

EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING ADMINISTRATION
UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF LABOR



Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act

STATE SUCCESS STORIES



Program
Year 2019

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Foreword

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

These success stories highlight WIOA Title I programs, including Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth programs. They are excerpted directly from the Program Year (PY) 2019 States' WIOA Annual Report Narratives and may have been minimally edited for clarity and consistency. The full Annual Report Narratives may be found on the U.S. Department of Labor's Employment and Training Administration website at: <https://www.dol.gov/agencies/eta/performance/results>.

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

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

WIOA Adult Program

ALABAMA

- **Andrea** started her training in July of 2019. She came into the Jackson Career Center inquiring about WIOA funding opportunities for electrical and instrumentation training at the Thomasville campus of Coastal Alabama. After her professors referred her to the program, Andrea had several questions regarding WIOA funding. She had never heard of the program and thought that the services being offered were too good to be true. Andrea was on track to complete her training in three semesters and managed to complete her first semester with a 4.0 grade point average (GPA) while also maintaining a spot on the President's List. She has been praised by her technical instructors and has received the award for top electrical and instrumentation student. Andrea was hired by Arcelor Mittal and Nippon Steel in Calvert, Alabama, where she is working full time while completing her final college classes. Her official job title is Crane Technician with a starting wage of \$26.76 per hour.
- **Rico** had engaged with a variety of different jobs and hiring agencies, unable to obtain stable and reliable employment. With no skills training, certifications, or college

education, Rico, who has a felony from April 2019, was also faced with the stigma of being an ex-offender.

Rico came to the Alabaster Career Center eagerly seeking assistance with obtaining a Class A Commercial Driver's License (CDL). When his training was delayed because of COVID-19, he maintained a positive outlook and kept working hard at his job—until he was officially laid off as a result of the pandemic. Rico was eventually able to begin school in mid-June. By the start of July, he was able to successfully pass and complete his Class A CDL training and obtained his official Class A CDL license the following week. Rico worked tirelessly to search for CDL jobs, both close to home and out of town. He continuously updated his case manager, often stopping by the office for job-search assistance.

Less than a month after his CDL graduation, Rico was hired on with Bearden Delivery Services in Birmingham, Alabama. His driving position is regional, so he can be home more often than most CDL drivers. He is getting paid 43 cents per mile, which is in the higher range of mileage pay for new drivers.



ALASKA

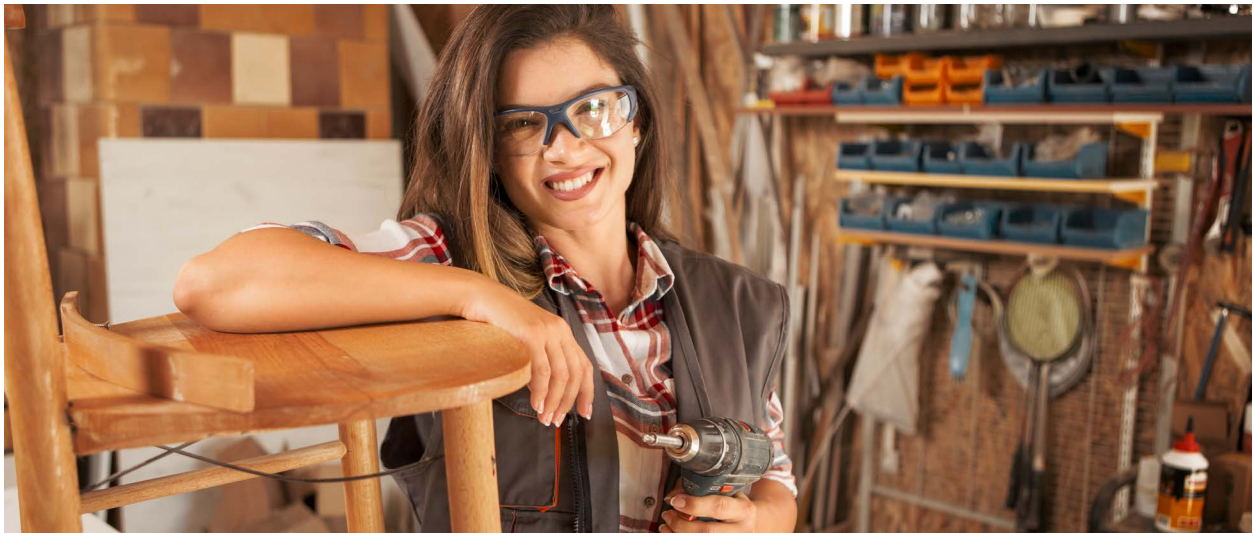
- **Ashley** was unemployed when she first came to the Peninsula Job Center in hopes of finding help with training and job searching. After being referred to Career Support and Training Services, she worked diligently with her case manager to build a plan for employment. Namely, the center assisted Ashley in overcoming barriers and becoming employed in her chosen field as a Class A Commercial Driver.

Ashley received WIOA Adult and National Health Emergency funding for tuition, housing, clothing, transportation, and endorsements. She successfully gained full-time, year-round employment as a Commercial Truck Driver, earning \$23.00 per hour plus benefits at Alaska Oil Sales in Kenai, Alaska.

- **Ellie** is a longtime Alaskan who enjoyed working as a dental assistant for several years. She had reached a point in her career where she needed to obtain additional training in order to be eligible for a promotion and a chance to earn a sufficient wage.

In September of 2017, Ellie was accepted into the highly competitive Dental Hygienist program at the University of Alaska. Participating in this training program required her to relocate from Fairbanks to Anchorage, and the rigorous nature of the program did not allow time for maintaining employment. Ellie realized that she needed financial assistance to continue participating in the program, so she contacted the Fairbanks Job Center to inquire about potential assistance. She was deemed eligible and suitable for Career Support and Training Services (CSTS) programs and was enrolled in the WIOA Adult and the Smart Traveler Enrollment (STEP) programs. CSTS provided supportive services with housing, tuition, and professional license fees.

Ellie has since graduated from University of Alaska Anchorage with a Dental Hygiene Credential. In July 2019, she was hired by a local Fairbanks Dentist office as a Dental Hygienist, earning \$52.00 per hour plus benefits.



HAWAII

- **Leimana**, a wife and a mother, had been out of the labor force for more than nine years as she raised her family. After sending her children off to school, she made the decision to return to work. Eager to adapt and rejoin the workforce, Leimana walked into the Kauai AJC hoping to find assistance.

After meeting with her case manager at the AJC, Leimana was enrolled in the WIOA Adult Program. She decided to take the Basic Office Skills Training course, a QuickBooks course, and other courses at Kauai Community College and the Office of Continuing Education. Her instructor motivated her to continue sharpening her skills, and Leimana refreshed her ability

to complete work on the computer. After completing all required coursework, Leimana received four certificates and included them in her résumé.

Shortly thereafter, Leimana obtained full-time employment as a family service worker at a non-profit organization where she visits homes to support the needs of children. Her new job allows her to engage both her passions and her new skills. "Just having that basic skill to start investing in myself again has made all the difference," she said, noting that she is thankful for the Adult Program and the impact it made on her life.

IDAHO

- **Dani**, 45, lived in a small town and had no schooling beyond a high school. In her last job, which ended because of medical issues, she worked in Quality Assurance with a trailer outfit. After marrying, she took a three-year break from the workforce. Once divorced, Dani decided that she would need more training and education in order to start a career. She began investigating how to obtain a Class A CDL, but the costs to obtain this training exceeded her current resources. With the help of the WIOA program, however, she successfully enrolled at Sage Truck Driving School, graduating within six weeks and obtaining a Class A CDL. She immediately began a full-time job with a local trucking company, earning \$18.00 per hour.

- After leaving an abusive relationship, **Jenny** moved from the U.K. to Idaho with only her suitcase in hand. As a 46-year-old, she had worked a variety of jobs while also raising her children. Several years ago, she was employed and attending school on a part-time basis, hoping to obtain a degree in the medical field. Unfortunately, she did not complete the program and couldn't obtain additional financial aid. With her nine-year-old as the only one of her four kids remaining at home, she wanted to try school again. She spoke to the College of Eastern Idaho in the summer of 2019 to review her status. The school stated that she was still many credits away from earning an associate degree, causing her to conclude that school was not an option.

Jenny met with an Idaho Department of Labor WIOA career planner at the end of

January 2020. She was bus driving for the school district with a Class B CDL, working part time and struggling financially. She found that she enjoyed driving so much that she wanted to obtain a Class A CDL. She had studied the driver's manual, taken and passed several practice exams, and had spoken with Sage Trucking, a local trainer. Later, Jenny connected with various trucking companies that would hire her for long haul or local runs.

Jenny enrolled in WIOA in February 2020, and she found another part-time job on the weekends. Her plan was to continue with both jobs until she completed her training and secured a full-time job. Her career planner, however, noticed that Jenny lit up when someone brought up healthcare positions. This planner convinced her to look at available healthcare positions and suggested that she apply for some of them before doing anything related to driving. Jenny and her planner met, updated her résumé, and had her apply for several positions.

The University of Utah would later hire Jenny as a Dialysis Technician, and the WIOA career planner was able to provide her with new work shoes. Jenny completed the CPR class and is now working more than 40 hours a week at \$15.00 per hour with benefits.

- As a single mother, **Florence** left a dancing job in California and moved to Idaho to care for her disabled mother. This move provided her with the opportunity to pursue a nursing degree, as she had always had a desire to help others. Her five-year plan was to complete her certified nurse assistant (CNA) certificate, obtain part-time employment, complete her Associate Degree in Nursing (ADN), obtain full-time employment, and then obtain her Bachelor of Science Degree in Registered Nursing.

After her first year back at school, Florence visited Magic Valley Youth and Adult Services (MVYAS) in hopes of obtaining

some financial assistance. Her plan was to complete a CNA program and work part time while attending college. MVYAS enrolled Florence in the WIOA program, assisting with her tuition, tools, and scrubs for her classes. Later on, Florence applied for the Free Application of Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) and was able to receive additional assistance.

In addition to providing financial assistance, MVYAS also provided Florence mentoring services and counseling, allowing her to work through her personal issues while still pursuing her career goals. Florence has now received her RN degree from the College of Southern Idaho with a 3.5 GPA and secured full-time employment at St. Luke's Emergency Room department. She began the first semester of the online RN B.S. program at Lewis and Clark College this August and plans to graduate in 2021.

- **Dalton**, a 23-year-old honorably discharged Navy veteran, recently married and became a stepfather to a 2-year-old son. For the last two months, he worked part time for a flooring company, earning \$1.00 per square foot installing floors on a contractual basis. His wife earned \$12.00 per hour, working 30 hours per week. Since Dalton recently returned from a missionary trip to Africa, the young couple lived with his parents as they could not afford their own housing. Dalton decided to approach North Idaho College's WIOA program for assistance to help to fulfill his dream of working as an Emergency Medical Technician (EMT). After being accepted into the program, he completed the EMT program at North Idaho College's Workforce Training Center and passed the National Registry of Emergency Medical Technician's certification exam. He was offered full-time employment with American Medical Transportation company in Spokane, Washington, as an EMT-B. When the WIOA career planner contacted him to follow up on his progress after completing the program, he reported that he was working over 40 hours a week and making \$18.25 per hour.

KANSAS

- **Lisa**, a single mother with six children, came to the Manhattan Workforce Center seeking assistance with her goal of working in healthcare. Lisa worked with her WIOA Employment and Training Specialist (ETS), Jenny, to research healthcare career and training options. Through funding aid from the WIOA Adult Program, Lisa enrolled in a Licensed Practical Nurse (LPN) program with the goal of completing the LPN and RN certifications. During her two-year training period, Jenny worked with Lisa in case management and career guidance services.

In December 2019, Lisa began her last semester working toward becoming an RN, but when schools shut down due to COVID-19, Lisa had to take on the task of homeschooling her six children while also completing college assignments and nursing clinicals (via Zoom, which she had never used before). Not only was Lisa able to activate the internet for her home and homeschool her children, but she was also able to graduate with her Associate of Applied Science (A.A.S.) degree in Nursing, take and pass her State Board Exam, and secure full-time employment with a Rural Healthcare Hospital on the labor and delivery floor. Lisa will be working full time and earning higher-than-average wages for her area.

- **Derrick** first came into the Junction City Workforce Center in November of 2019. He was released from prison 10 days before meeting with his ETS. He had a difficult history and was in and out of prison since 2010. The convictions were barriers to employment, and he was looking for assistance with working past them.

Derrick met with ETS in the Junction City Workforce Center, and together they were

able to conduct career research and training options for Derrick. Northwest Missouri State University offered a warehouseman training program, a short-term course that provided Derrick valuable training to assist him in obtaining employment. Derrick applied for the WIOA grant because he needed assistance and support to complete his training program.

Derrick began and finished his warehouseman training in December 2019. He earned his OSHA Safety Certification, OSHA 10 Safety Certification, Operator's License, and his Certified Warehouse and Material Handler Certification. He contacted ETS in January 2020 to inform them that he obtained a full-time position as a Material Handler starting at \$15.00 per hour. Derrick is thankful for the WIOA grant and excited to start this next chapter in his life.

- **Kenneth** first became aware of Workforce Center services through the Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessment (RESEA) Program. He lost his job due to COVID-19 and was receiving unemployment benefits, but he had been unemployed for four weeks with no prospects for employment. Kenneth lacked education beyond his high school and desired a current certification in an in-demand occupation.

He was referred to WIOA and began working with his ETS, Harry, researching options for training. Kenneth had been interested in getting his CDL and undertaking over-the-road truck driving, but he was never able to pursue his goal because he lacked the resources to attend a CDL program. Harry helped him enroll in White Line's CDL Training program, secured WIOA Adult funding for his tuition and fees, and provided information on local employers hiring for

this occupation. While Kenneth was in school, Harry provided case management and career guidance services.

Kenneth successfully completed his training program in the spring of 2020

and attained employment earning nearly double what he was receiving prior to his training. His new job also allowed him to relocate to Indiana where most of his family and friends reside.



MARYLAND

- **Denis** came to the Western Maryland Consortium (WMC) after being a stay-at-home parent for nine years. He knew that he wanted to be a truck driver, so we found a CDL program that would work with him and teach him how to drive a truck. WMC works closely with Hagerstown Community College (HCC) and puts many drivers through their program every year. Denis decided to go to the HCC CDL program because it is one of the preferred schools for trucking companies in the Mid-Atlantic region. Denis faced many challenges as a CDL Class A student with a hearing impairment, but a supportive training program and full-time interpreters helped him to overcome those challenges and succeed in reaching his goal. Denis was the first deaf person in the state of Maryland to obtain a CDL Class A license in the six years since the FMCSA began granting hearing exemptions. He is currently driving locally for DM Bowman Trucking.

He then applied for and utilized training and supportive service funds. L. Jones has since secured independent housing, successfully completed occupational training, and passed his licensure exam. He is now gainfully employed.

- Before connecting with Frederick County Workforce Services (FCWS), **L. Jones** had been in prison, then a drug treatment program, and then a halfway house. While he was in the treatment program, representatives from FCWS came to present an overview of all the free resources available through the Frederick County AJC. L. Jones decided to take advantage of these services, and as a result of this decision, he began to work directly with an experienced ETS on career exploration and skills assessment.

- **James** started working with Career Consultant Andrea Fuhrman at Hunt Valley Career Center in November 2019. He had a college degree and a wide variety of interests, including art and accounting. James had a criminal background and had spent time in prison. His record created significant obstacles in his pursuit of employment. James was working unhappily as an Office Assistant when he started in the WIOA program. Andrea and James worked together on a variety of career assessments to help identify a specific employment goal, and James eventually received WIOA funding for Towson University's online Accounting and Bookkeeping class, which he successfully completed. This would later lead to an Office Manager position where James was able to earn \$24.00 per hour plus benefits. He is much happier in this position and credits the skills he learned in the training program for helping him to obtain new work.

- **Tara** is a veteran who, despite her education and work experience, found herself unable to obtain employment. She had fallen behind on her mortgage payments and

exhausted her savings, so she came in search of help to Prince George's AJC in February 2020. Cordia McArthur, a Disabled Veterans' Outreach Program (DVOP) Specialist, was there to offer assistance and resources. She referred Tara to the WIOA Dislocated Worker Program, which provided the funds for her to complete training in the field of project management. As a result of her training, Tara accepted a position as a Privacy Analyst with a starting salary of \$120,000 per year.

- **Steven** started working with Career Consultant Andrea Fuhrman in August of 2019. He was working part time in a

law office and hoping to launch a career working in informational technology (IT). To develop the necessary skills, Steven was awarded training funds through WIOA. The funds enabled him to enroll in the University of Maryland Baltimore County's Cyber Foundations program from September 1, 2019, until February 5, 2020.

Andrea and Steven worked together to fine-tune his résumé. After briefly working in a position where he provided technical assistance for mental health counselors, Steven was hired for a customer service position with the Social Security Administration. He was hired on March 2, 2020, and he now earns \$39,000 per year.



MICHIGAN

- When **Jessica** first came to Great Lakes Bay Michigan Works, she was working part time as a Medication Aide at a local assisted living facility. Overworked and underpaid, Jessica was barely able to cover her living expenses. She had come to Great Lakes Bay Michigan Works seeking tuition assistance in order to complete her Bachelor of Science Degree in Nursing (BSN) at Saginaw Valley State University. Jessica was scheduled to begin her BSN clinicals, but the most significant barrier to her long-term career goal of

becoming an RN was the lack of funds for the completion of clinical rotations.

Case management worked with Jessica to complete all pre-training requirements and quickly obtain approval for training assistance. As a result, the Adult Program was able to provide the cost of tuition, books, and supplies, which allowed Jessica to successfully complete the BSN program. She began working as an RN at Mid-Michigan Medical Center. She is earning \$29.62 per hour and received a generous benefits package.



MISSISSIPPI

- **Christian** is the mother of two young children and a graduate of Lanier High School. Although she wanted to develop a career for herself, Christian feared that she lacked professional and technological skills. Her high school counselor referred her to Refill Jackson Initiative (RJI). Throughout the training program, Christian had a positive attitude and excelled when serving customers in the Refill Café. After graduation, she decided to pursue an internship as a receptionist at Stewpot's Opportunity Center. Christy Burkett, Director of the Opportunity Center, shared that she is impressed with Christian's work ethic and plans to increase her job responsibilities over time. Because of this opportunity, Christian is motivated to explore new things and is more confident working with computers.
- **Brittani** was tired of working menial, entry-level jobs. She wanted a career, not just a job. Brittani had always envied the freedom and income that truck drivers enjoyed, so she decided to pursue her dream of becoming one. She visited her local AJC and was awarded an Adult WIOA Individual Training Account that would pay for her to attend Ace Truck Driver Training. Brittani resigned from her position as an EMT in order to begin the six-week truck driver training. After completing her training, Brittani earned her certification, CDL, and accepted a full-time position with Total Transportation of Jackson. The starting salary is \$1,500 per week, which allows Brittani to provide for her family while working a job that she finds pleasurable.

- **Mr. Blevins** credited Hinds Community College with helping him to restart his education. A single father of two, Mr. Blevins worked as a forklift operator before returning to school. He took courses at the Rankin Campus Career Technical Education building and benefited from WIOA funding, which provides federal aid to support training for qualified students in approved career-tech programs.

This past semester, Mr. Blevins earned an A.A.S. degree in Electromechanical Technology and earned a spot on the Dean's List. He was among 619 students who received at least one credential from the college during drive-through ceremonies, and he plans to continue his education at Jackson State University in order to complete a degree in Industrial Engineering.

- **Matthew** was selected by Philip Good Farms to participate in the East Mississippi Community College (EMCC) WIOA Adult paid internship program in the areas of logistics and IT. Matthew has expressed extreme gratitude for the opportunity, and his internship experience eventually translated into a role as a permanent team member.
- **Helen** enrolled in WIOA, completed an application for the Shipfitting Program, and began classes shortly thereafter. Her housekeeping work paid under \$10.00 per hour, and she was ready for a change. Helen successfully completed training at the top of her class and was later hired at Halter Marine, where she earns \$17.00 per hour. Helen loves her new position as a shipfitter, is appreciative of the WIOA funding, and is grateful that she can support her family with a sustainable wage.

MONTANA

- **Wendy** left her job after being stabbed by a client and developing severe post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). There was an opening with a local feed store, and though Wendy had experience keeping large animals, she had no retail or cashier experience. Job Service Montana (JSM) facilitated an on-the-job (OJT) training program opportunity, allowing Wendy to train on the Point-of-Sale system, ordering product, doing inventory, and restocking. Wendy is flourishing and her confidence has increased.
- **Mattea**, a disabled veteran, was contacted by the University of Montana's BAA program with an opportunity to continue her education. She was eligible for the Title 1B Adult Program, and the BAA program assisted her in navigating her health issues and putting together a training proposal. At her enrollment appointment, Mattea said that she could not follow through because her Veteran's Disability Status changed to 100 percent. She was referred to Disability Services for Students, where she enjoyed additional support. Mattea is now supported by BAA and VA Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment, continuing with her coursework at the University of Montana.
- **Micheline** enrolled in the Service Missoula's Pathways program, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), and other services that helped to enhance her skills and abilities. After working for TJ Maxx, Micheline hoped to find a job where she could assist the less fortunate. With the help of Pathways, Micheline gained CPR and First Aid certifications, improved her English language skills, and learned new financial skills. Micheline was placed as a hospitality aide at Village Health Care and eventually moved into a position in dining services. Micheline successfully completed her goals and is happy to be working in the healthcare field and helping others.



NEBRASKA

- **Anthony** had lost everything: his home, his business, and his health. Wanting to do better for himself, he reached out to the Title I Adult Program, which helped him to obtain his Class A CDL after only one month in training. He later obtained a job as a CDL Driver for Waste Management Services. He is now on track to obtain permanent housing.
- **Bobby** was referred to the Norfolk Disabled Veterans' Outreach Program (DVOP) and was eligible to be served as a veteran with a service-related disability. Bobby's goal was to get back into trucking after nearly five years of working at a local packing plant. With a DUI on his record, he was having difficulty securing a CDL position. Fortunately, he utilized the various resources available to him. Northeast Community College covered the cost of CDL occupational skills training, the required equipment and books, and all industrial testing fees. The Supportive Services for Veteran Families Rapid Rehousing Program and Northeast Nebraska Community Action Program covered the cost of six months' rent and utilities. The Madison County Veteran Service Officer assisted Bobby in obtaining a copy of his DD214 and medical records, and he also covered the cost of vehicle repairs. The Norfolk DVOP assisted Bobby as he developed his résumé and looked for work. Bobby is well on his way to putting his life back together and gaining full-time employment.
- **Julie** spent several years working as an RN, but the physicality of the job always took a toll on her body. While recovering from back surgery, she found herself becoming addicted to pain medication, and she eventually started experimenting with more extreme drugs. Julie eventually lost everything: her nursing license, her family, and her friends. Knowing change was necessary, she became sober and signed up for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) Next Step/Title I Adult Program.
- **Leslie** worked closely with the WIOA Youth Employment and Support Services (YESS) program, which supported her in reconnecting with school, obtaining her own apartment, and finding a job as a full-time case manager. Leslie became very close with her case manager, who helped her to maintain hope in her dreams. She will graduate this winter with a B.A. in management and insists that she could not have achieved her goals without the financial and moral support offered by the WIOA YESS program.
- **Shayla** is a single mom with two children, and though she was employed, she was working on-call while also studying to become an LPN. Shayla participated

Title I began working with Julie in March of 2019 with the goal of reestablishing her RN license, which necessitated many documents, timelines, and phone calls. She was approved for a temporary license in July and enrolled in an 18-month RN Refresher course. Julie eventually completed her training, and her license as an RN was reinstated.

With the help of Title I and SNAP Next Step, she began her job search process. She developed a résumé and a turnaround letter and was hired as an RN at the Bridge in Lincoln. She loves her job and has worked to mend her relationships with family and friends.

in the Title I Adult Program, receiving assistance with assessments, résumé, and finances while in the LPN program. She accessed mileage reimbursement from the Title I program while she commuted to and from school and her clinical sites. The Title I program also

reimbursed her for the National Council Licensing Examination (NCLEX).

Shayla successfully completed her courses in Practical Nursing and passed the NCLEX. She is now working full time in Falls City and plans to pursue the possibility of becoming an RN.

NEW HAMPSHIRE

- **Jozimar** was born in the Democratic Republic of Congo, and his family fled the country when he was just a boy. His family lived in Uganda for many years before Jozimar had an opportunity to come to the United States. He decided to enter a program for advanced manufacturing at the NH Job Corps Center and immediately excelled. In time, Jozimar also went on to graduate at the top of his class and obtain a green card.

During his time in the Advanced Manufacturing Program, Jozimar learned of an apprenticeship opportunity at Tecomet. He was told to apply for WIOA in order to support his transition into a career. He was given an OJT contract and received support services that helped him with transportation costs throughout his apprenticeship. Jozimar now works as a machine operator and plans to continue pursuing advanced manufacturing.

- **Devin**, an unemployed single father, was concerned about his criminal record and minimal employment history when he first contacted the WIOA program in April 2019.

He had been referred to the program by a friend who had completed WIOA training and secured full-time employment.

Devin decided that he would like to be a CDL Class A truck driver, and he hoped the program would help him to achieve this goal. After reviewing and visiting different New Hampshire Works Source for Consumer Information on Training (NSCITE)-approved training vendors, Devin determined that a Commercial Driving School in Concord would be the best fit for his learning style. He was impressed with the operations of the facility and that the staff members were both friendly and accommodating.

Devin and his Career Navigator worked collaboratively to create a training program that fit his training needs. Once a training schedule was established, his individual employment plan was updated, and a timetable was created for completing the CDL Class A driving requirements. Devin completed all CDL Class A requirements and obtained full employment in just 16 weeks. He is now working full time making \$21.00 per hour with benefits.

NORTH CAROLINA

- **Early Wright**, winner of the Wayne Daves Award for Outstanding Achievement in Workforce Development, serves as an outreach career advisor for the NCWorks Career Center in Charlotte. He listens to customers to discover their challenges, needs, and desires. In 2018, Charlotte Works (the workforce development board for Mecklenburg County) partnered with Mecklenburg County's Community Resource Center (CRC) to better serve individuals with barriers to employment. Wright was deployed to meet those individuals where they are and provide coaching, rapid employment, and access to training scholarships. In two years, Wright's contributions have resulted in employment for 589 individuals, with salaries ranging between \$28,000-\$64,000 per year. He is now working with Freedom Communities to provide job coaching to people impacted by COVID-19.
- **Stephanie** demonstrated extreme perseverance after being laid off. After exploring options for a new, more sustainable career, Stephanie was assisted by NCWorks Career Center in completing certified nursing assistant (CNA) training. She began working for a home health agency and later returned to NCWorks to secure support for more advanced training to prepare for the next phase of her career path. Stephanie successfully completed the CNA II program at Wake Technical Community College and now works as a COVID-19 screener for the N.C. Department of Revenue.

NORTH DAKOTA

- **Declan**, a farm worker from Kenya, was utilizing the AJC Resource Room to look for work. Farming was his only work experience, and he was having a difficult time finding employment that allowed him to support his family. He inquired about CDL Class A training in November 2019 and was approved for the WIOA Adult Program. His CDL Class A training was completed on January 31, 2020, and he was soon hired by a local company at \$24.50 per hour.
- **Kashir** approached Job Service about WIOA training possibilities in September 2019. He had been working as a Frac Equipment Operator when the company in Williston closed in August 2019. Hoping to find work that could support his family of five, Kashir requested CDL Class A training. He began his training in November 2019 and successfully obtained his CDL Class A license in December 2019. With continued support from his case manager, Kashir was offered a well-paying job in February 2020.

SOUTH CAROLINA

- **Cheryl** first came to SC Works seeking assistance with résumé development. She was referred to the center by the Ticket to Work program. After working 20+ years in management, Cheryl had to give up her career due to a medical disability. Within three days of enrolling in WIOA, Cheryl earned a Silver WIN credential. After researching her training options, she expressed interest in Medical Coding and Billing. Within one year, Cheryl had successfully completed the Medical Coding and Billing program and passed the American Academy of Professional Coders exam. She is now a certified medical coder and biller and employed at one of the area's largest hospitals.
- **Embry** came into the WIOA program in November 2019 looking to obtain a Class A CDL. Embry began class at Palmetto Training, Inc. in Sumter, SC, where he learned to properly operate a heavy-duty commercial truck. He completed training and passed the necessary exam on May 8, 2020. He has since started his own company, Right Way Logistics, Inc., and is now delivering products around the southeast area and enjoying being his own boss.



TENNESSEE

- **Marwin** arrived at the AJC in need of guidance amidst a series of major life changes. He had been shot, suffered debilitating injuries, and had to learn how to walk all over again. He also had a family to support and hoped to remain a role model for his children.
- **Desmond** is a transitioning soldier who came to Campbell Strong for assistance with tuition for the Hopkinsville Community College CDL Program. He completed the program, received his CDL, and is now working for Werner Trucking making \$15.75 per hour.

At the AJC, Marwin met Career Advisor Sherry Johnson. Sherry helped him to update his résumé and brush up on his interview skills. He was eventually referred to Account Manager Savannah Bishop. Savannah pre-screened Marwin to determine which local employers might be a good fit. Vanguard Utility Services expressed interest in hiring Marwin. Although he was struggling with the fact that his house had recently burned down, he showed up prepared for his interview and was hired on the spot. Marwin is extraordinarily grateful for the assistance he received at the AJC.

- **Morgan** is a transitioning soldier who came to Campbell Strong for supportive services assistance while attending the Ryder Program. He has completed the program and received employment with Ryder in Fairborn, Ohio, making \$23.80 per hour.
- **Colvirak** is a transitioning military officer who was interested in entering the project management field. He was assisted with funding for his Lean Six Sigma green belt certification. Upon completion of training, he was able to successfully transition into the civilian workforce as an application Engineer at US Water Services making \$31.00 per hour.



UTAH

- **Sharon** was incarcerated as both a youth and an adult. She had been in and out of a domestic violence situation with her children's father and always struggled with low self-esteem.

While incarcerated, Sharon earned her high school diploma. After her release, she was able to obtain employment in production, driving heavy equipment and operating forklifts. When Sharon came into Workforce Services, she was interested in the computer-aided design program; however, she could not pass the entrance test. Her Workforce Services counselor referred her to a program that was helping students increase their learning skills. Despite its difficulty, Sharon would ultimately pass the class. With the support from her Workforce Services counselor, Sharon graduated from the computer-aided design program. She is now employed in the engineering field.

- **Mike** is a disabled veteran who recently relocated to Moab with his family. When he went to the Moab Employment Center, the DVOP specialist encouraged him to apply for WIOA. Mike expressed interest in obtaining a CDL because of his military experience operating large trucks and transporting heavy equipment.

Mike worked with his counselor to improve his résumé and develop job-search strategies that could help him find employment opportunities to meet his needs. Based on Mike's military experience, his counselor determined that formal CDL schooling was not necessary and thus focused their efforts on studying for the written exam. WIOA supportive service funding was utilized to cover expenses to help Mike reach his goal. Mike passed the written CDL exam and is now working a full-time job that allows him to gain experience in order to pass his skills exam.

- **Akramah** is from Ghana and worked with the United Nations to bring awareness to various health concerns in the area. He earned his bachelor's degree in fine arts from University of Ghana and worked as a theater teacher and dance instructor. When he came to the U.S., however, he was unable to find work that suited his skill set and experience. He went back to school and earned a master's degree in education, culture, and society.

When Akramah started Work Success, the job coach sat down with him to get an understanding of his work history, accomplishments, skills, and abilities. She assisted Akramah in developing a résumé that immediately led to a variety of different job interviews. The job coach also assisted him through mock interviews. He was eventually offered a job with a starting pay of \$50,000 and opportunities to grow within the company.

- **Noah** is a Marine veteran. Due to various incarcerations, he was on the verge of homelessness. He came to the Spanish Fork One-Stop Center, where the Wagner-Peyser staff referred him for veteran services. A DVOP specialist followed up with Noah the same day, later helping him to complete an interest profile and apply for the WIOA Adult Program. Noah and the DVOP specialist reviewed the interest profile results and found that Noah was suited for maintenance positions. The specialist contacted an employer who was looking for workers to maintain asphalt machines. After helping Noah create and target a résumé for the position, the DVOP gave the résumé to the employer's hiring manager, helping Noah to obtain an OJT opportunity. Through the specialist's efforts, Noah avoided eviction and now has a promising career.

VERMONT

- **Susan** participated in both labor exchange activities and the Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessment (RESEA) program. She did not have internet access and could not afford the cost. She utilized the AJC resources every day, taking advantage of résumé, interviewing, and networking workshops that helped her to improve her résumé and job-search skills. Susan was selected for many interviews and faced multiple rejections from several hiring managers. She was concerned that her age may have been hindering her ability to find new employment. With continued encouragement and support, she continued to apply for various positions, and her persistence paid off when she was hired at the University of Vermont as an office program support specialist in the physics department.
- **Bill**, a disabled veteran, moved his family to Vermont in 2020. He was a stay-at-home dad and knew he needed to get back into

the work force. He created a Vermont JobLink account and began searching for new employment. Veterans are provided with priority of service with the Vermont Department of Labor (VDOL), and when his name appeared on a VDOL report for new veteran enrollments, the VDOL DVOP specialist began sharing services and resources.

When the initial outreach and assessments were complete, it was determined that Bill would benefit from a connection with the VDOL Local Veterans' Employment Representative (LVER) staff and the local VDOL Labor Exchange staff. The collaborative efforts of the VDOL staff led to a job offer at CAD CUT®. This employer was experiencing labor force shortages during the pandemic, and they struggled to fill government contracts for personal protective equipment. Bill was extremely happy with the outcome and was impressed with how well the organization worked together while still working remotely.

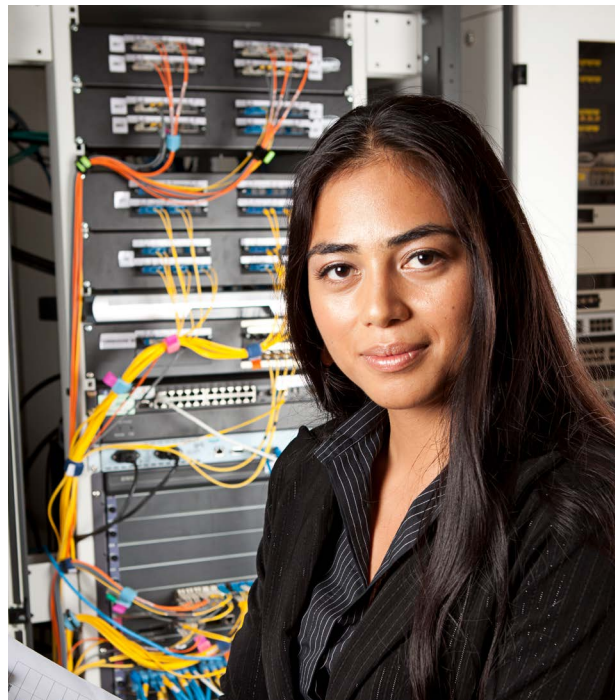


WYOMING

- **Sharlene** came into the Evanston Workforce Center to inquire about CNA training. She resides in a rural area of Uinta County, where the CNA job opportunities are in high demand. Sharlene and her case manager discussed available opportunities through the WIOA Adult Program. Once Sharlene was found eligible for the program, the case manager assisted her with getting enrolled into the CNA Program at Western Wyoming Community College. Despite the complications caused by COVID-19, Sharlene remained motivated and determined throughout the course of her training process. She has expressed extreme gratitude for the WIOA program and the opportunities that it has created for her.
- **Christina** is the owner of a small trailer park and the Washboard Laundromat.

Her business was on the verge of closing and needed immediate assistance. She scheduled an appointment with the Rawlins Workforce Center, and the case manager assisted her with filling out and submitting the business relief program application. The case manager also assisted Christina with applying for the Mitigation Fund, which helped her to receive assistance with her trailer park.

She was ultimately approved for the first round of the business relief fund and the Mitigation Fund, which allowed her to keep her laundromat and trailer park open. Additionally, the case manager was able to assist several of Christina's tenants with applying for the Housing Relief Program. All of these tenants were approved, and many of them were referred to WIOA for additional services.



WIOA Dislocated Worker Program

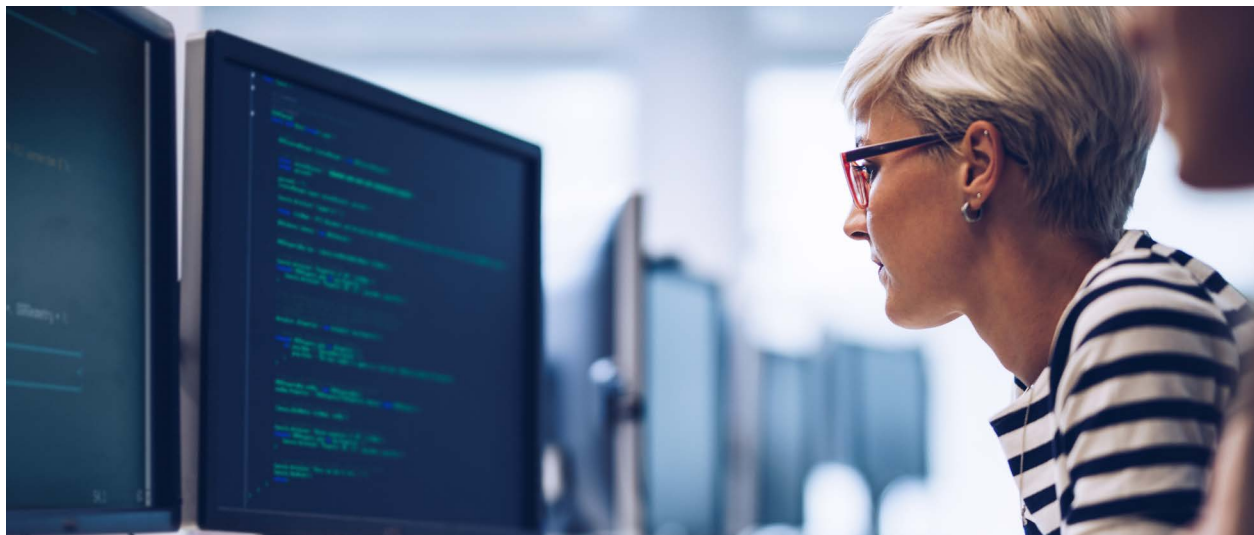
ALABAMA

- **Joshua** was a dislocated worker who came in for a RESEA appointment. He soon found OJT with Southern Apparel, Inc. as a shipping supervisor at \$14.00 per hour. He completed OJT in July 2019 and was recently promoted to Operations Manager. His salary has now increased to \$40,000 per year.
- **Chester** was laid off from Anderson Construction Company and had exhausted his unemployment benefits when he first came into the Eufaula Career Center. Pomeroy Lumber Products placed him in an OJT training position. By August, he had completed 840 hours of training. He is now employed full time with Pomeroy Lumber Products as a Maintenance Laborer.
- **Patrick**, a U.S. Navy veteran, felt displaced in the IT industry after leaving his career

to serve his country. “Getting back into the IT world was daunting since I spent a few years away from it overseas,” Patrick said. “I no longer had a security clearance, I didn’t have any valid certifications, and I had no real leads or recent experience that would get me back in the IT world.”

He visited the Alabama Career Center and learned about the OJT program. According to Business Information Systems, Patrick is one of several employees hired through the OJT program. “[He] constantly pushes himself to make sure our clients are well taken care of. Whether it is through getting certifications, eliminating problems before they become issues, or just generally trying to make things more efficient, Patrick does it,” they said. They are pleased with his progress.

Patrick has become a valuable part of the team because they were able to develop a customized training program to ensure his success.



ALASKA

- **Shahmeer** contacted Career Support and Training Services (CSTS) for assistance in completing his RN program at the University of Alaska Anchorage.

Shahmeer demonstrated a strong desire to work in the healthcare industry, which was evident through his previous training, employment history, and volunteer work within the community. He had also earned a 4.0 GPA while completing his RN prerequisites, thus ensuring his acceptance into this highly competitive training program.

CSTS assisted Shahmeer with tuition, books, and costs associated with licensing fees. Shahmeer went on to gain employment with Swedish Medical Center as an Emergency Room RN, earning \$33.00 per hour with benefits.

- **Daniel** is a 41-year-old who came to CSTS after being laid off as an expediter in January 2019.

Daniel enrolled in the 48-Hour Commercial Truck Driving course with Kenai Peninsula Driving Instruction on August 26, 2019, and he obtained full-time employment as a commercial driver with Crowley Fuel Services on September 30, 2019. He now earns \$21.00 per hour with benefits.

CSTS assisted with training, lodging, and transportation throughout the course of his training.

- **Antonio** is a Navy veteran who found himself distressed and dislocated as an Alaska Marine Highway System (AMHS) worker. In between sporadic AMHS dispatches for work, he regularly visited the Ketchikan Job Center Resource Room, hoping to find steady maritime employment. CSTS assisted Antonio with the costs needed for job hunting, and he later accepted a four-month contract with the Department of Defense.

“I currently work in the supply department aboard the Richard Byrd,” Antonio recently reported. “I was a day worker involved with cleaning and sanitizing the ship, as well as connecting pallets of supplies and retro to aircraft carrier-based helicopters. I then moved up to messman serving licensed officers in the wardroom. From there, I was promoted to the salad cook in our galley. All of this within four months. My experience from the Navy and AMHS helped me along the way. I am grateful for the help and support of the CSTS team, who pushed me to pursue this job with Military Sealift Command and helped me to stay in the maritime field.”



DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

- **A Participant** came to the AJC-Northeast (AJC-NE) as a referral from RESEA, hoping to receive dislocated worker services. She enrolled in the WIOA program on March 13, 2020, seeking eventual employment in public affairs. She had graduated with a B.A. in Political Science in May 2018 and initially expressed concern that she did not have years of experience in her desired field.

The Workforce Development Specialist (WDS) reviewed Participant Two's résumé and suggested changes to boost it, ultimately highlighting the skills and experience that she had through previous volunteer work and leadership roles. The WDS assisted Participant Two in developing an individualized plan that included upgrading her résumé, increasing job-search skills, and utilizing multiple search engines to apply for a minimum of three jobs per week.

The WDS instructed Participant Two to use Global Jobs for government affairs and international careers. The WDS sent job leads for policy and communication affairs, providing an employment referral for a Tracer Manager position with DC Government. Additionally, the WDS provided unemployment information, guidance on how to manage job interviews, and encouragement.

On June 11, 2020, Participant Two phoned to report that she would start working for a public affairs company. During the call, she reported that she was "grateful for all of the support that WDS had provided, as well as all of the encouragement and guidance received through the COVID-19 pandemic." Two weeks later, Participant Two contacted the WDS to report she signed a job offer with Stateside Associate in Arlington, Virginia. She is now working as a Legislative Associate, earning \$26.15 per hour.



HAWAII (HAWAII COUNTY)

- **Naomi** was laid off from her previous job and referred to the AJC by the Unemployment Insurance Office. She had not worked in a few months and expressed an interest in pursuing a more stable and well-paying career. Knowing that she needed training, Naomi enrolled in a healthcare administration program at one of Hawaii's Eligible Training Providers in January 2020. MedCerts provided the training program online, which allowed Naomi to learn the lessons from home. An AJC case manager further assisted Naomi in finding new employment, and in May 2020 Naomi secured a position as a case manager at Going Home Hawaii, a non-profit organization that provides services to ex-offenders. She completed her training on July 8, 2020, earning a Certificate of Completion. She will soon be taking the Certified Professional Coder examination.
- **Ken**, a local radio personality, had lost his job in March 2020 as a result of the pandemic. He was shocked when he became furloughed. Still, Ken saw the opportunity to pursue his passion: taking care of the elderly. Once he learned about WIOA, he decided to get assistance at the AJC the following month. Knowing the exact kind of employment that he wanted, Ken enrolled in the CNA program at the Hawaii Institute of Healthcare and Training Services, another Eligible Training Provider. After two months of training, Ken earned the CNA Certificate of Completion. He will now prepare and take the CNA examination, which will give him a state license to be a CNA. "This program is the hope that we all need during this time," Ken noted. "I am glad to have completed my goal, and I'm excited to become a licensed CNA!"

HAWAII (MAUI)

- **Kelly** is a mechanic who was laid off after 19 years of employment at the Hawaiian Commercial and Sugar Company. Maui AJC staff supported Kelly throughout his layoff transition and worked with him to create an individualized program plan. Staff assisted Kelly in setting measurable objectives toward finding alternative employment opportunities, and they also helped with identifying opportunities to further his education. To achieve his goal of obtaining a degree in public administration, Kelly received financial assistance for the required courses at UH West Oahu and Leeward Community College. Now, Kelly hopes to obtain a full-time position with a government agency, and he sees his job loss as a pathway to a new beginning.

IDAHO

- **Kenneth** came to the WIOA Dislocated Worker program as a “reverse referral” from a local employer who was familiar with the program and interested in hiring Kenneth through an OJT. As a disabled veteran, Kenneth had previously connected with Vocational Rehabilitation (VR). They worked in tandem to identify local employers that would be a good match, focusing on this specific employer as the best fit. The initial plan began as an effort to coordinate the OJT along with the need for tools or supplies that he might need with VR services. Soon after beginning the program, however, Governor Little issued a stay-at-home order. As a result, many businesses froze their hiring, including the one Kenneth had worked with. The employer placed his name in a hiring pool but ultimately decided not to hire him immediately.

WIOA continued to work with Kenneth on his job search efforts, and he took initiative in researching local businesses where he felt he could succeed. While he was interested in a position with a hardware store and lumber yard near his home, the business

had no available positions. Fortunately, Kenneth’s career planner saw that the parent company, located just out of town, did have an opening, and he suggested that Kenneth apply and see if the work environment would be compatible with his disability.

Kenneth was hired immediately, but after two weeks he called and said he would be giving notice because the store did not want to transfer him to the worksite closer to home. His WIOA Career Planner counseled him on how to approach his employer, and the employer told Kenneth they wanted to retain him in his current location to work more closely with him on his truck driving skills. The career planner and the VR Specialist went into action, setting up several meetings with the employer, after which they agreed to put Kenneth to work in a position in the local store that did not require additional training. His work ethic was key in the company’s decision to retain his employment. He is now working closer to home, which allows him to enjoy a better work-life balance and family time.



KANSAS

- **CB** came to the Wichita Workforce Center in May 2017 hoping to find opportunities for training as a nurse. CB was receiving SNAP and Section 8 assistance at the time of his enrollment and was struggling financially. Utilizing Workforce Center services, he decided on a BSN training at a local university. Working with his case manager and the university, he was able to put together a degree plan to complete this training.

CB managed to successfully complete his BSN training, though not without challenges. A serious traffic accident

meant that CB had to delay his clinicals one semester to complete physical therapy and heal his injuries; however, CB was able to overcome these obstacles and gain his BSN in May 2020.

After graduating, CB gained employment at a local hospital. The first month of employment included training and a wage of \$16.00 per hour. After successfully completing the first month of employment and training, CB moved into full-time employment as an RN and now makes \$23.00 to \$30.00 per hour depending on the time of the shift.

KENTUCKY

- With trade training funds provided through the TENCO Workforce Development Board, **Steven** enrolled in a four-week CDL program at Gateway Community and Technical College (GCTC). He completed his training in 2019 and was immediately

hired by Chessie Seaboard Consolidated to operate the equipment. Steven's short-term training didn't just secure him a job that exceeded his previous earnings, but also the job that he always wanted.



MARYLAND

- **Michael**, a native Marylander, had earned both his bachelor's degree in finance and his master's degree in business administration from Maryland colleges. For the next 30 years, he held key healthcare administrative roles in large hospital and ambulatory care organizations. But despite his experience and accomplishments, Michael suddenly found himself unemployed due to a corporate restructuring.

Quickly regrouping, Michael discovered the Susquehanna Workforce Network's AJC in Harford County. Staff at the center assisted Michael in establishing a profile in the Maryland Workforce Exchange. They then referred him to Maryland's Professional Outplacement Assistance Center (POAC), a unique workforce system center designed to provide career services to individuals in professional, executive, technical, managerial, and/or scientific occupations. POAC Assistant Director Tom Dezell enrolled Michael in an intensive two-day "JumpStart" workshop, where he learned about the latest job search strategies, résumé development, interviewing techniques, and negotiation strategies. Tom also gave Michael individualized feedback on his résumé and LinkedIn profile as he refined them. In only four months, Michael found himself accepting a healthcare operations manager role. "I have only great feedback for the POAC team," Michael said. "They provided excellent content and education for professional job seekers. They were supportive, gave me personal

feedback, and were available whenever I needed them."

- **Kevin** spent 21 years with the same company and found himself confused and directionless after a surprise layoff. Wanting to be proactive, he sought out the help of staff at Susquehanna Workforce Center, Bel Air.

Job Service Specialist III, Tondi Correll, assisted Kevin by helping him to focus on his "passions," which meant a career change was imminent. They looked for an employment opportunity, and together they designed a cover letter and résumé aligned with the job posting.

A Regional Business Solutions Consultant was then able to connect to the company's Human Resources Director and subsequently submitted Kevin's cover letter and résumé. Thanks to the team's efforts, Kevin was contacted for two consecutive interviews and eventually selected for the job. He changed careers after 21 years and forged a new path as a cosmetology instructor. Kevin started his new position on March 3, 2020. "I realize now that the opportunities are endless if you have people to guide you and encourage you at a time when you can feel very lost without a job," Kevin said. "Thank you for all you've done to help guide, encourage, and ultimately help me find my dream job."



MICHIGAN

- **Katie**, a Delta County resident with a bachelor's degree in Biology, was surprised and nervous when she found herself laid off in 2019. When seeking unemployment benefits, she was referred to the Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessment program through Upper Peninsula Michigan Works! (UPMW). At UPMW, Katie met with a Talent Specialist who quickly recognized that she was struggling to find a career that aligned with her experience and education. Katie was eligible for the WIOA Dislocated Worker Program, which jump-started the process

of finding her next job. Katie was eventually asked to interview for a Talent Specialist opening in the Delta County AJC. Katie finds her position to be extremely rewarding. "I have been on both sides of UPMW," she explained, "and I can confidently say I would not be where I am today without the help of my case manager, Jen. Michigan Works! is about so much more than just finding somebody a job; it's about building a relationship along the way and in the end finally getting to watch them succeed."

MISSISSIPPI

- **Brandon** found himself dislocated from his job at Navistar Defense after only seven months of working there. Although he had suffered from significant health issues, Brandon was determined to move forward and seek new opportunities. He enrolled in East Mississippi Community College's Composite and Avionics and Cabling Manufacturing programs, which were funded through a WIOA Individual Training Account. Both programs were beneficial in providing the skills necessary to establish a new career.

Brandon developed teamwork skills, manufacturing skills, and received instructional training. He was granted an eight-week internship with Aurora Flight Sciences in Columbus, Mississippi, that exposed him to experienced composite technicians who shared similar career paths and journeys. Eventually, Brandon was hired by Aurora Flight Sciences through the OJT program, and he continues to work with

and learn from experienced technicians. He is thankful for the opportunity and the assistance he received during his journey.

- **Ronald** needed to make some changes in order to improve his situation: he had lost his home to a house fire, and he was laid off from a job that paid \$13.00 per hour and offered little to no room for growth.

Ronald heard that Hood Industries was hiring. He contacted Hood Industries and was referred to the Hattiesburg Job Center, where he met with an employment specialist. Ronald received assistance in updating his résumé and was referred to an entry level position at Hood Industries. He was hired on March 28, 2019, at \$13.40 per hour. After completing his OJT training in August, his pay was raised to \$16.00 per hour, and he has stated that he is in the process of rebuilding his home.

MONTANA

- When **Tracy** was laid off from her position at Senior Solutions, she pursued WIOA programs and other training opportunities. Initially, Tracy pursued OJT with a Missoula-based law firm; the employer, however, decided to forego the OJT contract, worried about the uncertain success of a Butte branch. Job Service Montana (JSM) and Tracy continued to search for OJT opportunities in the Butte community. Fortunately, the National Affordable Housing Network later offered Tracy a position, and after six months of OJT experience, she earned her certification as a Housing Credit Counselor. Upon certification, she began working with clients in the Anaconda area.
- **Tansi** was laid off when ShopKo closed their local store. Her work experience was limited to retail, but she wanted to pursue other career options. JSM staff placed her in an OJT in a professional office setting, which proved to be too much of an adjustment. JSM then encouraged her to apply for employment at the local driver's exam office, and they also assisted in preparing her for the interview process. Tansi was ultimately hired, and she now enjoys a steady income and benefits.
- **Toni**, a single mother, was laid off after the spread of COVID-19. JSM staff worked with a local auto dealership to develop an OJT in auto sales, something Toni had never done before. She loves the work and has had great sales success. The employer is extremely satisfied with her performance thus far.
- **Ted**, a young dislocated worker with a large family to support, was struggling to find steady work. Although a local builder was hiring skilled carpenters, Ted lacked the skills required for the position. JSM staff reached out to the employer, who later agreed that Ted was a good fit for the company. JSM staff helped the employer establish a training plan for Ted, and he completed a highly successful OJT. Ted is now employed full time, and he recently purchased his first home.
- **Linda** was laid off from the Montana Department of Transportation. She was able to obtain interim employment as a patient sitter at Marcus Daly Hospital, but she was unable to obtain enough hours to support herself. She was interested in earning her CNA license, so she completed training at Bitterroot College and achieved her goal. She has since obtained a full-time position at Marcus Daly Hospital in the Med Surg Department.



NEBRASKA

- **Catherine** was laid off from her job as a Credit Analyst in 2017, and she learned about the WIOA and Trade Adjustment programs during a Rapid Response event. She enrolled in both programs while working a retail job. These programs ultimately provided job-search resources and coaching that allowed Catherine to secure a job as a Financial Operations Analyst for a media corporation. “I’m making more than I’ve ever made in my life,” said Catherine during a recent phone interview. She is still happily employed.

- **Crystal** was laid off after working as a Replenishment and Allocation Analyst for over seven years. Jobs were hard to come by in the Sidney area, especially ones that paid a competitive wage. Crystal was also experiencing a high-risk pregnancy when she enrolled in Title I.

Crystal had always been interested in the idea of becoming a nurse but had not pursued this profession because of the extensive training requirements and costs. She received occupational skills training and supportive services through Title I, eventually completing her prerequisites to become an LPN. She worked diligently in her classes and received a certificate of completion from West Nebraska Community College in July 2019 for her nurse aide class. In August 2019 she passed the State of Nebraska licensure exam.

In May 2020, Crystal graduated from Western Nebraska Community College. She obtained her LPN/Multi-state License from the State of Nebraska in June 2020 and began employment with Regional West Physicians Clinic the following month. She spent some time working at the Women’s Center before transitioning to Sidney Regional West in September 2020. Crystal now makes a livable wage and enjoys her line of work.

- **Cynthia** felt frightened about the prospect of seeking new work after being laid off. She was fifty years old and felt unsure about her skills and abilities. She decided to attend various job fairs and made a point to take advantage of their services. With some help, Cynthia was able to obtain a job at UST Global, where she very much enjoys working.

- **Juan** worked as a Senior Process Manager at Capital One before he was suddenly laid off. Although Juan immediately began searching for similar positions, employers repeatedly informed him that his application would be much more competitive if he were to complete his master’s degree.

Juan decided to enroll in both Trade and Title I Dislocated Worker Programs, which helped him narrow down his college choices. He decided to begin classes at Boise State, where Trade and Title I Dislocated Worker Programs assisted him with tuition, fees, and supplies. Juan successfully completed his training at Boise State University and received his Master of Business Administration degree. Juan is now employed at Nelnet, making \$20,000 more than his base salary at Capital One.

- **Suzanne** visited the Sidney one-stop center in June 2019. She enrolled in the Title I Dislocated Worker Program and was assisted in finding full-time work. Unfortunately, she was laid off yet again months later; however, she continued to receive Title I program services, including rent reimbursement. Suzanne was eventually referred to UST Global, where she has been working since January 2020. She is thrilled with her new role and hopes to continue working for the company for years to come.

NEW HAMPSHIRE

- **Cheryl** first heard about the ApprenticeshipNH Program through the NHWorks office in Conway. A veteran and a former a police officer, Cheryl was looking for a career change and a career pathway where she could transition into a traditional medicine practice. After connecting with the ApprenticeshipNH Program, she was immediately interested in a Medical Assistant opportunity that allowed her to participate in 480 hours of classroom instruction at White Mountains Community College. This extensive instruction helped to prepare Cheryl for the Certified Clinical Medical Assistant (CCMA) exam.

Cheryl is now responsible for 3,600 hours of OJT, which she is anticipated to complete at the end of 2020. Her tuition was completely covered by the WIOA Dislocated Worker Program, and she received support services funded by a U.S. Department of Labor apprenticeship expansion grant. Cheryl plans to obtain her LPN licensure and continue pursuing new career opportunities.

- **Sarah** is a 27-year-old single mother. After being laid off from a waitressing job, she found herself collecting unemployment checks and food stamps to make ends meet. Fortunately, she was referred to

WIOA, which helped her to further her education and find new and exciting career opportunities.

Sarah had always wanted to work in the healthcare field but was unsure how to make this a reality. After connecting with the WIOA, Sarah and her career navigator researched the Great Bay Community College. Before she knew it, Sarah had been accepted into the program and was able to start taking steps towards her new career.

While in training, Sarah found that extensive commuting was causing financial hardship. Fortunately, WIOA was able to provide mileage reimbursement, and Sarah was able to focus on her education instead of worrying about gas money.

Throughout her time in the program, Sarah was an excellent student who followed through with all of WIOA's requirements. Sarah went on to graduate from the program, and she completed her externship at Core Physicians, where she was offered a full-time position. Her new profession as a medical assistant earns her \$14.75 per hour and comes with a full benefits package. Sarah appreciates everything that WIOA helped her to accomplish, and she is very excited about what the future holds.



NORTH DAKOTA

- **Sonya** first visited the AJC Resource Center after being terminated from a local production facility in September 2017. The case manager informed her about in-demand occupations and available training programs. After doing some career exploration, Sonya decided that she was interested in getting her LPN license and working in healthcare. Persevering through a multitude of roadblocks and challenges, Sonya completed her LPN training. She received her LPN credential in August 2020 and was able to locate employment immediately as an LPN. Her long-term plan now involves returning to school and pursuing an RN license.
- **Cole** was referred to WIOA when he was laid off in January 2020. The recommendation of a former coworker encouraged a machine company to want to hire Cole for an operator position in their metal fabrication business, but he lacked the necessary skills to successfully perform the job. Cole was a high school dropout and feared he lacked the

skills necessary for obtaining employment. Still, Cole's assessment test confirmed he would be able to obtain the knowledge and skills needed to be a successful machine operator. He enrolled in the WIOA Dislocated Worker Program and participated in OJT at the machine company. He has since become a full-time employee for the company and is earning \$17.00 per hour.

- **James** came to WIOA seeking assistance with training for a long-term career. His previous work in manufacturing and production had not provided the consistent employment he felt that obtaining a CDL Class A license would. He had been out of work for a month and needed to make a move toward his goal. James utilized WIOA funds to enroll in a CDL-A class with the Truck Driver Institute and received supportive services through the program. He successfully completed the training program, earned a CDL-A credential, and entered employment as a Yard Jockey Driver for Lazer Spot in Alpharetta, Georgia.

SOUTH DAKOTA

- **Jeramie** and his wife moved their family to the Huron area in the fall of 2018. Once there, Jeramie was able to find work at a local trucking company, but he was laid off the following May. A few months later, he applied for VA benefits and started working with a Department of Labor and Regulation (DLR) employment specialist at the Huron Job Service. Jeramie was enrolled as a non-significant barriers to employment (SBE) veteran into Wagner-Peyser and the Title I Adult and Dislocated Worker Programs. He

did not want to be collecting VA benefits any longer than necessary, so he went above and beyond by applying for more jobs each week than required.

Jeramie had been taking online classes through Dakota State University, working toward a bachelor's degree in IT, and was scheduled to graduate in May 2020. During one of Jeramie's weekly appointments, he found an IT Technician position at Huron Regional Medical Center (HRMC). The

employment specialist completed a referral and Jeramie applied for the position.

After the interview, Jeramie was not confident about receiving a job offer. He knew he lacked work experience in IT. The employment specialist contacted the Human Resource Management Center and offered an OJT contract to give Jeramie a better chance. A few weeks later, Jeramie received a formal job offer and began his OJT training contract with HRMC. During one of his monitors, Jeramie said he looked forward to going to work every day for the first time in years. In June 2020, Jeramie received the HRMC Exceptional Employee Award, which is given to an employee who demonstrates the hospital's values of being accessible, helpful, and knowledgeable.

- **Peggy** was devastated to lose her position of 39 years. She attended a Rapid Response meeting and then visited a job service office for help. Peggy was enrolled in WIOA Title I and Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA). DLR assisted with her résumé, job applications, mock interviews, and a wide range of other services on a weekly basis. Peggy's skills were limited, and her computer knowledge was minimal, so she also worked on Teknimedia training.

After receiving denial letters for several different job openings, her confidence was low. DLR set up a short-term WIOA Work Experience in the hopes of increasing

Peggy's employability. The retail business owner enjoyed having Peggy as an employee for her attitude and work ethic. DLR also assisted with some transportation through the Dislocated Worker Program and continued to help her apply for job openings. Once Peggy had a current job on her résumé, she was quickly offered employment at an assisted living facility doing housekeeping.

- **Jackie** entered the AJC in Covington after being laid off from her accounting job. Career Advisor Aretha Gooden quickly assured her that there was no shame in filing a claim and notified her about a free job search program offered under the Greater Memphis WIOA program. Aretha was extremely helpful in assisting Jackie with her claim and offering her words of encouragement.

After enrolling in the job search program, Jackie struggled to afford the many trips to job interviews. Aretha helped her to sign up for supportive services, which included a free gas card for transportation costs. Overcoming this barrier was a huge step, and Jackie was soon referred to Account Manager Savannah Bishop, whose positive attitude helped Jackie start to believe in herself again. Savannah sent Jackie's résumé to several local employers. Although the process began slowly, Jackie soon landed an interview at one of the area's top agencies. She was successfully hired for a position that paid \$18.00 per hour.



UTAH

- **Doug** served in both the Bosnian and Kosovo military campaigns and had been searching for an entry-level position for more than two years. He was also working with Veterans Affairs to better learn to manage his PTSD and addiction issues. When Doug came to an employment center to ask for help finding employment, a DVOP specialist met with Doug and helped him to reach an employer who needed asphalt laborers. The employer expressed an immediate interest in Doug, but the DVOP specialist saw that he would also make a terrific project manager. After seeing his assessment scores, the DVOP specialist knew that Doug's experience would serve him well in a leadership role.

Knowing that the employer might be hesitant in hiring Doug without project management experience, the DVOP specialist sealed the deal by explaining the WIOA Adult Program and OJT to help support Doug's initial experiential training. The DVOP specialist's confidence in Doug and his knowledge of WIOA programs and services created a win-win situation for the employer, who hired Doug as a project manager. The success of this OJT training paved the way for two more veteran work experiences with this employer, with the possibility of more in the future.



VERMONT

- **Angie** attended the “Building a Greater You Series” at the Kingdom Recovery Center in January 2020. It was here that she met the VDOL WIOA case manager, who provided an overview of the Individual Career Advancement Network (ICAN) and WIOA programs. She was working with Vocational Rehabilitation in an unpaid work experience at the Kingdom Recovery Center during this time.

After completing her assessments and career planning, Angie was enrolled in a WIOA Work Experience opportunity that provided her the ability to earn income while taking classes in the recovery field. Angie developed a close connection with the worksite supervisor, who was able to challenge and mentor her. Angie’s enrollment was impacted by COVID-19, but the Recovery Center was able to continue to provide work assignments that allowed her to work from home. She provided outreach calls, attended training, and prepared social media posts for the recovery center’s Facebook page.

One of Angie’s main goals was regaining custody of her children, and during her enrollment in the program, she was able to move into a house with her children. Angie now holds a job at the Recovery Center as a Recovery Support Worker. She received her Recovery Coach Certification, which will allow her to grow in her recovery work.

- **Ben** is a 32-year-old Vermonter with a stable work history and a high school diploma. He was laid off from his job and decided to pursue construction and carpentry. After obtaining a new position, Ben once again found himself laid off in December 2019.

Ben moved in with his father to split living expenses. Still unable to find work, he decided to look into the WIOA programs. Ben met with a VDOL Case Manager to discuss his interests, goals, and training opportunities. In March 2020, Ben enrolled in the Advanced Welding Institute. He graduated in November 2020 and is continuing to seek employment.

VIRGINIA

- **Roksolana** was working in the hospitality industry and had limited opportunities for career and salary growth. When the COVID-19 pandemic began, the restaurant closed, and she lost her job. She had a background in IT but needed additional training to become competitive in the industry.

Roksolana received virtual services through the Northern Virginia WIOA Dislocated

Worker Program and completed software testing training virtually through Learnix Tree Center. With the help of her WIOA case manager, Roksolana was able to earn a software testing credential that helped her obtain a full-time position as a quality engineer. She now earns \$68,000 per year.

WYOMING

- **Owen Mathews** found himself jobless after the closure of two major mines in Campbell County. He had been working as a production technician and had years of experience as a pit supervisor at a different location.

Owen decided to change careers and become an RN. He held an EMT certification for 10 years but had never been employed in the medical field. He attended several classes before becoming a CNA. Owen

accepted a position in a nursing home while he took nursing prerequisite classes at Gillette College. Though admission is extremely competitive, Owen was accepted into the Nursing Program at Gillette College.

The WIOA Coal Grant assisted Owen in obtaining his degree. He graduated from the two-year program in May 2019. Owen has now been accepted into an RN position with Campbell County Health.



WIOA Youth Program

ALABAMA

- **Matthew** came to the Career Center at Hope Place Family Resource Center, a local youth provider. He had struggled with learning difficulties in high school, which eventually caused him to drop out. He later enrolled in the Hope Place Youth Program for GED diploma assistance and tutoring. Matthew worked hard and attended classes regularly at the Coastal Alabama Community College Adult Education Program and was assisted by the Youth Workforce Program.
- **Dominique** entered the Youth Program through the referral process. She encountered several challenges during the program, and she reported that she had a broken relationship with her mother, had faced homelessness, and felt that she lacked the skills needed to find employment. Dominique heard about the Dannon Project through the Central Alabama Partnership for Training and Employment. Her long-term goal was to study and become certified as a Patient Care Technician because she had always desired to help others. During the first one-on-one case management meeting, Dominique spoke of having limited skills and a lack of access to transportation. She began occupational training in April 2019 and ultimately persevered to overcome her individual challenges. Dominique received her nationally recognized credentials as a Patient Care Technician on August 15, 2019, and she is now employed by Grifols, where she earns \$13.37 per hour.

While attending Adult Education classes, Matthew also expressed a desire to take welding classes at Coastal Alabama, a local community college. With the help of Coastal Alabama Adult Education and Hope Place, Matthew completed his community college application and enrollment. It was at that time he was enrolled as an Individual Training Account (ITA). He started taking classes at Coastal Alabama in January 2019.



ALASKA

- **Ben** was an 18-year-old youth in the foster care system who had no employment skills or history. He was enrolled in the WIOA Youth Program by Nine Star, a group that sourced and coordinated a Work Experience opportunity with a local employer.

Ben began working for Furniture Enterprises, but only worked for one week before suddenly quitting. The providers, however, had an established relationship with the employer, who was willing to give Ben a second chance. Ben was able to continue his Work Experience opportunity after receiving skills training, guidance, and support from his case manager.

This second chance gave Ben the opportunity to improve his performance and work ethic. His rejuvenated approach has since led to increased hours and full-

time employment. His employer is pleased with his job performance, which is still steadily improving.

- **K'Lyn** faced several barriers that led to her enrollment in the WIOA Youth Program. At the time she was pregnant, going through a divorce, and lacking necessary employment skills. These events led to her enrollment in the WIOA Youth Program with the Literacy Council of Alaska in Fairbanks. WIOA offered a needs assessment, provided a service strategy, and lent supportive services while K'Lyn completed her GED and sought work experience training.

K'Lyn earned her high school equivalency diploma and was able to move into her own apartment. She is currently working with a local salon to pursue a career in cosmetology.

HAWAII (HAWAII COUNTY)

- **Austin** graduated high school in May 2018. Not knowing what he wanted to do, he enrolled in the WIOA Youth Program, where he received guidance in exploring his options. Austin was interested in obtaining a degree in Commercial/Residential Engineering, and he began taking classes at Hawaii Community College. He completed his first semester and then decided to pursue an employment track instead of an education track. After attending several Job Readiness Training classes, he participated in the Work Experience Program. This program

allowed him to work part-time as a trainee at the Hawaii County Parks and Recreation Department. He enjoyed working with the county so much that he wanted to continue on a full-time basis. However, Austin could not apply at the time due to a county hiring freeze. AJC staff continued to assist Austin in finding other jobs. With help from the AJC, Austin secured a full-time delivery driver position at the Hilo Goodwill Store on January 20, 2020, where he continues to be happily employed.

HAWAII (OAHU)

- **Shane** was a student at Farrington High School when he enrolled in the WIOA Youth Program on December 28, 2018. He saw the Youth Program as a chance for a fresh start. As a WIOA participant, Shane developed confidence in himself and in his abilities and was selected for Student Council, where he helped coordinate events and other activities. While working toward his CBase (competency-based) diploma, he also worked toward and earned a Certificate of Professional Development for Office Administration and Technology at Leeward Community College. Shane eventually participated in the Farrington graduation ceremony and received his CBase diploma.

Later, Shane enrolled and completed Pre-Apprenticeship Certificate Training with Building Industries Associate (BIA). During his training, he managed to work a part-time position at Farm to Fork Catering while also assisting at Self-Help Housing in Waianae in order to fulfill the Work Experience (WEX) requirement. After he completed WEX on November 24, 2019, Shane devoted the rest of his time to his job at Farm to Fork Catering. He went on to serve as lead chef.

After a few months of working full-time at Farm to Fork Catering, Shane lost his job due to COVID-19. The certifications that he earned in the Youth Program, however, allowed him to secure new employment at Color Dynamics, Inc. Shane is grateful for the

opportunities that he was given and is excited to continue pushing himself professionally.

- **Elijah** was born with health issues and lost both his mother and his sister at a very young age. Despite these challenges, he maintained the desire to make something out of his life. Elijah successfully went through the Special Education program at Waipahu High School, achieving a Certificate of Completion. During his last year of high school, an AJC staff member connected with Elijah and enrolled him in the WEX Program through the WIOA Youth Program. Hawaiian Building Maintenance (HBM) at the Pearl City Highlands Shopping Center would eventually provide employment opportunities for Elijah.

The AJC staff member has since followed up with Elijah's supervisor, who had nothing but positive things to say. He noted that Elijah is a hard worker with a positive attitude, stating the company hired Elijah on a full-time basis with benefits.

Elijah remains thankful to the Youth Program for recognizing his potential, and in January 2020 he shared his educational background and WIOA experience as a guest speaker at the Hawaii Association for Career and Technical Education (HACTE) conference. Today, Elijah is in the one-year follow-up phase of the Youth Program and continues to work at HBM.



IDAHO

- **Terrence** enrolled in the WIOA Youth Program after returning to northern Idaho from South America. He only had a high school diploma, lacked funds, and felt he had no way to achieve his goal of becoming an electrician. He approached the Idaho Department of Labor's WIOA Youth Program to ask about apprenticeship opportunities, where his case manager began working with him on a résumé and provided him with work search advice. The case manager explained the program benefits and his next steps. Terrence obtained his apprenticeship card and applied for several jobs, securing one as an apprentice electrician days after meeting with a career planner.

The career planner later touched base to see what Terrence's future plans were. It was revealed that North Idaho College (NIC) had offered Terrence a \$400 program scholarship, and Terrence was able to save enough money to pay for a portion of his tuition upfront. WIOA generously covered a substantial balance of Terrence's tuition. Terrence mentioned that, while he loved being an electrician, he was unhappy with his current employment setting, hoping for an alternative career path. The career planner advised him to transition before the apprenticeship class began, and two days later, Terrence found a position with another company. He is currently enrolled in the apprenticeship program at NIC.

- **Kiza** was recently a Work Experience participant in Boise. The International Rescue Committee referred her to the program in hopes she could participate as an older youth. She arrived in Boise from Africa in August 2019, twenty years old and speaking primarily Swahili. She worked in a beauty salon in Africa but had no U.S. work

experience after dropping out of high school in ninth grade. She realized she needed a GED in order to find a stable job. Kiza began working with a career planner in late 2019 and created a plan for GED completion and employment.

In April 2020 Boise's Interfaith Sanctuary accepted Kiza as a Work Experience participant. The site struggled to find help due to the COVID-19 crisis. She began her 520-hour WEX at \$11.00 per hour. As the WEX neared completion, Interfaith Sanctuary expressed how delighted they were with Kiza and her abilities. They asked about the possibility of hiring her as a regular, full-time employee and were notified they could proceed in doing so. They later responded to the career planner, noting that Kiza was an excellent employee and was also taking night classes to pursue her GED.

- **Jon** was homeless and staying with friends when he learned of and applied to the WIOA Youth Program. Having just moved back to Salmon, he wanted permanent work and a more secure place to live. In need of plumbers, a local Salmon employer offered to give Jon an opportunity as a Plumber Apprentice, granted that WIOA could help to offset some of the training costs.

His career planner enrolled him in OJT, and the program helped to pay for his tools and work clothes. WIOA also assisted by providing access to training through the College of Western Idaho's online Plumber Apprenticeship Training program. Jon is currently working full time, earning \$18.00 per hour with full benefits and has obtained an apartment of his own. He credits WIOA with helping him to become successful and stable.

KANSAS

- **Bailey** met with WIOA/Kansas Health Profession Opportunity Project (KHPOP) staff to explore employment opportunities available in her community. The WIOA/KHPOP employment specialist staff quickly discovered that Bailey longed to pursue post-secondary education. Bailey knew that she would need to earn more than minimum wage to support herself and her daughter, but her prior experience with post-secondary training left some uncertainties and self-doubt regarding her academic abilities. WIOA/KHPOP staff worked to reassure her that this time would be different, letting her know that they would be her new support system and would help her financially, academically, and emotionally throughout her educational goal.

Micaela, KHPOP’s Career Coach, told Bailey that they would work together to determine how many classes to take, working carefully around her personal schedule. Bailey agreed to enroll in the CNA program and soon found that she enjoyed her classes.

Bailey successfully completed the CNA course and has entered employment as a CNA. With her newly discovered confidence, Bailey decided to start taking pre-nursing courses, focusing on the nursing program offered at Garden City Community College (GCCC). Bailey started with online courses, which allowed her to continue to work at Scott County Hospital. She met with the Director of Nursing at GCCC and was informed that she was a good candidate for the nursing program.

At GCCC, Bailey was referred to TRIO (a combination of three federal programs: Upward Bound, Talent Search, and Student

Support Service) for additional academic assistance. She attended group study sessions with peers and worked to obtain her LPN credential. This work has led to an employment opportunity at Scott City Memorial Hospital, where Bailey is making \$17.00 per hour. She will continue her studies at GCCC and will work on obtaining an RN credential.

- After determining eligibility, **Brandon** was enrolled into the WIOA Out-of-School Youth (OSY) Program, where he received many services. One of these, a WIOA Youth Work Experience, was developed for Brandon in the summer of 2019 so that he could develop his workplace skills. He completed the Work Experience, and Kansas WorkforceONE (KWF1) assisted Brandon as he enrolled in the Welding program through North Central Kansas (NCK) Tech in Hays. He was also supported through Individual Service Strategy and WIOA funding. Brandon performed very well in welding classes and remarked several times that this was the field he wanted to be in. His instructor was highly complimentary, and Brandon also completed a Comprehensive Assessment and the Conover Workplace Readiness Credential. He also completed a series of courses that he reported taught him about life skills and goal-setting.

In May 2020 Brandon completed the NCK welding program and earned a job with Denning Machine Shop in WaKeeney. He started at \$14.00 per hour and is now able to fully support himself. Brandon said he is happy with the job and the services that he received through KWF1.



LOUISIANA

- **Canese** said the following about her experience with Louisiana's Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) Program:

"The TAA Program was a blessing. I had reached a point in my education where loans were no longer an option to cover tuition, so I had to pay a good deal out of pocket. Not only did I not have the money for tuition, but I barely had money to pay for living expenses... I was trying to get my Bachelor's in Industrial Engineering. As an African American female, I was already discouraged going into a field where I did not see people who looked like me. But it was my dream to do what I love.

"My college career was pretty tough. I spent two years going in and out of the hospital before being diagnosed with endometriosis. The hospital and medical bills got so severe

that I ended up being homeless about three times. At one point, I was working three jobs just to get by. Then I got a call to work at Frankie. I was finally able to get a good night's sleep and work only one job. I learned about my field and was able to focus more on school and managing my autoimmune disease. But within a year of getting a job that allowed me to meet my needs, I became jobless.

"After a very emotional talk with Ms. Gwen, I was set on graduating and not letting a layoff be the end of my future. After two quarters in the TAA Program, I walked across the stage as the first person in my family to graduate college with a degree in the sciences... I am sure I will never be able to fully show how grateful I am for the peace, direction, encouragement, and accountability [the TAA Program provided]."



MICHIGAN

- **Rickey** wanted to go to college and become a police officer, but he was facing some significant financial challenges. He lacked parental support and often found himself in a transient state. His career plans were on hold because he could not get the financial documentation necessary to qualify for financial aid.

Rickey worked with a Youth Career Advisor at Michigan Works! Northeast Consortium, and he enrolled in their OSY Program. He received assistance with post-secondary prep and financial assistance when his FAFSA was denied. Perhaps one of the most rewarding experiences for Rickey was job-shadowing activities at Shawono Center and the Crawford County Sheriff's Department.

Michigan Works! Northeast was able to assist Rickey with support services like mileage reimbursement and tutoring activities. Since working with Michigan Works! Northeast, Rickey has completed his first year of college, and his FAFSA is now in place for his second year. He has also secured a job as a Marine Patrol Officer with the Crawford County Sheriff's Department. Thanks to the assistance of the WIOA Youth Program, Rickey has a promising future in public safety and is already establishing connections that

will lead him to a successful future. This experience has taught Rickey that "there are people and organizations out there who can help."

- **Joel** first came to Upper Peninsula Michigan Works! (UPMW) seeking summer employment. He was running out of options and struggling to find a place that would hire someone so young. He spoke with a talent specialist at the AJC and was enrolled in the Youth Program. Joel's case manager determined that he would make a great Work-Based Learning (WBL) candidate, which would provide him with valuable work experience and start building his résumé and skills.

UPMW created a WBL contract with Northland Lawn & Sport, with Joel working full time as an employment trainee. He was able to start a bank account and participate in financial literacy courses through UPMW. Joel's supervisor spoke highly of his work ethic, and the owner of Northland Lawn and Sport wanted to keep Joel employed throughout the school year. Joel is now on the right path to becoming well-established in the workforce, and he is learning skills that will help him to successfully hold a job in the future.

MISSISSIPPI

- **Rakia** and **Carmen** enrolled in the Warren, Washington, Issaquena, and Sharkey Community Action Agency program in July and October, respectively. After the outbreak of COVID-19, Rakia and Carmen had to adapt their education plans, stay focused on their goals, and learn to

navigate computer-based training. Both women worked through the difficulties of the pandemic and received their Pharmacy Technician certificates through Mississippi Delta Community College Career and Workforce Development Center.

- **Annie** was a high school senior at Bruce High School when she enrolled in the Gateway Youth Program. She knew that she wanted to attend college after graduation and was seeking assistance with figuring out her next steps. The Gateway Youth Program was a great opportunity for her to explore her career interests and develop a career pathway plan. She obtained a Silver National Career Readiness Certificate and expressed interest in working in the funeral home industry. Annie completed the essential job skills training and learned the skills needed for success in the workplace. Her career coach also helped her to secure a paid internship with a local funeral home. During the internship, Annie utilized the skills she learned in the Gateway Youth Program. She discovered that the funeral services program did indeed present a career that she wanted to pursue. The career coach assisted her with completing college and scholarship applications, and when Annie graduated from high school in May 2020, she was accepted into the Funeral Services Technology program at Northwest Mississippi Community College. Annie is grateful for the opportunity the Gateway Youth Program offered her, and she continues to be successful in the Funeral Services Technology program.
- **Isaac** realized that he wanted to pursue employment that would lead to a successful career. After graduating high school, Isaac was only able to find employment at an automobile dealership or a local farm. He began searching for career information and discovered the Gateway Youth Program at East Mississippi Community College (EMCC). He contacted one of the career navigators, found out he was eligible, and enrolled in the program. During the enrollment process, Isaac mentioned that he was interested in becoming a commercial truck driver. He completed the essential job skills training, was accepted into the EMCC CDL Program, and was immediately employed with Royal Trucking upon completing his

training. Isaac attributed his success in finding employment quickly to the skills that he learned in the Gateway Youth Program and finds himself working a job that he finds meaningful.

- **D'Anthony** earned his diploma from Callaway High School in 2018. Afterward, he worked at Olive Garden as a busser and regularly volunteered at the Medgar Evers Library. His mentor at the library suggested he apply to Refill Jackson Initiative (RJI). D'Anthony was accepted to the cohort and his training began in January 2019. While at RJI, he acquired skills in customer service, professional communication, and critical thinking. The skills D'Anthony learned at RJI eventually led to a paid internship at The Good Samaritan Center, where he was responsible for stocking the thrift store, sorting and collecting clothing donations, and greeting and assisting clients. His internship then turned into a job offer, and D'Anthony became a full-time employee.
- **William** enrolled in the WIOA OSY program with limited skills and confidence. In fact, William's grandfather had to moderate the conversation because William did not want to speak. After five weeks in the program, however, William transformed into a far more confident individual. The program provided the opportunity for him to practice his social skills, build his work ethic, explore career options, and learn job-search skills.

Before the spread of COVID-19, William was given the opportunity to participate in Work Experience at the Gautier Public Library. This was William's first experience in the workforce, and he provided clients with an overview of the available services while working as a Library Assistant. This opportunity allowed William to purchase his first car. He has also applied for and received a Pell Grant, which will allow him to enroll as a student and pursue a career in Medical Laboratory Technology.



NEBRASKA

- **Anthony** was seeking career training after high school and was introduced to Heartland Workforce Solutions (HWS). HWS assisted Anthony in developing his résumé, and he was also able to gain job experience while working at the local humane society.

After completing the Work Experience Program, Anthony managed to attain full-time employment as a Workforce Services Coordinator, which allows him to mentor other young adults.

NORTH CAROLINA

- After enrolling in the NCWorks NextGen Youth Services Program of the Northeastern Workforce Development Board, **David** received career guidance that directed him toward a career in welding. He quickly completed his high school equivalency diploma and received support for welding classes at the College of the Albemarle. David then earned a certificate in Welding Technology and completed a welding Work Experience opportunity that was created with the help of NCWorks. Taking note of David's drive and work ethic, Hoffer Flow Controls offered him a position through the OJT program. He started OJT in May, which will lead to full-time employment in the near future.
- **Yadir** enrolled in the National Farmworker Jobs Program in 2019. At the time of the

report, she was a senior at Union High School and takes college classes through a partnership between her high school and Sampson Community College. While dedicated to her academics, Yadir is also involved in various school and community activities, including the Student Government Association, Key Club, Beta Club, Rotary Youth Leadership, and the Migrant Education Program. She also volunteers at a local nursing home, serves as an interpreter for the community and school system, tutors part time at Union Intermediate School for students of migrant farmworkers, and helps math students at Sampson Community College. Yadir is on track to graduate in 2021 with both a high school diploma and an associate degree. She plans to attend a state university and obtain undergraduate degrees in political science and economics.

NORTH DAKOTA

- **Jordan** was a 19-year old with a low-income and disability when a local school guidance counselor referred him to the WIOA Youth Program. A local school guidance counselor referred him to the WIOA Youth Program. Jordan was introduced to welding in high school and was interested in attending the 480-hour welding combination class hosted by a local training provider.

Jordan was deemed eligible and received financial assistance from WIOA, which covered tuition, fees, transportation costs, and more. Jordan successfully completed the Combination I Program and received his welding certification in September 2019. After graduating, Jordan interviewed with a local supply company and was offered employment as a welder. He is currently receiving benefits and earning \$15.00 per hour.

- **Michelle** was referred to her case manager from her high school transition program. She was on an Individualized Educational Plan and working with a Vocational Rehabilitation counselor. Michelle completed two years of welding classes in high school and had been offered a job with a local construction company after finishing welding training.

The WIOA OSY Program assisted Michelle with tuition, books, materials, and fees as she worked through the Combination Welder I training program: a 12-week program with a local training provider. Michelle completed her training in December 2019 and started working for a construction company in January 2020, earning \$18.00 per hour as a welder. Although a COVID-19 layoff put her out of work for a few months, Michelle is again working and supporting herself.

OREGON

- **Lauryssa** said, “Everything I have accomplished in the time since I have started this program has made me beyond proud of myself. I have achieved goals that I never thought I would even reach, and I have gained skills I never thought I would have the opportunity to, due to my lack of education. So, I would have to say that every step I have taken since joining the program has been a major personal accomplishment.”

- **Adrienne** said, “Because of the services offered through the WIOA Program, I have

been able to start and continue to grow in the health field, get a more reliable and safer car, and learn new skills that I can utilize in the future. I am very grateful for all WIOA has helped me with. I don't know where I would be without this program.”

- One youth, **Cheyenne**, completed a work experience with the Jefferson County Fire Department and received her Firefighting 1 certification and is continuing to work with the fire department. She is also attending community college for EMT certification.

PUERTO RICO

- **Pedro** is a 19-year-old who struggles with the English language and faces employment barriers as a result. After several interviews, Pedro was deemed eligible for an Achievement Improvement/Basic Skills Tutoring workshop called “Conversational English Combined with Education and Literacy Financial Concepts.” He received

his first job experience with A&A Wireless, which allowed him to sharpen his customer service skills. The employer retained Pedro after noting his excellent performance. He has since continued postsecondary education and began studying Computer Science at the InterAmerican University of Puerto Rico.

TENNESSEE

- **John** was referred to the Hardin County AJC in his pursuit of training at Tennessee College of Applied Technology (TCAT). He was discouraged because he had student loan debt preventing him from receiving tuition assistance. AJC staff assisted him in pursuing a student loan rehab program so that he could be in good standing on his previous loans. SNAP Employment and Training (SNAP E&T) and Title I partnered to provide John tuition assistance for TCAT Crump’s LPN program. He excelled in the program and graduated in August 2020 as the valedictorian of his class. After completing LPN training, Title I assisted in paying for his licensure exam. John is now employed as an LPN and is doing very well. He says he would not be where he is today without the support he received from the AJC.

his family. So, he began to pursue a career as a truck driver.

Cody met with Campbell County Title I staff for assistance with CDL Truck Driving Training. He was enrolled with Title I in the OSY Program for training at TCAT in Knoxville and needed some assistance for tuition and textbook costs. He was referred to SNAP E&T and was enrolled by phone for the convenience of the client and to expedite the process to secure funding. Through SNAP E&T, Cody’s tuition and textbook costs were covered, and he received transportation assistance and monthly case management through Title I. Cody completed his training at TCAT, earned his Class A CDL, and obtained employment with McElroy Trucking Company based in Cuba, Alabama. He began earning \$15.00 per hour for 40 to 50 hours per week and still received Job Retention Assistance from SNAP E&T.

- **Cody** was a young man supporting two children with a very low income. He was working as an equipment operator, averaged only 25 hours per week, and would often be out of work because of bad weather. Cody wanted a more secure career with full-time employment and benefits for

Cody now has a stable, full-time job that allows him to provide for his family.

- **Samantha**, a young, single mother was referred to WIOA by TCAT Jacksboro for

assistance to complete her LPN training. She received Title I assistance with supportive services such as travel, uniforms, drug screens, background checks, and exam fees. Samantha completed training,

earned her LPN license, and obtained employment as an LPN at a local nursing and rehabilitation facility making \$19.00 per hour.

TEXAS

- **Mary** was homeless after dropping out of high school in the ninth grade. She wanted to attend the YouthBuild program at Ogden-Weber Technical College and complete her high school education. She earned two certificates and her GED and improved her Test of Adult Basic Education (TABE) scores. She is now happily employed.
- **Mary** was chosen to attend the annual Council of Young Leaders workshop in Washington, D.C. She was also selected to attend a one-day event on Capitol Hill with legislators from the state. She completed the construction diploma, earning an AmeriCorps 450-hour \$1566 scholarship award. Mary is planning to attend Ogden-Weber Technical College in graphic design. She and her mother now live in their own apartment and are very excited for what the future may hold.
- **John** transitioned out of foster care at age 18 and, shortly afterward, started a plumbing apprenticeship program through Davis Technical College. Within four months of starting the program, John

was hired by a local plumbing company. He has been completing his apprenticeship with the same employer ever since. Over the past two years, John has been able to increase his earnings from \$12.00-\$15.00 per hour and has completed approximately 94 percent of his program. He plans to continue his plumbing apprenticeship with the employer until he has successfully completed the program.

- **Jack** is autistic and has a difficult time engaging in social settings and academic environments. Workforce Services helped Jack obtain his high school diploma, which then helped him obtain a part-time job. Jack and his counselor explored his interests and discovered that he is interested in welding. He quickly enrolled in a welding program.

Through collaboration with Vocational Rehabilitation counselors and workforce development specialists, Jack has become better prepared for a rewarding career. His counselor also collaborated with his parents and tutors, and Jack is moving closer and closer to success with each passing day.

VERMONT

- **Sabrina** was referred to VDOL by Northeast Kingdom Learning Services (NEKLS) in March 2019. She was working to complete high school after having dropped out in the tenth grade. Sabrina was receiving benefits to meet her basic needs and wanted help finding a job that would lead to a fulfilling career. She quickly identified her goal to become a Licensed Nursing Assistant (LNA).

Sabrina enrolled in a WIOA-funded Work Experience at the St. Johnsbury Welcome Center where she built confidence and data entry and customer service skills while also working on her education plan with NEKLS. The close proximity between the two sites allowed Sabrina to walk between her worksite and NEKLS, and the Individual Career Advancement Network (ICAN) provided mileage reimbursement. In July 2019, Sabrina applied for a Unit Aide/LNA Training Program at St. Johnsbury Health and Rehabilitation Center. She was accepted and obtained her LNA license in January 2020. Sabrina continues to work full time as an LNA at St. Johnsbury Health and Rehabilitation Center. She plans to continue her education and further her career in the medical field.

- **Erik**, age 18, graduated from high school and was living with his parents while taking a break from school. He came to VDOL hoping to fill his gap year with activities that would prepare him for college. His goal was to improve his communication skills, confidence, and independence. A WIOA case manager met with Erik and his parents to discuss goals, strengths, weaknesses, and past experiences. His network of support was expanded to include representatives from the Vermont Learning Support Initiative and Vocational Rehabilitation. The team engaged in supportive dialogue around self-advocacy, triggers, coping strategies, and accommodations to help Erik prepare for a WIOA-funded Work

Experience placement. Erik enrolled in a part-time Work Experience at the Fairbanks Museum & Planetarium, where he assisted staff in the Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) Lab. As Erik's confidence grew, his training plan expanded to include providing customer service and assisting with weekend planetarium shows. Erik is now a resident student at Northern Vermont University's College Steps Program.

- **Michelle** was referred to VDOL by ICAN, a program she chose to access for support transitioning to the workforce after years of being a student and stay-at-home mom. She was referred to WIOA. A VDOL case manager helped Michelle develop a résumé and identify her skills and abilities. As part of her employability plan, Michelle established short- and long-term goals, searched and applied for work, and rehearsed her interviewing skills. After a few weeks of intensive work search, she enrolled in a WIOA-funded Work Experience at a local housing authority, which allowed her to receive experience and feedback in an administrative role. Her plan included co-enrollment into a Community College of Vermont (CCV) class, and the seven-week hybrid was a great aid to her transition to work. When her Work Experience with the housing authority was placed on hold due to COVID-19, Michelle continued her college classes with CCV working toward her LPN. She continued her work search as well. Her efforts resulted in an entry-level job (full time with benefits) at the local hospital.

- **Taymi** was a 22-year-old Boston University graduate when she first met with her VDOL case manager to begin assessments for WIOA programs. She was determined eligible and, following the successful completion of the Vermont

HiTec Phlebotomy Program, began her year-long apprenticeship and full-time paid employment with the University of Vermont's Medical Center.

- **John** was born in Guatemala and adopted at age two before being relocated to the U.S. He had limited work experience. After years of struggling with substance abuse, John graduated from Lake Champlain Waldorf and noted that he wanted to make positive changes in his life. He connected with a VDOL case manager to establish an employability plan and determine goals for his time in the WIOA Program. With the assistance of his VDOL case manager, a work-experience program was set up at a local car detailing establishment. Following the successful completion of the program, John was able to apply for, interview, and secure employment with the University of Vermont's Medical Center.

- **Miro** had participated in technical education programs while attending high school and was looking for work in carpentry after graduation. He had very limited work experience when he decided to engage in the VDOL WIOA Youth Program.

Miro worked with a VDOL case manager to develop an individualized employability plan which included enrollment into a Work Experience activity. During this enrollment, he continued to struggle with adapting to training site expectations. Using the Work Experience as an assessment of Miro's strengths and barriers, the WIOA case manager tailored Miro's learning with workshops centered on improving communication, identifying values, and adapting to new information. Miro found success in manufacturing and discovered that he valued small work teams, clear instruction, repetition, and performance feedback. These lessons allowed Miro to secure a job that offered these values.

He now works on manufacturing plastics at a local company. He continues to engage with his VDOL WIOA case manager and participates in financial literacy workshops.



VIRGINIA

- As unemployment rates surged amid the COVID-19 pandemic, the **Hampton Roads Workforce Council** remained committed to connecting job seekers to employment opportunities in the region. This new program offers valuable workplace experience. **Cory**, a program participant, completed his 90-day experience and secured employment immediately

afterward. He recently began his full-time job at the Fairlead Shipyard in Newport News and plans to pursue additional training in welding. Hampton Roads Workforce Council has also launched a series of virtual workshops to provide services to job seekers throughout the COVID-19 pandemic.



WYOMING

- **Jayne** faced significant barriers in her pursuit of employment. While participating in the Dental Hygiene Program at Sheridan College, Jayme enrolled in the WIOA Program for assistance with tuition costs. The WIOA Program was able to assist Jayme with her schooling costs, which allowed her to focus on her education and training without worrying about debt.

Jayne was also able to obtain employment as a control operator at the local jail. This part-time job, combined with her Personal Opportunities With Employment Responsibilities (POWER) program payments, enabled Jayme to pay her rent and bills each month. She has now passed her boards and accepted a position as a dental hygienist in Miles City, Montana.

- **W. Metz** was enrolled in the WIOA Program at the Rawlins Workforce Center. After working with a case manager, she began a WIOA Work Experience where she gained experience in performing administrative duties. This allowed her to gain confidence and to become more comfortable with talking to strangers. She was committed to her job and was eventually offered temporary employment working the same administrative position.

She eventually worked with her case manager to become a dual client with VR, and her VR case manager assisted her with higher education opportunities. The case manager worked with her on researching and applying to colleges, and she was eventually enrolled as a full-time student.

NORTHERN MARIANAS

- **Pauline** is passionate and educated, but she found herself unable to obtain employment after graduating with her natural resource management degree. She sought assistance from the Workforce Investment Agency, which helped her to land two different job interviews. In the end, Pauline received EMT training and was hired as an emergency medical technician.

- **Emma** knew that she needed to turn her life around after being charged for possession of crystal meth. She enrolled in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI) Drug Court Program and went through intensive outpatient counseling. She successfully completed the program and obtained employment at the Bureau of Environmental and Coastal

Quality. The Drug Court Program ultimately helped Emma to find a positive direction for her life, and she is happy to be drug-free and working full time.

- **Leonardo**, a former National Dislocated Worker Grant (NDWG) participant with the Bureau of Environmental Quality, excelled during his temporary employment and later earned a permanent position as an environment technician trainee.

- **Ana Cristy** was interested in joining the Workforce Investment Agency for training in medical coding. The program helped her pass the National Healthcareer Association Certification exam, and she was eventually hired as a medical coder and biller.

Other Workforce Programs

ALASKA

- **Nathaniel** is a disabled U.S. Air Force veteran. He became unemployed in August 2019 and shortly thereafter began seeking employment. He applied and qualified for multiple professional-level positions at the state and federal level. Only two of his applications led to interviews, neither of which resulted in a job offer. Nathaniel entered the Jobs For Veterans State Grants (JVSG) program in January 2020 seeking intensive assistance.

Upon entry to the JVSG program, he worked one-on-one with DVOP specialists. The DVOP specialists assisted Nathaniel in developing his goals, restructuring his résumés and cover letters, practicing interview skills, and finding job leads. He expanded the minimum qualifications in the Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities (KSAs) sections of his state and federal résumés so that he could increase his chances of getting an interview. He also attended a Navigating USA Jobs workshop.

After several months of working with DVOP, Nathaniel was offered a job with the federal government at the VA Domiciliary in Anchorage as a Social Services Assistant for homeless veterans. He is now employed a GS6, and he makes \$45,000 per year.

- **Thella** came to Alaska Works Partnership as a homemaker determined to enter a construction apprenticeship. She completed weatherization training and followed up with an 80-hour building maintenance training. In addition, she also completed carpentry training, blueprint reading, and trades math training. She found her passion and strength in carpentry and was entered into

the Carpenters' Local 1282 apprenticeship in June 2020. Thella is currently working full time for BEK of Alaska, Inc. on a project at East Anchorage High School.

- **Shady** was a combat medic transitioning back to civilian life when he came across a welding opportunity at Alaska Works Partnership. Registering with Alaska Helmets to Hardhats, Shady was given the opportunity to participate in the U.S. Military Veterans Electrical Entry Program (VEEP), where he spent several weeks training with the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW) and was direct entered into the apprenticeship program.
- **Austin** was a cavalry scout who was transitioning out of the military and hoping to find a career in the civilian world. He registered with Alaska Helmets to Hardhats and was given an opportunity to train with the IBEW in their VEEP program. Austin was able to complete the several weeks of training and was directly entered into the apprenticeship program.
- **Marc** was an indirect infantryman transitioning back to civilian life when he discovered Alaska Works Partnership's Alaska Helmets to Hardhats program. He enrolled in the VEEP program and trained for several weeks with the IBEW before being direct entered into the apprenticeship program.

INDIANA

- **Jeffrey** spent 14 years in the U.S. Marine Corps, serving his country remotely and abroad as a combat infantryman. Unfortunately, Jeffrey fell on hard times last year after he chose to quit his security job in order to pursue his dream of helping veterans through a podcast that he had hoped to develop.

Jeffrey also launched a project to promote the physical wellness of veterans through boxing lessons. He found himself homeless after neither venture panned out. “The well went dry; I was sleeping in my car for a while,” Jeffrey recalled. “Then it clicked: ‘You need to go get help.’” After first approaching a friend for help with the non-profit American Veteran Services Corp., Jeffrey was referred to a DVOP specialist at a WorkOne Center. Through a slew of programs aimed at helping veterans find housing and employment, Jeffrey landed a job last October at the Franklin WorkOne Center, working as a DVOP.

DVOPs are based in WorkOne Centers throughout the state, employed by the Indiana Department of Workforce Development, and are dedicated to helping veterans and eligible spouses receive services. “When I first walked in, I thought that they would just connect me with employment,” Jeffrey said of WorkOne. “I did not know they were going to put me in classes teaching me how to do a résumé, how to do an interview, and how to be knowledgeable about social media.”

Mari Phillips, the coordinator of the WorkOne in Johnson County, said Jeffrey’s military background has proven to be a big plus for the center and for the veterans seeking assistance. “I don’t think that they feel intimidated when they come in, because they’re actually talking to someone [who has] been through what they are going through,” she said. “[Jeffrey is] friendly, and he’s been doing well with outreach and hopefully will get more vets to come in.” Jeffrey finally seems to have found his calling as a DVOP.

MARYLAND

- **Sovang** was an active service member preparing to transition into civilian life when he was referred to the Anne Arundel Workforce Development Corporation’s Military Corps Career Connect (C3) initiative. C3 is a statewide initiative focused on building career success for transitioning active-duty service members, active-duty spouses, and recently separated veterans. Through C3, Sovang enrolled in the Hiring

Our Heroes Corporate Fellowship. Sovang’s fellowship experienced included a 12-week program that integrated professional training with hands-on experience working for Amazon Web Services as a cloud consultant. After successfully completing his fellowship, he was offered a full-time position with Amazon Web Services as a cloud networking consultant where he now earns \$217,000 per year.

MISSISSIPPI

- **Mary** is a Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP) participant who is receiving training at Central Mississippi Incorporation. Mary learned about the program through the Grenada WIN Job Center. She needed to work because she had been laid off, had no income, and lacked the necessary skills to gain new employment. Her experience helped her develop skills in filing and in researching to locate resources for others in need. She has stated that she does not know where she would be if she did not have the Senior Program. SCSEP has provided her with a source of income and is actively helping her acquire new skills for the workplace. Upon completion of the program, Mary looks forward to obtaining employment where she can utilize her new skills.

- **Sherry** is 61 years old and lives in Northeast Mississippi Planning and Development District, an area that has low employment prospects. Sherry did not have a high school equivalency diploma (HSE), and she lacked the necessary skills to enter the workforce. Still, Sherry was able to progress through SCSEP in 11 months and was moved to unsubsidized employment at the Host Agency Adult Day Care. She loves working with seniors and actively prepares meals and plays games with them. Sherry continues to progress in achieving her HSE diploma, and she considers Adult Day Care a wonderful place.

- **Donald** entered the Pascagoula Job Center ready to begin the next chapter in his life. While meeting with the DVOP, Donald explained that he did not have a driver's license and that it would cost several hundred dollars to have it reinstated. He

did not have reliable transportation, an email address, or a résumé.

The DVOP assisted him in creating a functional résumé and email address, taught him basic computer skills, and assisted him in submitting job applications. Donald remained in contact with the DVOP after he found employment as a groundskeeper at a local church. He was provided transportation to and from work and began saving money for his license. After several months of steady income, Donald acquired a driver's license with a light commercial endorsement.

Donald was eventually offered a job as a health screener at the WIN Job Center through the Dislocated Worker Program, earning \$14.90 per hour. This opportunity allowed Donald to purchase a vehicle, which has made him more mobile and independent.

- **Evangeline** is a disabled 60-year-old who was hard-pressed to find employment that could provide her with decent housing. She had been unemployed for years and felt that the combination of her age and disability discouraged employers from seriously considering her for permanent employment.

After various conversations with an enrollment specialist, an employment plan was created. Evangeline felt that her years of customer service experience would be beneficial in an office setting. She soon began working as a clerical assistant at a Gulfport Nonprofit, and her professionalism earned her an offer for permanent employment at the Host Agency, Renaissance Community Loan Fund, Inc. She enjoys her work and expects to continue working for the agency.



MONTANA

- **Cindy** requested help from Job Service Montana (JSM) after being laid off from her position as a greeter at McDonald's. Cindy has a disability, and did not have a phone. She was unable to understand unemployment-related filing requirements. After sending in three requests for unemployment services, JSM staff suggested that a trusted friend or family member with a computer assist her. Her sister called with Cindy present and JSM staff walked her through the MontanaWorks requirements, providing instructions for filing the unemployment insurance claim. Staff followed up with Cindy's sister who reported that the claim was filed successfully.
- **Amy** talked openly about her learning disability and asked JSM for help with interviewing. JSM staff coached her extensively, conducting mock interviews and advising her about appropriate topics to discuss in an interview. OJT eventually developed with a local entity serving developmentally-disabled individuals. Amy overcame her challenges and remains successfully employed.
- After suffering a traumatic brain injury, **Pat** had a difficult time finding and maintaining employment. JSM staff worked with a local feed store to develop OJT for Pat. Pat's employer has accommodated his limitations, and Pat remains employed today.



NEBRASKA

- **Danielle**, a veteran, faced significant barriers to employment. She was disabled, low-income, and did not feel confident in her ability to secure work. Having assumed guardianship of her granddaughter, finding employment during traditional work hours was a necessity. (Danielle previously worked at a gas station, and the hours were not suitable for her family responsibilities.)

After reviewing labor market information, it was determined that CNA positions were available at multiple facilities in her area. Danielle was eligible for the Title I Adult Program and SNAP Next Step services, and she had already been approved for tuition assistance for nurse and medication aide classes.

There were many obstacles that could have prevented Danielle from completing training: delays, closures, and the adjustment to online learning after the spread of COVID-19. Still, Danielle would go on to pass the CNA licensing exam with an almost perfect score, as well as the licensing exam for medication aide. She recently started a position where she provides in-home care and is excited to be pursuing a new career pathway.

Danielle is grateful for the assistance provided by the Title I Adult Program, SNAP Next Step, Project HELP, and Northeast Nebraska Community Action Program.

- **Mark** had been living in a halfway house after being released from prison. Knowing that he had to re-establish himself in the world, Mark contacted Grand Island's AJC about obtaining a CDL. He was eligible for the Title I Adult Program as he was receiving SNAP benefits and was homeless and an ex-offender. Mark had been a truck driver in the past and hoped to pursue this career once again after obtaining his CDL. Still, Mark faced many barriers to entry: he had no income, no driver's license, no vehicle, and no high school diploma" with "he did not have an income, driver's license, vehicle, or high school diploma.

Title I, Kearney Works, and Dimas Charities all partnered together to cover the costs of Mark's permit, CDL training, and licensing. Mark has taken full advantage of this assistance, and he is now employed full time as a driver for Ready-Mix.

