2013. A native of Tortola, British Virgin Islands, Jemmalee moved to St. Croix during her junior high school years. Jemmalee attended Link from February 2013 - December 2013. She relocated to Florida upon graduation.



## Marty's Success Story



Marty Stone is a reentry youth. He enrolled in the Workforce Investment Act Youth Program at the advisement of his Reentry Specialist unsure of how the program may help him. Marty knew he had a passion to learn to become a chef, but was unsure what steps to make his dream come true or if his dream could now come true due to his past. Unfortunately, every year approximately 100,000 exit the juvenile WIA Annual Report November 2014 Page 11 of 54 system each year. "Within twelve months of their reentry to the community, one study found that only 30% of previously incarcerated youth were involved in either school or work" (Back on Track, 2009). In the WIA program, Marty's case manager worked with him on application skills, resume skills, and interview skills. His case manager was also able to partner with Cruis-In Café in Keysville to offer Marty a work experience for Marty to gain basic skills in the culinary industry. Marty blossomed in the work experience and both owners, Mr. and Mrs. Balland, as well as co-workers state how well Marty is doing. He learns new skills, always asks for more work when he is finished, and is very punctual about getting to work on time. This work experience deepened Marty's desire to become a chef one day. Marty worked with his case manager and found a Culinary Arts certificate program available at Central

Virginia Community College. He applied and was accepted. He began his classes in the Fall semester of 2014. Marty continues to appreciate all the help and support he is receiving from the WIA Youth Program. Marty states, "It's people like those at the WIA that help guys like me to know we are still people, and we can still follow our dreams."

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## A STEM-H Youth Success Story

Building robust career pathways is an integral part of Opportunity Inc.'s industry sector strategy. Throughout the program year Opportunity Inc. completed several advanced manufacturing initiatives, helping to strengthen the region's advanced manufacturing career pathway. Under contract with Opportunity Inc., Old Dominion University developed an 11 module "Foundations of Mechatronics" class, to be taught in local high schools, that prepares students to enroll in Mechatronics certificate courses like those at Tidewater Community College and elsewhere. To better disseminate the Foundations of Mechatronics course, Opportunity Inc. hosted a two-day teacher training workshop in June 2014. The event provided an overview of the course, teaching aids and a lab kit that could be used in the classroom. Teachers received all the materials necessary to intersperse the

coursework in their existing classes as a teaching tool. "I knew that mechatronics combines all of the disciplines that are taught in my department--electrical, mechanical, computer and industrial engineering--but I didn't understand how it all comes together as a career path," says Dawn Rountree, a teacher at Suffolk's Nansemond River High School. Eventually, the goal is for school divisions to create stand-alone "Foundations of Mechatronics" courses using the materials. Lastly, Opportunity Inc. was instrumental in

bringing together Tidewater Community College and the Virginia Beach City Public Schools to develop a dual enrollment program whereby students could earn TCC college credit toward six manufacturing-related certifications by taking a sequence of courses at Virginia Beach's Advanced Technology Center. The program, which was highlighted in a May 2014 US News article "Two-for-One Deal: Earning College Credit for STEM in High School," began in the fall 2014 semester.

## WISCONSIN



### Nick's Success Story

Nick Kloften graduated last year from Union Grove High School but was unsure of what he wanted to do until the Computerized Numeric Control (CNC) boot camp. "After high school I did not know what I wanted to get into." Before attending the boot camp he was working 30 hours per week at an area grocery store, and was "just getting by." A friend of his father, shared his own experience while participating in a CNC boot camp and told him he should consider applying. "I don't want a part-time job for the next couple years I want to get into something solid, plus I heard all good things about the program." After he completes the camp and gets some experience in industry, Nick would also like to take some engineering classes. "Going from nothing to something and designing something new is fun. I enjoy it. I think anything having to do with technology or machinery sparks my mind." He feels what is most beneficial about the boot camp is the way the instructors teach the program. "They teach

you about attitude too so you know what to expect in the workplace."

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*"They teach you about attitude too so you know what to expect in the workplace."*

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The first day he met instructor Rick Lofy and Todd Nienhaus from the Racine County Workforce Development Center, they told the participants that the course was going to be tough. He quickly found out that was true, but said he appreciates that structure of the program. He looks forward to having decent pay so he can save money, be able to support himself, and maybe a family someday. "I was just thinking it would be schooling and then get out of here to go to work, but it has opened my mind up to a bigger picture." Nick was very appreciative of the program. "It is a big commitment, but as long as you are willing to put in the work, it is worth it."

### Donald's Success Story

Donald C., a recent Waukesha North High School graduate, was enrolled in the WIA

Youth Program with no previous work history. Through the WIA Summer Youth Program, he was placed in a summer work experience at Steinhafel's as a furniture unloader where he learned and developed the soft skills necessary to be successful in the workforce. Donald's supervisor was pleased to share how much progress had been made since the program began, and noted how other employees took notice of his great work ethic and contributions to the team.

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*Donald's supervisor was pleased to share how much progress had been made since the program began, and noted how other employees took notice of his great work ethic and contributions to the team.*

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As a result of his performance, Steinhafel's made the decision to hire Donald as a full-time employee. Looking forward, Donald will simultaneously attend Waukesha County Technical College in the Information Technology (IT) Program while maintaining employment with Steinhafel's.

## WYOMING

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### Laura's Success Story

About a year and a half ago, Laura T.'s mom met with Jennifer Cruz from the Cheyenne Workforce Center, about the WIA Youth Program. The purpose of the meeting was to help Laura get her GED. At the time, Laura was in a residential treatment facility. She was going through a very sad time in her life; struggling with the mental effects of some trauma she had experienced. This issue had caused her to drop out of high school with no plan or goals. The small structure of the facility, where Laura was being helped, enabled her to realize that she could get back on track in the right environment and by utilizing the right support system. Knowing this is what helped Laura make up her mind to join the GED and Occupational Attainment for Life (GOAL) program. When Laura returned home from the treatment center, she met with Jennifer in person, and started the process for WIA enrollment. Laura liked the fact that Jennifer took the time to explain all of the details that were required of her,

but also let her know that she was just as accountable, for being a solid support for Laura's success. Laura started classes and did well. She was progressing academically, but then realized that jumping into this so soon after her release was more overwhelming than she initially thought it would be. So she dropped out of contact. After several months of enjoying her freedom, reality began to set in; Laura realized it was time to grow up. She had no education and no job prospects, and found out that she was pregnant. It was at this time that Jennifer quickly welcomed Laura back to the WIA program. She applied herself and, within a few weeks, obtained her GED. Laura immediately felt a sense of pride that she hadn't felt for a very long time. She also felt it was time to start setting the best example she could for the baby she was carrying. Today, Laura is on the right track in life. She gave birth to a healthy daughter and they are a complete family with the child's daddy. They share a home and both parents work, earning enough money to support them, with no

government assistance, and they are enrolling in college. Laura was a sheltered young lady, who is finally living a healthy and independent life. For the first time in a long time, she can comfortably think about the future with positive thoughts, and hope. Also, she is very grateful for her case manager's persistence, information, and faith in her. The GOAL program allowed her to be in a small environment where she could focus on learning goals, without the

stress of social issues, and pressure to do work she didn't understand. This, along with all of the support she received in this program, has been the stepping stone Laura needed to kick start her life.

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*The GOAL program allowed her to be in a small environment where she could focus on learning goals, without the stress of social issues, and pressure to do work she didn't understand.*

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# TRADE ADJUSTMENT ACT (TAA)

## Success Stories

### ILLINOIS



#### Casey's Success Story

Casey worked for 9 years at American Pad and Paper, LLC in Mattoon, Illinois, but was permanently laid off when the plant closed after being impacted by foreign trade. Since he was unable to find employment at a wage to support his family, he decided to request training in the field of Civil Engineering. While participating in the Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) Program, Casey received assessment, Individual Employment Plan (IEP), classroom training, transportation assistance, child care assistance, supportive services, and case management.

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Casey enrolled in the two year Civil Engineering Technology Program at Lake Land College in January 2012. He received straight A's for all but two of his classes, for which he received two B's during his entire training program. Casey was on the President's List every semester. Casey always had a positive and upbeat attitude, and was eager to learn new things and apply his knowledge during his SOE. He

always kept his case manager informed of any changes or concerns he had, and graduated Magna Cum Laude in May 2014. Before he graduated, he had already targeted the employer he desired to work for and secured an interview for the position shortly after his graduation. Casey was hired as a Civil Engineering Technician for The Upchurch Group in Mattoon, IL and began working on June 3, 2014. Casey states that even though he is outside in the heat, it doesn't bother him at all, because he is doing what he loves and what he's always wanted to do!

#### Manivanh's Success Story



Manivanh (pronounced "Money-won") Chipongsay immigrated to the USA from Laos. She took an AAS Degree in Computer Information Systems from Harper College in Palatine, Illinois and then joined Direct Marketing Technology in Schaumburg, IL as a Mainframe Computer Operator. She worked for the company for over 25 years until she was laid off in 2013. The layoff allowed Manivanh to modernize her credentials. She chose the professional Information Technology (IT) program, "CareerPro E-Commerce Comprehensive" offered by Management Information

Technology Solutions (MITS) of Schaumburg, IL in which she earned industry standard certifications including Oracle (database)/SQL Expert Certification, Java Certification, and Data Analytics/Oracle Combo Certification. Data Analytics is commonly called “Big Data.” July 2014 she joined GOGO, LLC the pioneer and leading provider of in-flight Web connection services, located in Itasca, IL as a Financial Systems Developer responsible for software design and specifications, testing, and using data analytics tools in working with the main company business database. Chipongsay says, “I believe the training, which included Oracle SQL, that I received from the Trade Act program, and the help from the Illinois WorkNet Center with my resume, got me the job.”

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## Tonya’s Success Story



Tonya Brown was laid off from Apria Healthcare as a Customer Service Specialist. Apria filed for Trade Adjustment Assistance Certification Status with the US Department of Labor

and was certified under the Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) Act. Seizing the opportunity to obtain credentials and new work skills, Tonya researched growth occupations that would lead to employment and that offered a salary that would allow her to support her family. With assessments and testing, she ultimately decided that the Dental Hygienist AAS

Degree at Lewis and Clark Community College (LCCC) was the right path for her. As a former student of the college, Tonya was able to use most of the previous earned credits towards her degree. She was still required to take prerequisite courses related to the Dental Hygienist Degree Program. While this delayed her anticipated completion date by an additional semester, it did not discourage her from completing her goal. The Dental Hygienist program at LCCC is a two part program. First the student must complete the one year Dental Assisting Certificate program and then to complete an additional year of required curriculum to obtain the Dental Hygienist AAS Degree. Tonya was able to complete the training while maintaining a high standard of excellence in her classes. As a student, she achieved academic honors throughout her program and received award recognition for Dental Hygiene Academic Honors. As a mother, she had the ability to multi-task to ensure that her husband and children remained a priority. After completing her training program and graduating from LCCC, she found herself back into the job market equipped with a credential and marketable skills. She completed a short span of job searches before she was hired on as a Dental Hygienist at a local dental office. Today, Tonya Brown is gainfully employed earning nearly double the amount she was earning before being laid off from Apria Healthcare.

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***Today, Tonya Brown is gainfully employed earning nearly double the amount she was earning before being laid off from Apria Healthcare.***

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As a result of taking advantage of the Trade Act and available training, she now has a nationally recognized credential, a Dental Hygienist license in two states and in-

demand skills. Tonya is able to support her family with confidence.

## Liliana's Success Story



Liliana Garcia worked for Metaldyne from 2005 – 2009 as a Quality Coordinator. Liliana had an Associate's degree at the time of her lay-off and has disclosed a disability as well (epilepsy). Despite the

challenges she endured after the lay-off and raising her kids as a single-parent, Liliana successfully completed a Bachelor's in Social Work degree from St. Augustine

College. While in school, Liliana did really well and maintained As and Bs. She received an A in her internship with the Latino Organization of the Southwest. Although she completed her training in May of 2014, Liliana is on an active job search. Consequently, she has been hired to temporarily assist with the Adult Education program at National Able Network. During this assignment, Liliana will continue to enhance her employability by learning new skills and enrolling in intensive job readiness classes. Liliana has expressed her gratitude towards the opportunities she has received through the TAA program. She is extremely grateful that she was able to complete a Bachelor's degree as that has been an immediate goal.

# OTHER WORKFORCE SYSTEM PROGRAMS

## Ex-Offender Success Stories

### ARKANSAS



#### William's Success Story



William Henderson Jr. is an ex-offender released in July 2014. Upon his

release he had been conducting job search in the Arkansas Workforce Center in Helena with no success. It had been over 4 years since William had a job and he is surviving with the help of SNAP benefits. He was referred to WIA Career Advisor Heather Pipkin to see if there was any assistance through WIA for him to get training. She met with William August 5 and assisted him with Job Search and career assessments. William wanted short term training so he could get to work as soon as possible and start getting his life back in order. He thought driving a truck for a local farmer would help him do that. Cox Farms was willing to hire him if he could get his license. He was enrolled and approved eligible for

WIA assistance on August 07. William was able to get a travel permit from his parole officer and started school at Pine Bluff Trucking on August 11 and graduated on August 29, 2014. Unfortunately by the time William graduated, Cox Farms was no longer hiring but after conducting further job search he was employed at Edwards Farms of Marianna. He earns 25% of the load and hauls an average of 2 loads a day which leaves him earning on average \$500.00 a week. William was exited from the WIA program on September 22, 2014 due to obtaining his CDL's and entering employment in his field of study. He feels that now he can get his life back and none of that would have been possible has it not been for the belief his Career Advisor had in him and the encouragement she gave him to believe in himself.

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# FLORIDA



## Richard's Success Story

Richard Nieves came to CareerSource Broward in search of training and job placement assistance. Richard had been incarcerated for five years and has a hidden disability. After his release in September 2014, he was referred by the Florida Department of Corrections to meet with the Disability Resource Coordinator (DRC). He came to the center with his resume on a laptop, a list of job goals, a work record from his incarceration and "Things-to-Do" list. The DRC provided guidance and information on the steps necessary to obtain employ. It was determined he needed a forklift license to be more marketable for a warehouse employment opportunity, interview skills, federal bonding and interview clothing. A mock interview was conducted and his resume was revamped and brought up to date. He was referred to a community partner for a

tuition voucher for his forklift license and a class was found he could attend. The DRC assisted him in completing job applications and interviews were scheduled with two employers.

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On September 18, 2013, Richard had his first interview and was offered a part-time position. On September 25, 2014, he was offered employment as a Warehouse Operator. He returned to the center with his letter of hire requesting Federal Bonding which he obtained. He started employment the very next day. The DRC kept Richard motivated, focused during the job search process and continues to provide postemployment support. The customer, despite having multiple barriers to employment, was able to obtain employment within 30 days of his release.

# HAWAII



## Cory's Success Story

Determination is etched in the face and heart of Cory Silva. After spending some time incarcerated, upon release, Cory regularly

visited the Dillingham Oahu WorkLinks

(OWL). Cory was eager to get back to work and provide for his family so the Employment Consultant (EC) arranged for vocational training through the Workforce Investment Act Adult Program. Although he had previous work experience in truck driving, Cory needed a Commercial Driver's License (CDL) to be competitive. Cory began intensive and training services in April 2013 and completed 6 weeks of training at

Leeward Community College – Office of Continuing Education and Workforce Development. By the end of June 2013, he acquired the CDL on his first try. Despite his desire for a quick return to work, Cory delayed his job search and unselfishly gave his time to care for a loved one. By August 2013 with the family member on the mend and others there to help, Cory was able to resume his job search and landed a job as a Driver/Worker/Loader for Roofing Supply Inc. in less than a month. It's now over a

year since Cory started working again and he is still employed, providing for his family and grateful for the OWL training and services that paved his road back to success.

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## IOWA



### John's Success Story

When John first started coming in to IowaWORKS in Fort Dodge, he was a resident of the halfway house for offenders trying to get integrated back into the community. He found employment, but then was laid off in June 2012. John utilized Skills Development services at IowaWORKS to search for work, but he wasn't successful. Through meetings with a Workforce Advisor, he decided to attend ICCC in the Auto Mechanic Program. As a WIA Dislocated Worker he was assisted with training costs. He graduated in May 2014. After graduation, John had trouble completing his Exit Counseling Application with ICCC. This was required because he took out a couple loans while attending school. ICCC would not release his degree until this online counseling application was completed. He had tried to complete it twice without success and was very frustrated. A Workforce Advisor helped him complete this application. Together, they got it submitted and they printed a copy. The Advisor suggested to him that he

immediately take it personally to the ICCC office to show proof of completion. He returned a half hour later with his degree in hand. He was really excited and thankful for the assistance we provided. IowaWORKS staff also assisted John with multiple job referrals and online applications. It didn't take long for him to call and say that all those applications paid off. He has been hired as a mechanic at Rees Truck & Trailer in Fort Dodge. His starting wage is \$15.00 per hour.

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John said he is so thankful that with our assistance he was able to complete his goal and get his dream job. He told his Workforce Advisor, "I could not have done it without you!"

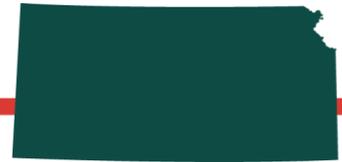
### Bart's Success Story

Bart came to the WIA program after experiencing many difficulties in his life. Bart had previously been terminated from

Pioneer and is also an ex-offender. Bart experiences a disability and also received services from the offices of Iowa Vocational Rehabilitation Services. Unable to find employment beyond part-time, Bart came to the One-Stop Center and the WIA Low Income Adult program after researching employment options which could utilize his natural ability and affinity for Agriculture. A recipient of public assistance such as SNAP (food stamps); Bart was eligible for

assistance with pursuing his Associate's Degree in Agri-Business. Bart successfully completed this program in May of 2014. He has since started his own business called BD Custom Property Services. He provides a variety of landscaping and agriculture related services. Bart has marketed his services in both Iowa and his home state of Michigan. He is currently completing a landscaping contract within both states.

## KANSAS



### Dustin's Success Story

Dustin was incarcerated at Larned Juvenile Correctional Facility (LJCF) when he began working with Susan and was enrolled in the WIA Title IB Youth Vision Program. During incarceration, Dustin completed five Barton County Community College courses, which included Manufacturing Skills Certificate. He also participated in a work experience in the maintenance department. Upon release from LJCF Dustin remained enrolled in the youth program and continued his education at Barton County Community College. He graduated with honors with an Associate's Degree in Business Management. At graduation, he met Governor Sam Brownback, which he felt honored to be selected for. Dustin is now part owner in a motorcycle shop and doing well. He does have plans to get his Bachelor's Degree at Washburn University in Topeka. Click here to watch video of Dustin meeting Governor Brownback:

[www.youtube.com/watch?v=sA9dH8uPC4E](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sA9dH8uPC4E)

### Priscilla's Success Story

*The Challenge* – Priscilla came to the WFC at the request of her parole officer after she had been released from the state prison system. An offender with four years of incarceration left Priscilla with several barriers to her successful employment. Her confidence was extremely low and she felt her prior convictions would prevent her from obtaining a job. *The WFC Solution* – WFC staff with the Labor Exchange program had Priscilla take the WorkKeys assessment to show both her and employers her current skill level. Staff felt it important to quickly demonstrate to Priscilla she had skills to offer a prospective employer. In addition, they connected Priscilla to a local clothing bank to help her obtain interview appropriate attire. At the same time, staff also worked with Priscilla one-on-one to develop a resume and practice her interviewing skills. They helped Priscilla complete state applications for employment as well.

The Outcome – Priscilla obtained a Gold level Work Ready certificate which immediately boosted her self-confidence. This new, stronger level of self-esteem came through in her interviews. She quickly obtained a position with a local kennel and received a promotion after one month. Although pleased with her new job, Priscilla continued to look for additional employment opportunities which would offer her increased wage and benefits potential. With the WFC's help, Priscilla was able to obtain a full-time job with benefits. WFC staff received feedback from the employer that Priscilla was one of the

highest performers in the testing/application process for her new job. Priscilla said of the staff member she worked with at the WFC, “she helped me find my career job. She was my personal assistant in doing so. She was always polite, helpful and knows just how to motivate people for any job that comes up. Thank you. The workforce center in general is a great place to go if you are truly wanting to find a job.”

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## MAINE



### Adult and Dislocated Worker Programs

The past year was very busy for the Adult and Dislocated Worker programs. Enrollments exceeded expectations as the economy continued to rebound. Although unemployment in Maine continued to exceed pre-recession rates, customers realized their employment goals as a result of training and assistance through WIA. One such example involves a gentleman who had been released from prison after a lengthy sentence for felony drug charges. Prior to his incarceration he was a plumber, but his license had expired during his time in prison. His attempts to secure

employment in the year after his release were unsuccessful and, as a result, he found himself sleeping on friend's couches and relying on public assistance to get by. Through the WIA Adult Program, this individual was able to attend the refresher courses that were required for him to reinstate his license as well as pay for his examination and licensing fees. Soon after completing training, he obtained full-time employment with a local plumbing company earning \$22.00 per hour.

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# MARYLAND



## Arnold's Success Story

In April 2014, Arnold was referred to the Hagerstown Re-entry Coordinator by his parole officer. He was having “great difficulty” finding employment and was becoming quite frustrated. After meeting with Arnold, the coordinator discovered that Arnold had once worked as an Emergency Medical Tech (EMT) and apparently still had a passion for doing that type of work. So, Arnold was invited to

attend the Job Club where he would receive job leads, coaching, skills building and mentoring. Arnold was clear that although he wanted to find something in his field, he was willing to work any job offered. As luck would have it, an agency located in the same building as the Job Club had an opening in in-home critical care services. Arnold was referred to the agency and based on his experience and his references, he was offered a full-time position with benefit.

# MISSISSIPPI



## Joseph's Success Story

Joseph Campbell was laid off two years ago from his security job he had held for more than three years and had since been looking for work while his wife supported the family. Due to his prior criminal record, Joseph could not find another job in the security field. Realizing that he needed to make a vocational change to re-enter the workforce, Joseph visited the Clarksdale WIN Job Center. After the initial assessment and the CRC test, Joseph was referred to Metso as an assembler but was not hired for that position. WIN Job Center Staff

continued to provide intensive services and suggested that he attend a pre-employment training class. Joseph completed the pre-employment training and was referred to Metso again. This time, Metso hired Joseph through the OJT program in February, 2014 as an inspector trainee. After two months on the OJT program, his supervisors gave him an excellent rating on his evaluation. He continued to learn and completed his training on June 26, 2014. Joseph is very thankful to the WIN Center Staff for the career guidance and assisting him in finding a job.

# NEVADA



## Steven's Success Story

Steven came to FIT after having spent a number of years in and out of prison as a result of his struggle with drug addiction. In the winter of 2013, Steven was dependent on his son and daughter-in-law, fully reliant upon them for his every need and expense. Desperate to stand on his own two feet and give back to his family, Steven worked with his case manager to obtain a letter of intent from one of his old employers. Steven was given training to re-obtain his CDL license, as well as the clothing and tools essential for his work. Shortly thereafter Steven became employed, and today has achieved his goal of not only supporting himself but paying back his family for all their assistance.

## Caroline's Success Story

Caroline is a current client of YAP-WIA Re-Entry. Caroline and her family migrated from Honduras to the US. During her first few years, she excelled in school. After their family moved to Las Vegas, Caroline's behavior began to change. She was expelled from school and began attending behavioral school. Caroline began using drugs/alcohol

and absconding to abandoned homes. After living as a runaway for over three months, a concerned adult reported her whereabouts. Caroline was arrested for the destruction of an abandoned home and criminal trespassing. She was then placed on formal probation. In April of 2013, after failing a drug test, Caroline was sentenced to Caliente Youth Center. There, with the help of staff and teachers, she was able to obtain her high school diploma and set realistic goals for her future. With the help of a WIA Re-Entry program as well as a scholarship award from YAP, Inc. LLC., Caroline was awarded a full tuition payment so she could begin her education in cosmetology. Caroline is currently on track to become a theatric costume makeup artist. Caroline has also been accepted to College of Southern Nevada and plans to begin in the fall.

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*With the help of a WIA Re-Entry program as well as a scholarship award from YAP, Inc. LLC., Caroline was awarded a full tuition payment so she could begin her education in cosmetology. Caroline is currently on track to become a theatric costume makeup artist.*

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# NEW HAMPSHIRE



## Antonio's Success Story

Antonio's problems were piling up, one after another, and he did not see a way clear of them. With a pregnant wife and

two children, he had moved from Georgia to New Hampshire to start anew, but those problems were piling up. The family couldn't find housing and were cramped in

his mother-in-law's small apartment; the family car broke down. The only income coming in was TANF cash assistance and food stamps. But perhaps the biggest problem for Antonio was finding work. As a convicted (twice) felon, Antonio faced the challenge of explaining his past to prospective employers while proving he was a man who had changed his ways. He practiced his interview skills and explanations, but all the problems and pressures convinced Antonio to visit the NH Works Career Center in Nashua. The team partners of NH Works were impressed by Antonio's determination to help himself and his family.

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*The team partners of NH Works were impressed by Antonio's determination to help himself and his family.*

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First, the housing issue was addressed by introducing Antonio to the Front Door Agency so he could obtain assistance covering the cost of a security deposit. WIA funds were used to cover a month's rent. The NH Works partner Southern NH Service was Antonio's connection for Fuel and Electrical Assistance. Next, Antonio's WIA Counselor urged him to file a second request for Social Security Disability Income

for his wife. The WIA Counselor helped with the effort. To get to a job, Antonio needed a car. His counselor introduced him to the program Good News Garage for the chance to obtain a free donated vehicle and to More Than Wheels for assistance finding and funding a vehicle. While waiting for a chance to obtain a car, Antonio had the chance to work at a nearby employer, Barlow Signs, under an On-The-Job training contract. Antonio biked to work and earned \$15 an hour, forty hours a week at Barlow Signs. And he proved to his employer that he was dependable, smart and capable of advancing in the company. Today, Antonio and his family live in a three-room apartment, and he is about to buy a car. Antonio no longer collects TANF. He no longer uses food stamps. Antonio is self-sufficient. Antonio is starting classes at Southern New Hampshire University to obtain his Bachelor's Degree in Business Administration with a concentration on Operations and Project Management. Antonio is no longer looking over his shoulder for law enforcement problems. He is only looking ahead, and he was helped to move in the right direction because of his love for his family and by NH Works partners working together on his behalf.

## NEW YORK



### Young Adult Ex-Offender Initiative

On July 2, 2013, NYSDOL awarded a New York City consortium a total of \$1 million for an 18-month contract to offer specialized services to young adult ex-offenders between the ages of 18 and 21. This

initiative, which is operating from September 1, 2013, to February 28, 2015, is designed to help the state develop a comprehensive approach to increasing job readiness while improving employment outcomes for young adult ex-offenders who identify as homeless and/or Lesbian/Gay/Bisexual/ Transgender (LGBT). Data as of July 31, 2014, reveals that 58

participants have been enrolled in the program. Of the 58 participants enrolled, a total of 28 completed a career plan, 17 entered unsubsidized employment, 23 earned the National Work Readiness Credential, 10 completed an internship, and 3 entered post-secondary education.

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## Work for Success

Governor Cuomo initiated a program to help the formerly incarcerated find employment. Under the Work for Success program (WFS), businesses can earn up to \$2,400 in federal tax credits for each formerly incarcerated individual hired. This helps reduce recidivism, promote economic development, and improve public safety throughout New York State. The WFS program is a collaborative effort between NYS DOL, other state agencies, and various community partners to provide training and employment services.

- New York’s 91 Career Centers have identified dedicated workforce professionals to serve as primary contacts for businesses interested in hiring ex-offenders and for assisting the formerly incarcerated in finding gainful employment. These WFS Liaisons participate in monthly meetings, trainings, and events to further develop their skills in servicing the formerly incarcerated.
- The Department of Labor has worked with the Division of Criminal Justice Services (DCJS) to provide Offender Employment Specialist Training to WFS Liaisons and Business Services staff in New York City, Western New York, and in the Capital Region. Training for the remainder of the regions is being planned for the near future.

Low Risk/Low Need Pilot – In September 2013, the Brooklyn and Bronx Career Centers began a pilot to connect ex-offenders to employment. Parole officers in these boroughs refer ex-offenders directly to WFS Liaisons. WFS Liaisons then provide employment related services to low-risk ex-offenders.

# OHIO



## ODRC Commercial Driver’s License Program

ODJFS continues to expand its collaboration with the Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Correction (ODRC) to help nonviolent offenders find employment upon their release. A commercial driver’s license (CDL) program has been operating at two sites:

the Richland and Pickaway correctional institutions, with a third site at Grafton Correctional Institution taking over for Pickaway in the fall of 2014. Inmates train and test for their CDL while still incarcerated, with the goal of having a valid CDL upon release. ODJFS is providing funding for up to eight inmates to participate in the CDL program each month. The Ridge Project, an Ohio-based nonprofit

organization that sponsors prisoner reentry programs, is funding an additional five students per month. PI&I Motor Express, Inc., an Ohio-based trucking company, has hired 24 of the 29 released participants who obtained their CDL. The ODJFS-funded portion of the project has had 43 participants as of June 30, 2014.

## O.N.E.-STOP Program

The Offender Network for Employment to STOP Recidivism (O.N.E.-STOP) collaboration between ODJFS, ODRC, the OhioMeansJobs system, and community and faith-based partners continued to expand in PY 2013. The project now operates at five sites: Trumbull, Grafton, Marion and Pickaway correctional institutions and the Northeast Reintegration Center. O.N.E.-STOPS help inmates within one year of their release prepare to reenter the workforce. O.N.E.-STOPS offer the same amenities inside the institutions as those available at standard OhioMeansJobs Centers. These amenities include an

institutional version of OhioMeansJobs.com, called Ohio Reentry Connections, which provides secure, daily feeds of job opportunities and allows inmates to establish accounts for saving resumes and other information. All information transfers to the statewide OhioMeansJobs system upon inmates' release. O.N.E.-STOPS also provide software tutorials, career exploration, county-by-county resource listings, labor market projections and more. As inmates approach their release dates, partners provide workshops on such topics as interviewing, resume writing, labor market information, entrepreneurship, child support, public assistance and other topics. Program participation more than tripled from PY 2012 to PY 2013. Nearly 2,200 male and female inmates have participated in the voluntary O.N.E.-STOP program since its inception.

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*Program participation more than tripled from PY 2012 to PY 2013.*

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# OKLAHOMA



## Alex's Success Story

Oklahoma Greenovation's primary target populations include veterans, dislocated workers, the underemployed and the formerly incarcerated. The program works closely with Oklahoma's local Workforce Investment Boards to reach these populations and recruit participants. It offers the local WIBs an incentive of \$200 for each participant they refer to the program and who gets placed in OJT with an employer. Alex Pippin, one of our successful WIB referrals, is 47 years old and

was previously incarcerated. He was released in 2008, with very few prospects. After working one dead-end, low-paying job after the other, Pippin says he was probably headed back to prison. However, after connecting with Workforce Oklahoma he found the motivation to get his GED and began to see a different future. Pippin now attends the Air Conditioning & Refrigeration program at Oklahoma State University-Institute of Technology and has a 3.6 GPA. Because of his high GPA and overall great attitude, Pippin was referred to the Oklahoma Greenovation on-the-job training

program. He was placed with McAlester Regional Health Center, Facilities Management Division, as an in demand HVAC technician and energy efficiency project coordinator. Pippin has been trained in several different areas: piping, compressors, change of fans, filters, boilers, chillers, convector units, pneumatic chilled valves, and automated programming. Pippin has also been trained to use the COG system, which is an online system that helps to streamline work and ultimately, improve energy efficiency. Pippin produces preventative maintenance and efficiency plans, helps with the daily operations, and provides input as the hospital remodels or launches new construction designed to save energy and operate more efficiently. Pippin's supervisors, David Parish and Keith Mateychick, speak very highly of Pippin and stated he has been a "great employee and a tremendous help." They hope he stays on part-time when he returns to school, and they plan to offer him a full-time position when he graduates. While Pippin looks forward to making family sustaining wages

(\$22 an hour), Pippin says Oklahoma Greenovation has meant so much more to him. "It's made me the father I've always wanted to be," Pippin says. "The other night while watching me refurbish an old cooler in the garage and talking to me about school, my 6-year-old son said 'Daddy, when I'm grown up I'm going to be just like you.' There was a time in my life—the prison life--that would've been the last thing I wanted to hear. But, now I can be very proud of who I am; I'm finally a positive role model for my son, and I think that's going to make a huge difference in his life too."

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*Pippin says. "The other night while watching me refurbish an old cooler in the garage and talking to me about school, my 6-year-old son said 'Daddy, when I'm grown up I'm going to be just like you.' There was a time in my life—the prison life--that would've been the last thing I wanted to hear. But, now I can be very proud of who I am; I'm finally a positive role model for my son, and I think that's going to make a huge difference in his life too."*

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## RHODE ISLAND



### The Governor's Workforce Board

The Governor's Workforce Board (GWB) Innovative Partnership grants increases the alignment between business needs and workforce development strategies so that businesses have access to appropriately skilled employees, and that job seekers have the skills, training and support they need to meet employer demand in vital sectors of the Rhode Island economy. In

FY2014, the GWB provided funds to ten Innovative Partnerships that began in April, 2013 and continued through June 30, 2014. A total of \$1,887,864 in Innovative Partnerships funds were awarded to three community-based organizations, three employers, three GWB Industry Partners, and one educational institution. Over the course of the 15-month contract period, Innovative Partnerships collectively served 459 unemployed adults, of which 366 participants graduated from their respective programs and 283 secured

employment. An example of a FY2014 Innovative Partnership grantee includes the following program:

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### *Open Doors*

9 Yards is a prisoner reentry pilot program for high risk offenders that begins during incarceration and provides comprehensive education, case management, supportive services, employment placement, occupational skills training and housing support. Upon release, participants are placed in a 20-hour a week, six month subsidized entry-level positions with one of our employer partners. Participants also have the opportunity to progress academically and obtain employer-recognized credentials.

## TENNESSEE



### Workforce Investment Network

Over-the-road truck driving offers ex-offenders an avenue to enter a career field with good pay and benefits. A recent WIN client was working at Hershey's as a forklift driver making \$8.25/hr. and was interested in training to obtain a Class A Commercial Driver's License. He was able to secure a

Pre-Hire Letter from a moving company saying that he would be considered for employment upon completion of the program and licensure. He completed training and went to work for the company that gave him the Pre-Hire Letter, but that is not the end of the story. In February 2014 he became employed at another company and eventually purchased a truck. He now works as an Owner/Operator and makes \$.94/mile.

## VERMONT



### J.'s Success Story

J. was referred to me in October of 2013 by his parole officer for help with funding for CDL training. J.'s criminal past made him ineligible for VSAC non-degree grant funding, and therefore, he needed full tuition assistance. J was on parole for a

Felony Burglary charge for which he was found guilty in 2009. He had been in and out of jail for violating his conditions of release, but had not "been in trouble" for nearly two years. The bulk of his employment his was comprised of under the table jobs working in the woods. He was a food stamp recipient and owed back

child support. After struggling with a speech and language processing disorder, J had dropped out of high school early in his high school career. J was quick to complete every task that I assigned to him. He obtained a letter of intent to hire from Northern Gas Transport, a local employer. I confirmed with his parole officer that he was in support of this plan. His training started in November, but due to a family emergency, he was not able to complete the training in his first attempt. But, since the issue was out of his control and J was

proving to be a solid student, the training provider allowed him to come back for the next session of class. J started full-time work with Northern Gas Transport in March. In the first quarter after completing training, he earned more than \$8,000 – more than his entire legitimate employment wage records combined!

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## WISCONSIN



### Kelly's Success Story

When Kelly Vogelsberg was serving time in jail for theft in a business setting, she had never heard of Southwest Wisconsin Workforce Development Board (SWWDB) Outreach Liaison Ron Coppernoll. "This man approached me and asked if I had ever thought about going back to school. I didn't know him from Adam, so I wasn't sure what to do. But after hearing what he had to say, I decided it was the best course of action for me," Kelly said. Now, a bit over two years later after she was released in December, 2011 after serving nine months, she has an excellent job and is grateful for what Ron and others have done for her. "I had wanted to go back to school prior to my jail time, but didn't really know how to go about it," Kelly said. "Without Ron approaching me, I'm not too sure I would have done it. I wanted to make sure the WIA "investment" in me would pay off, and it has."

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Following her graduation from Southwest Tech's Medical Lab Technician associate degree program in May, 2014, Kelly found a job within three weeks at United Clinical Labs in Dubuque, Iowa, with the help of an OJT agreement developed with the assistance of SWWDB Business Development Coordinator Anna Schramke. The OJT pays half of the training costs for Kelly for a limited period of time, helping to develop her proficiencies while increasing United's productivity. "I remember how down Kelly was when I first encountered her at the Grant County Jail, but then how quickly her enthusiasm grew when she realized that she could go to school and change her life," Ron said. "She really worked hard at Southwest Technical College (SWTC) and deserves the payoff for all of her efforts." Although Kelly had attended UW-Platteville for two years, going back to SWTC at age 35 took a lot of

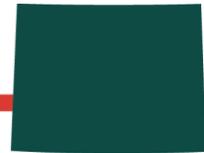
courage. "I spoke to my husband Dave and while at first he wasn't convinced going back to school was appropriate, he soon was behind me, as were my two children now 10 and 7," Kelly said. "It was challenging." Of the 16 enrolled, only six graduated. Kelly was on the Dean's list with honors for her excellent grades. "It wasn't difficult but was challenging," she said. "I really had to study hard." The Iowa-Grant High graduate and former Livingston resident who now lives in Potosi was one of the oldest students in her class. "WIA and the DOC grant really helped me, but Ron was the catalyst," Kelly said. She started at United Labs on June 17 and has received excellent performance ratings. "When I first spoke to her, it was apparent how bright

she was and she just needed a chance," Ron said. And now, Kelly Vogelsberg is making the most of her opportunities!

## Workforce Development Board Highlights

Two graduates of Bay Area's *Steps to Success* program at the state women's prison in Taycheedah, both of whom went through a six-credit Basic Manufacturing and Safety certificate in the Lakeshore Technical College mobile lab at the prison, were released in PY 2013 and were successfully placed in jobs at Marinette Marine and Bay Industries, two large regional manufacturing companies.

## WYOMING



### Jeremy's Success Story



The Dads Making a Difference (DADS) program is a training-to-work program for low income fathers who are experiencing multiple barriers to self-sufficiency. Each

participant is provided with nationally certified training in high growth, high demand occupations, along with over 60 hours of life skills training in topics such as parenting, healthy relationships, financial fitness, and resource development. The program operates from TANF funding received from the Department of Family Services, but because many of the DADS program participants have multiple barriers to success, they are co-enrolled in the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) program

which can assist with emergency supportive service funds that may be needed while the participant is in the program.

Jeremy was one such dad who was accepted into the program as a non-custodial dad with barriers to overcome such as unemployment, court ordered child support payments, probation and recovery from substance abuse. Jeremy was able to complete training in Welding and is now certified in Structural Steel welding and has been employed since graduating from the program. He is now off of probation and has been living a clean and sober life. Jeremy is making well above the self-sufficiency wage and has been able to catch up on all of his bills while providing a much better life for his child. He wrote, "I am writing this to express how grateful I am to the DADS program and how much the program impacted my life. The DADS program gave

me a reason to pursue a new and better life. I went from living a negative life to living better than I ever dreamed possible.”

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# OTHER WORKFORCE SYSTEM PROGRAMS

## Success Stories

### DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

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#### Christine's Success Story

Christine Morgan was 59 years old, unemployed, and discouraged. She entered DOES' SCSEP in March 2012 after her position as a Human Resource Assistant was "downsized" by her previous employer in October 2009. Her efforts to become re-employed had been fruitless. In August of 2012, SCSEP enrolled Ms. Morgan in customized computer training for older job seekers. She was placed at a host agency that provided certification from the Districts' Department on Disability Services (DDS). After mastering her responsibilities with DDS, she was transferred to Seabury Resources for Aging to serve as a Transportation Receptionist. Within a year of her arrival at Seabury, Ms. Morgan was hired as a full-time permanent employee, earning \$14.00 per hour with benefits. Ms. Morgan said she is delighted working for her current employer and that everything she learned while in SCSEP "brought me to this point."

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#### Edward's Story

Edward Easley graduated from Project Empowerment's Job Readiness Training class in April 2014 and started his subsidized work experience at the DC Department of Housing and Community Development on April 28, 2014. His supervisors and staff took note of his strong computer and office skills and were impressed with his level of professionalism. Within six (6) months, Mr. Easley was hired in an unsubsidized job at the agency as a Program Support Assistant. His responsibilities include database management, bookkeeping, composing correspondence, reviewing reports, consolidating materials for annual reports, and conducting research on various topics. Mr. Easley had a criminal history that had been a barrier to employment in the past, but according to Mr. Easley, Project Empowerment helped remove that barrier, so he could be judged on his merits and not his past. Edward Easley is a true success story!

#### Audrey's Success Story

The DOES Rapid Response team met Audrey Lathan during an event on June 12, 2014 at Booker T. Washington Public Charter

School. Ms. Lathan was worried about being laid off and not sure she would find other employment so late in the school year. She worked with a Rapid Response specialist and was referred to the Chief of the Office of Family and Public Engagement in the DC Public Schools system. Ms. Lathan was later hired at Kramer Middle School as an Instructional Coach.

## Margaret & Laura's Success Story

Reemployment and Eligibility Assessment (REA) customers Margaret Vincent and Laura Beecham were unemployed and receiving UI benefits. Ms. Vincent attended an REA session on March 25, 2014 at the AJC Northeast and during the following months she worked with an REA Employment Specialist to research the labor market and conduct job searches. She also

took advantage of DOES workshops on resume writing and interviewing skills. Shortly thereafter, in August 2014, Ms. Vincent was offered and accepted a full-time position with Philips Healthcare as a Senior Consultant. Former nurse Laura Beecham completed an REA program workshop on April 7, 2014. The customer embraced many techniques and tools learned from the REA workshop; within a few months, Ms. Beecham was hired as a fulltime clinical research nurse at the National Institutes of Health. She contributed her new-found employment to the techniques she learned during the REA workshops.

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## FLORIDA



### Caily's Success Story

Ms. Caily Perez entered the WT program in CareerSource Palm Beach County (Region 21), while attending school to become a Nurse. Ms. Perez is a single mother who was determined to continue her education in spite of the long hours in school, financial difficulties, and taking care of her child who has Autism. Against all odds, Ms. Perez graduated from nursing school and obtained employment as a Nurse making \$35 per hour.

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Ms. Perez is bright, responsible and strong role model. Ms. Perez' professionalism, drive and charisma will allow her to achieve greatness.

### Paris' Success Story

Paris Purce came into the program in September 2012. From his first meeting, the career consultant recognized he was a "go-getter". He asked a lot of questions and was very interested in the services the program provided to help him become self-sufficient. He is a single parent of two children who lost his job and needed help with childcare, transportation and clothing. Through the WT program, he received childcare

assistance, vouchers for clothing and bus passes to assist him with getting to Job Skills classes and to job search. Mr. Purce gained employment in the Transportation industry in August 2013 and remains employed. He currently earns \$720 per week.

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## HAWAII



### John's Success Story

John T, a Vietnam veteran, worked for 37 years in torpedo production for the federal government and a defense contractor. When he returned to Hawaii, he sought employment assistance from WDD's WorkSource Maui, where an assessment of his skills and the Maui labor market made it evident that a career change and retraining were necessary. John's WIA counselor arranged for him to take six computer classes and an Energy Electronics class. She also informed him about On-the-Job Training (OJT) that reimbursed employers 50% to 90% of wages for new hires during the initial training period. When John applied for a Service Writer/Service Technician job at Valley Isle Marine Center and sensed that owner Mark Tracy preferred someone with experience, John informed the owner about the OJT program. As a result, John was hired under the OJT program and started working in December 2013. The classes gave John a good foundation for computer applications,

which facilitated his learning the company's system. John also learned new skills during the OJT, including repairing marine engines and interacting with customers. John later visited his WIA counselor to thank her and WDD staff for the help. He felt that without the help provided, he would not have been offered employment and retained in the job.

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Valley Isle Marine Center recently won the prestigious Mayor's Small Business of the Year Award in recognition of exceptional service and community involvement for companies with ten or fewer employees. Mr. Tracy explained that in a small company, every employee must "pull his own weight". He is happy with John's continued good performance and daily contributions to the company's success.



## Allan's Success Story



Allan graduated from Glenbrook South High School. Although he has employment experience in retail, facilities maintenance, and technology, his goal is to pursue full-time employment with a technology related business. Through a partnership with the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity's Disability Employment Initiative and Have Dreams (a non-profit autism resource agency), Allan was able to participate in Project SEARCH at Northwestern University. There he completed internships at the Kellogg School of Management and with the University Services Department. His duties included office and clerical tasks, as well as sorting and delivering mail. Allan is a very interactive young man who loves humor, is independent in the community and extremely diligent with his work responsibilities. He has a strong knowledge base, possesses skills with an array of technology applications, and holds an interest in many entertainment topics including animated films. On June 16th, he began full time employment at E-Works, a technology recycling firm in Elk Grove Village, Illinois. After investing his year in Project SEARCH at Northwestern, Allan has achieved the first the first step in a meaningful and independent career path.

## Nancy's Success Story



Hearing loss can be a challenge in any aspect of life, but for Nancy Swisher it proved especially difficult in following her passion in caring for seniors. With help from the Illinois Department of Human Services Division of Rehabilitation Services (DRS), Nancy has been able to maintain her job as a certified nursing assistant (CNA) doing what she loves. Nancy's hearing loss was first discovered in 1983 — her sophomore year of high school. Her sister took her to get her ears checked due to a strong occurrence of hearing loss in the family (her mother and six of her eight siblings suffer some degree of hearing loss). Deterioration of her hearing had begun, and she was referred to a counselor at DRS. DRS is Illinois' primary office working with people with disabilities so they may achieve their educational goals, find employment, and live independently. After two years of training, Nancy was able to find and maintain work as a CNA through the help of DRS. "[They] helped me keep my job by keeping my hearing aids up and working, sending me to the audiologist when new ones were needed, and making sure I had the things I needed for my job." Tools made available to Nancy included an alarm clock and blood pressure cuff that did not rely on the ability to hear. With her hearing at only 10 percent functionality and continuing to decrease, Nancy decided to get a cochlear implant in 2011. Her mother, who has had two of the implants, was her inspiration, but DRS was there to guide her

through the process. “The best was all the work we did together to get through all the paperwork,” Nancy said. The implant, which feeds sounds directly to the auditory nerves as opposed to simply amplifying them, changed Nancy's life. “Every day is a learning, new awakening for me. There are sounds I have never heard or heard correctly... it is amazing what is possible today.” She went on to describe the variety of sounds she can hear now, sounds many people take for granted, like birds singing and leaves rustling in the wind. The best sound came the day the implant was turned on. After a six-week recovery from the surgery, the device was activated and Nancy's audiologist brought her family into the room. Nancy describes the experience: “My son was very nervous because he was afraid it wouldn't work for me. [The audiologist] told him to say something without me looking at him so I didn't read his lips. He then said, 'I love you, Mom.' I couldn't answer I was crying so hard; so I gave him the 'I love you,' sign. It was the best day ever!” In returning to daily life, Nancy has found she can do her job even better. Being the caring person she is, Nancy strives to go above and beyond as a CNA. “The most rewarding part of my job is my residents,” she said, “sometimes all they

want is for someone to actually listen to them, and now I can do that better than before.” The assistance DRS provided Nancy in overcoming her hearing-loss challenge has been inspirational. “I can't say enough how DRS has enlightened my life,” she said, adding, “I would tell anyone about the help that is available, because, to be honest, not very many people know that DRS offers so many different lines of caring help.”

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Nancy has encouraged co-workers and family members in need to contact DRS. DHS's Division of Rehabilitation Services is the state's lead agency serving individuals with disabilities. DRS works in partnership with people with disabilities and their families to assist them in making informed choices to achieve full community participation through employment, education, and independent living opportunities. To learn more, call 1-877-761-9780 Voice, 1-866-264-2149 TTY, or 312-957-4881 VP, or go to [www.drs.illinois.gov/success](http://www.drs.illinois.gov/success).

## MARYLAND



### C. Woodard's Success Story

C. Woodard, a U.S. Army veteran and father of a small child, was renting a room in someone's home. He was unemployed only four months when he began his job search process with the Laurel Regional Workforce Center (LRWC). Mr. Woodard is a Chef and

Manager with over twenty years' experience in the food industry. With the help of his Local Veteran Employment Representative (LVER), they reworked his resume and explored suitable options for housing for him and his son. He was very active in the LRWC, working closely with his LVER at least once a week. Mr. Woodard

was referred to the Community Resource Center to discuss housing opportunities with transitional housing through the Department of Veteran Affairs. In March 2014, Mr. Woodard gained employment with an assisted living agency in Upper Marlboro as the Head Chef. He resides in transitional housing with a program called Renewed Hope and has moved into his new apartment as of July 2014. Staff at the LRWC truly enjoyed working with Mr. Woodard — they stated that his motivation

and determination actually inspired them. In an effort to increase his marketability, Mr. Woodard plans to obtain a federal bonding letter and adds, “That federal bonding letter would simply be nice to have.”

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*Staff at the LRWC truly enjoyed working with Mr. Woodard — they stated that his motivation and determination actually inspired them.*

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## OHIO



### Jerry's Success Story

Jerry was referred to the Disabled Veterans Outreach Program (DVOP) by a customer service representative at OhioMeansJobs Guernsey County. The representative was acquiring Trade Adjustment Act funding for Jerry to attend heavy equipment operator training at the Mid-East Career Technology Center. Jerry's round-trip commute to the training was 44 miles. He was unemployed at the time and could not afford the cost of

traveling back and forth every day. Training was starting before other sources of assistance could help. Jerry met with DVOP staff, who enrolled him in intensive services under the Veterans Short-Term Services program to receive supportive services. When he traveled even farther than originally projected, another DVOP staff member obtained approval for additional travel assistance. These combined efforts enabled him to train for a career as a heavy equipment operator.

## SOUTH CAROLINA



### James' Success Story

James was unemployed and wanted to start a new career. He is a United States Coast Guard veteran and also has experience in sales and building supplies. James stated he was interested in being a paramedic and was interested in receiving training at Horry-Georgetown Technical College (HGTC). Workforce Solution James was

found to be WIA adult eligible. He started the paramedic program at HGTC during the fall 2011 semester. Outcomes & Benefits James did extremely well in his program of study and graduated in May 2013, with a 3.59 cumulative GPA, with an Associate's Degree in Applied Science - Emergency Medical Technology. Immediately after graduation, James gained employment at TransMed as a paramedic.

# VERMONT



## A VDOL Success Story

A local VDOL Veteran Employer Representative reached out to a local company and found out that another company needed assistance in finding qualified and reliable individuals who could represent the company in a positive way, and deliver and set up high end office equipment to professional organizations throughout the State. A follow up visit and presentation was conducted with the president of the company, the result of which was an employer account being set up on Vermont Job Link. As VDOL's Vet Rep was posting the job, a Veteran, who was a recent Combat Veteran, had combat driving experience, and carried himself very well came into the office. After speaking with the Veteran about delivering and assembling office equipment furniture, VDOL's representative called the employer, advising him that the job had not yet posted, however he had a Veteran who

could do an outstanding job started at \$15/hour with full benefits. A week later, the newly hired Veteran called expressing his deep gratitude because now he had a job which was a great fit for him and he could afford to bring his fiancé from Vietnam. Two weeks later the employer called and said "Can you send me another Veteran that is a clone of the first?" He said he is an outstanding employee and he would appreciate another!

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VDOL was able to send another Veteran who also had extensive combat driving experience to the employer. He too was hired on the spot. A week later, the employer called expressing his gratitude for the two very quick fill jobs we helped him with. He couldn't be happier!