Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act

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Foreword

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

The success stories are excerpted directly from the Program Year 2015 States’ WIOA annual report narratives, which are located on the Department of Labor’s (the Department) website at: http://www.doleta.gov/performance/results/AnnualReports/annual_report.cfm.

In general not every state includes success stories in their annual reports. This explains why some states are not included in this compilation and is not an indication that these states did not have noteworthy individual participant successes throughout Program Year 2015. Furthermore, some states submitted numerous stories across various programs, and only a small collection was selected to highlight the unique successes achieved by the programs.

These stories focus on employer engagement, WIOA Adults, Dislocated Workers, Youth, Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) participants, and others, who have benefited from program services such as assessments, the development of an individual employment plan, classroom training, on-the-job training, job search assistance, and emergency support because of natural disasters. Employer engagement stories illustrate how states have worked with employers and cultivated industry partnerships that have made a difference in the lives of many individuals. Some stories are from sector specific programs for at-risk youth, such as YouthBuild. YouthBuild provides job training and education to recipients ages 16 to 24, while they construct housing for low-income or homeless families. Additionally, there are some stories highlighting services targeted toward veterans. Thus, there are a number of stories from the range of programs supported by the Department, included in this compilation.

The highlighted success stories have been minimally edited, only as needed for clarification and consistency, but are generally included as the states present them in this aggregate form, as a point of access to the success stories resulting from the workforce system.

The Department plans to continue to compile and disseminate WIOA participant success stories from states’ annual report narratives as an added way to put a face on performance—participants benefiting from these programs as well as to showcase to the public the significant impact of investments made in WIOA training and employment programs.
Alaska

American Apprenticeship Initiative Grant for Health Care

Alaska’s American Apprenticeship Initiative Grant for Health Care began October 1, 2015. During the program year, the department’s Health Care Apprenticeship Coordinator, along with the USDOL Office of Apprenticeship, worked with a variety of health care providers to establish Registered Apprenticeship (RA) programs focusing on Behavioral Health workers. They are also working with school districts on school to apprenticeship programs, Alaska Pioneer Homes, Alaska Native Health Care providers, and other agencies across the state in establishing health care RA programs.

A unique multi-employer group, the Alaska Health Care Apprenticeship Consortium (AH-CAC), representing both small and large health care providers and both union and non-union employers, is being formed specifically to sponsor and expand RAs in health care. This Consortium is working towards gaining 501(c)(3) status, establishing a governing board, developing bylaws, and creating a strategic plan. AH-CAC will provide a structure through which employers may expand the RA training more quickly, affordably, and comprehensively, in coordination with other employers and labor unions, than they would in the absence of such a group.

Arizona

Advanced Business Services (ABS) Industry Partnership

The Advanced Business Services (ABS) Industry Partnership is an industry-led collaboration dedicated to identifying and implementing solutions that enhanced the competitiveness of the advanced business services sector in the greater Phoenix region. Launched in October 2015, the partnership has two primary areas of focus: 1) marketing and promoting the sector; and 2) building a talent development system to prepare the workforce with the skills they need. To date, through the active participation of more than fifteen employers, the ABS partnership has established a speaker’s bureau of ABS professionals who speak to regional educators, workforce development organizations, career events, and other venues that provide an opportunity to expose students and jobseekers to careers in the industry. The partnership is finalizing the creation of a pilot talent development project that will connect advanced business services companies with a pool of pre-screened talent from a select group of education and training partners. The pilot will provide an opportunity for feedback and continuous improvement to ensure that education and training partners are preparing students with the right skills and competencies to meet industry demand.
Honors Military

Arizona applied and was selected to be one of the pilot states for the Hilton Worldwide initiative to support veterans seeking employment assistance from State Workforce Agencies. As part of the agreement, Hilton HHonors Military has been created to provide an avenue for Hilton Worldwide to partner with individual State Workforce Agencies to support travel related to job search activities. State Workforce Agencies have the flexibility to determine eligibility criteria based on current state-wide employment and reemployment initiatives already in place for transitioning service members, veterans, and military spouses. Hilton donates 100,000 points to the veteran and or eligible family member to be redeemed for approved job-search related activities.

California1

Workforce Testimonial Quote: Jennings Technology

“NOVA’s ability to provide our company with qualified candidates for our most critical openings has been unbelievably beneficial. We’ve been able to minimize our recruitment efforts due to NOVA’s expansive and impressive candidate pool, and the staff at NOVA is so easy to work with. In addition, NOVA’s recruitment process is tailored to their customer, so it demands minimal effort on our part to get our postings out to the public in a timely manner. NOVA is our first, and often only, resource for recruitment due to their high quality service and candidates.”

~ Lori Schmittle, HR Manager, Jennings Technology

Workforce Testimonial Quote Submitted By: BC Schmidt Construction

BC Schmidt Construction was recently presented with a Small Business Award by the SBA.

“As a small business owner trying to grow in a Historically Underutilized (HUBZone) marketplace, finding and keeping good quality employees is one of our largest obstacles. BC Schmidt has been able to overcome this obstacle by using the One Stop programs at Colusa County Partnership One-Stop and Oceanside areas. The One-Stop has assisted us with assistance in the hiring, training and keeping of good local employees. We feel the best way to give back to our community is to provide local jobs and thanks to the One-Stop program we are able to do that and be successful.”

~ Carrie Schmidt, CEO

1 This material was approved for publication on the California Workforce Investment Works campaign website hosted by California Workforce Association (CWA) in partnership with the National Association of Workforce Boards. The full story may be viewed at www.WorkforceInvestmentWorks.com/California.
Colorado

Innovative Industries Internship (III) Program

The Colorado Department of Labor and Employment (CDLE) received a state general fund grant to launch the Internship program on January 1, 2016. The program provides funding for up to 90 internships annually and is designed to incentivize businesses in innovative industries to build a talent pipeline and career pathways to align education, training, and work-based learning. The program model provides half of internship costs with a cap of $5,000 per internship. The state provides incentives directly to businesses and links employers and interns to the local workforce areas for ongoing support when applicable. The program was developed using Agile and Lean strategies and provides web-based applications, internship resources, program orientation, evaluations, and billing. Employers work directly with the state program coordinator and receive individual support when necessary. The state also contracts with six industry associations to assist with program development and outreach. The program has been tremendously popular with Colorado employers. Program outcomes for the first six months (through June 30, 2016) are as follows:

- 162 interns were working in active internships throughout Colorado.
- Seven interns had completed internships.
- One hundred percent (100%) of internship spots for the 1st fiscal year were filled.
- Participating interns were making a minimum of $10.00/hr. and up to $22.00/hr.
- The program received federal recognition as an emerging best practice.
- More than 200 outreach contacts were completed with universities, community colleges, technical schools, and adult education programs. Additionally, businesses received information about the program through trade shows, individual contacts, newsletters, and email announcements.

A quote from a participating business includes: “I just wanted to provide you with some feedback on the two interns we have: Both of them are really tremendous! There has been positive feedback from both the Quality and HR teams about their initiative, work ethic and performance. Who says millennials aren’t motivated? They are incorrect. We couldn’t be more pleased! They appear to be very happy in their roles, as well. One intern has told me he would love to work here someday. So I just wanted to let you know that the intent of the program is really working well.”
Connecticut

Uber Partnership

South Central Workforce Alliance has partnered with the rideshare service Uber to provide rides to jobs, interviews and training. It is the first time in the country Uber has collaborated with a workforce development agency to directly take on lack of transportation as a barrier to employment. The pilot program serves customers based out of the American Job Centers in New Haven and Meriden. As with the Workforce Development Board (WDB)’s traditional transportation assistance model, Uber rides are capped at a certain amount per person, with the expectation that once steady income has been established, a person will be able to arrange and pay for his or her own transportation. The Uber partnership grew out of a need to address limited bus lines and schedules, as well as a lack of a personal vehicle. These transportation barriers leave employment opportunities untapped because job seekers cannot get to where the interviews, training, and jobs are, or those hired cannot get home at the end of their shift. If successful, Uber ridesharing may continue as a transportation solution.

District of Columbia

Local Veterans’ Employment Representative (LVER)

In Program Year 2015, the Local Veterans’ Employment Representative (LVER) staff assisted over 40 employers with nearly 100 employer-related services. These services were delivered to employers in career sectors such as Security, Healthcare, Hospitality, Non-Profit, Ability One, Transportation, Construction, Information Technology and included such services as on-site visits, promotional calls, resume referrals, candidate pre-screenings, employer job order assistance and employer registration in DCNETWORKS.

National Facility Services/NoMa Hospitality, LLC Partners with DOES – BSG

National Facility Services/NoMa Hospitality, LLC partnered with DOES – BSG to assist with the company’s talent acquisition needs for Homewood Suites by Hilton Hotels property located at 501 New York Ave, NE. With the assistance of the American Job Center, BSG referred qualified candidates achieving success from several prescreening hiring events (March 2016 through May 2016) for Guest Services and Facility Management positions. Over 60 job seekers competed for multiple job vacancies and 22 were successfully onboarded as a result of the event.
Indiana

To ensure the economic health of the region, a continued focus has been placed on aligning workforce investments in support of economic development activities within the region. As evidence of this, over the past year the regional workforce system has provided financial and workforce service support to nearly 50 economic development projects, demonstrating the strong alignment that exists between economic and workforce development in the region. Overall, more than 1,000 employers were assisted this past year through hiring events, applicant referrals, candidate pre-screening and incumbent worker and on-the-job training activities. Of interest, the workforce system provided these employers with more than 200 customized hiring events/job fairs during the past year at which thousands of applicants were identified and pre-screened for these employers.

Kansas

On-the-Job Training Quote

“The employees we have hired that your team recommended has been a great asset. Your support is very valuable to us in expanding our company. We look forward to working with you in the future.”

~ Renee Dalrymple, President Industrial Metal Fabrication, Inc., Newton, KS

3rd Annual Patriot Day Career Fair – Junction City, Kansas

In September 2015, The Junction City Workforce Center (JCWFC), the Junction City Area Chamber of Commerce and the Employer Support of the Guard & Reserve (ESGR) worked together to host the 3rd Annual Patriot Day Career Fair. Outreach for the event occurred in the Junction City community and surrounding communities, with targeted outreach occurring at Ft. Riley. Collaborating with the Wounded Warrior division, along with other specialized veterans groups, the JCWFC hosted additional offerings of job seeker workshops on federal resume preparation and job fair readiness techniques. 47 employers and 6 federal and state agencies were represented at the fair and over 140 job seekers attended. The employers were very pleased with the event’s turnout and felt the activity would help them reach their hiring goals.
Mars Chocolate North America – Topeka, Kansas

Mars Chocolate North America has had an ongoing partnership with the Topeka Workforce Center (TWFC) since its grand opening in March 2014. One of the most recent examples of this successful partnership was a large hiring event in March of 2016. With help from the Topeka Chamber of Commerce, GO Topeka and Visit Topeka, the Topeka Workforce Center hosted the event. Over 400 job seekers attended, pursuing 50+ openings in the production, maintenance and supervisory fields. TWFC staff worked side-by-side with Mars employees to greet applicants, give information sessions, conduct initial screenings/online assessments and hold on-site interviews. The KANSASWORKS mobile WFC was also available on-site, to help with increased traffic flow. At the end of the day, Mars’ Recruiting Manager expressed her sincere appreciation for the TWFC team’s efforts, noting their high level of customer service and their “service with a smile” approach to the entire day. This event helped Mars achieve their hiring goals.

Quote from Junction City Wire Harness

“We have used the WORKReady! Certificates (WRC) for many years. Not something that we require, but an applicant has a better chance of being hired if they provide a certificate with the employment application. That little piece of paper tells us where the applicant’s strengths are, it reinforces the information on their employment application, and it guides our placement of the new employee. The best way I can explain the value of the WRC is this example – two applicants have similar work histories and educational backgrounds. According to their Work Ready Certificates, one of them scores a little higher in math, the other scores a little higher in reading for information. The position that I’m hiring for involves using tape measures, calculators, and counting. The applicant with the higher math score will be the happier employee in this particular position. The job will fit their skill set and help to make them a long-term employee. The value of the Work Ready Certificate for the employer is that it’s a tool to gauge the job requirements against the skill set of applicants. The value of the Certificate for the applicant is that it’s a tool to gauge their skill set against the job requirements of potential employers.”

~ Cindy Carlyon, HR/AR/AP Junction City Wire Harness

Maine

St. Croix Tissue (SCT) Workforce Partnership

St. Croix Tissue is a new, state-of-the art tissue paper manufacturing company in Baileyville, Maine. SCT is located next to their parent company, Woodland Pulp LLC, Washington County’s largest employer. SCT produces a full range of products for the growing national and international tissue markets, including paper napkins, paper towels, bathroom tissue and facial tissue. Two automated tissue paper manufacturing machines are expected to produce over 120,000 tons of tissue a year with pulp supplied by Woodland Pulp. Training this
workforce resulted in a successful collaboration of various partners including SCT, Washington County Community College (WCCC), AXIOM Education & Training, CEI, Sunrise County Economic Council, and the Maine Department of Labor for an initial nine month Paper Making Technology course in which 40 students were enrolled. MDOL supported 18 of the 40 with travel assistance and laptop purchases through the Competitive Skills Scholarship Business Program, the Job Driven National Emergency Grant and WIOA. Thirty eight students completed the class and were all offered interviews with St. Croix Tissue. MDOL provided interview and resume preparation to the students. Five students were also certified as WorkReady though AXIOM Education & Training.

Massachusetts

Workforce Competitiveness Trust Fund (WCTF)

A key to the success of the Workforce Competitiveness Trust Fund (WCTF) grant program is the active involvement of local manufacturers. Through the partnership, two employers are engaging directly with students, sharing what they look for during an interview. This activity is particularly helpful for participants with limited or no previous job experience. Diane Ferrera, Director of Human Resources at AccuRounds, explains that there isn’t a large pool of experienced machinists on the South Shore, which motivated them to become a grant partner. “We’re all [local manufacturers] vying for the right employees. We have to invest in the community in order to get something back. This is the face of our future workforce. If we can help them do better, it helps all of us,” says Ferrera. AccuRounds has already hired one participant from the program into a full time machinist position. According to Ferrera, he has proven himself to be a driven individual, interested in furthering his skills through on-the-job training and participating in online simulation training.

Michigan

Harbor Freight Tools Program

The corporate offices of Harbor Freight Tools in California contacted Michigan Works! and informed the staff that Harbor Freight Tools was opening a new store in Howell. The Grand Opening was scheduled for mid-October and the company would need assistance with staffing the location. The manager of the new store, Tracey Weber, would need to recruit for 45 positions that were available. Beginning as early as July, staff assisted with recruiting. Tracey spent countless hours at the service center until all of the hiring needs were met in September. Orientation was scheduled to be held at the service center on September 10, 2015, with the goal to have the store staffed and running smoothly leading up to the Grand Opening. The Grand Opening was a huge success and better than expected. “Merchandise was flying
off the shelves,” stated Tracey the Store Manager. According to Tracey, trucks continued to arrive with merchandise to restock the store in hopes of keeping up with the sales. Mark Callaghan, one of the first store customers, stated he had to return four times that day purchasing more items. Due to the successful partnership with Harbor Freight Tools and the professional yet passionate way in which Tracey conducted business and recruitment for the store, both were nominated and selected to receive an “Outstanding Service Award” at the 2015 Livingston County Workforce Development Council’s Annual Awards Ceremony in October 2015.

Mississippi

Indianola WIN Job Center
226 N. Martin Luther King Jr. Avenue
Indianola, MS 38751

To Whom It May Concern,

We have been working with the WIN Job Center (WJC) in Indianola since the summer of 2012. When we started up, we were in great need of help getting our Operation staffed quickly to meet the needs of SUPERVALU in their Distribution Center. Since that time, we have maintained a crew of 60-70 employees who pick up orders and complete various other tasks within the warehouse. The WIN Job Center was instrumental in helping us find the employees we needed initially as well as providing a steady stream of candidates over the course of our tenure there. The On-the-Job Training program has enabled us to quickly get our new employees productive and contributing safely to the success of our Operation. The fact that we have been able to receive significant training dollars for each of the qualified WIN candidates we hired has made our decision to work with this program a winning move. WJC staff has been extremely helpful every step of the way and has guided us through the process of utilizing their programs. I think it fair to say that we would not have been successful in our Indianola endeavor without the partnership of the WIN Job Center. I want to say thank you to Carolyn Eubanks and all those working with her there in Indianola WIN Job Center. Your cooperation and diligent efforts have helped build up our business with quality candidates who have received quality training through your programs. These referrals have become excellent employees who are well-satisfied with their jobs. Thank you Indianola WIN Job Center.

Sincerely, Jeff Olsen, DistributionSolutions
Montana

Incumbent Worker Training Successes

- Okamoto Arbor-Care has grown their business from $100,000 to $400,000 a year by helping their employee become a certified arborist.
- Flathead Animal Clinic has increased their annual income by over $30,000 when they trained employees to use new state-of-the-art ultrasound diagnostics and digital dental imaging equipment.
- McCall Homes was producing 5 houses a year. They utilized $34,000 to train all staff on LEAN processes, and used those same skills with their vendors. One year after training they increased production to 25 houses a year. The following year they were producing 50 houses a year. Employees, customers, and vendors couldn’t be happier.
- Nova Café expanded their facility, increased revenue 10%, and improved efficiency in service and customer experience when they utilized training for baristas and social media marketing.
- Wolf Point Green received training to be the only certified asbestos contractor in the northeastern region of the state. He is so busy he is now looking to purchase training for certified asbestos supervisor for staff.
- 99.8% of employees with UI-reportable wages who received grant funded training experienced wage growth in the next year, with an average increase of $769 per quarter, or $3,076 per year.

Nevada

Quotes from Employers

“We have an outstanding working partnership with the Workforce Connections’ Business Engagement Specialist Team (BEST). Expanding to a new location is a huge challenge for any company, but BEST helped us with office space, conference rooms for our interviewing/staffing needs, and on-the-job training for over 100 employees.”

~ Joe MaglioZZI, Sutherland Global Services Inc.

“Workforce Connections’ Business Specialist Team is extremely responsive, respectful and pro-active to our requests. Their commitment to Wyndham Resorts has been nothing short of excellent when it comes to sourcing, developing and placing their valuable clients in our career hospitality resort positions.”

~ Dave Swanson, Regional Recruiter, Hospitality Services, West Coast

“In partnering with Workforce Connections and the Business Engagement Specialist Team it is a pleasure to agree to be a Compact Member. Referring BEST to other business partners is one of the easiest recommendations I can make.”

~ James McKenzie, Delta Global Services Recruiting
“We appreciate the Business Engagement Specialist Team for their support with our initial and ongoing talent acquisition needs. They are a pleasure to work with; always willing to assist with our needs especially with the OJT program.”

~ Leo Gobbo, Human Resource Manager

“I am grateful to be able to utilize your knowledge of the local employment market, your candidate profiles/screening services and as always ability to host job fairs in a welcoming and professional manner with consistent and exceptional results.”

~ Zarina Harrison, Recruiter

New Mexico Workforce Connection Online System (NMWCOS): Online Portal

NMWCOS gives employers access to a database of job seekers in New Mexico. Employers can enter, update, and archive job listings securely. The New Mexico Workforce Connection On-Line System is available free of charge to employers and jobseekers. Employers can post their own jobs or provide job listing information to Workforce Connection Center staff for the matching and referral of qualified job seekers. Workforce Connection Center staff can access both employer job listings and job seeker accounts entered into the system. The job listing information allows Workforce Connection Center staff to evaluate the hiring requirements of the employer, as well as the qualifications of the job seeker. In addition to assistance with job listings, recruitment assistance can be provided to employers, including provision of interview rooms, job fair assistance, specialized testing, on-site staff assistance, and labor market information.

Workforce Connection of Central New Mexico (WCCNM) “Career Connections Academy” for Dislocated Workers

Shortly after the first of year and on the heels of an alarming 2015 unemployment rate, a group of staff members from WCCNM strategized to create a specific Customer Service Training project designed for dislocated workers. The training program included identification of local employers in and around the Albuquerque area interested in highly qualified customer service training prerequisite for employment. One of the employers was Walmart who was preparing to open a super store in the area. Walmart was so impressed with the curriculum and the Career Academy Training Team that they required all newly hired personnel to participate and obtain certification on Customer Service as part of their overall orientation. The curriculum continues to be made available to customers and is widely shared with prospective employers as one of the value added benefits of working directly with WCCNM for job placement.
New York

Business Services

Through improved communications with businesses on their specific needs, New York’s Career Center system continues to build on its successful outreach efforts with the business community. Business Service staff are connecting with new and repeat business customers to offer targeted programs and services. By doing so, they have been able to increase the usage of OJT programs and other hiring incentives such as the Work Opportunity Tax Credit, NYS Workers with Disabilities Employment Tax Credit, and the NYS Urban Youth Jobs Program Tax Credit.

Jobs Express

Jobs Express is an online database for businesses to post available jobs. Local workforce areas use the Jobs Express system as a lead generation source to grow the state’s database of business customers. For PY 2015, staff contacted more than 30,528 businesses and, since the effort began in December 2012, reached out to 97,124 businesses.

Ohio

OhioMeansJobs.com

Businesses use OhioMeansJobs.com to post job openings for free, to learn about tax credits and OJT opportunities, and to use the website’s advanced tools and filters to narrow down many resumes to the most promising candidates. Through the OhioMeansJobs.com Business Support Center, they also can request help posting jobs, finding employees, and receiving customized training and other services. In PY 2015, the Business Support Center received 12,527 requests for one-on-one assistance, which ODJFS staff provided within 48 hours. As a result of those requests, 9,506 resume packets were sent to employers. Employers can request help via an online form, live chat, email or phone call.

Employers interested in hiring veterans can request help from the Veterans’ Business Support Center. Just like with the Business Support Center, employers can request online, email or over-the-phone help finding qualified candidates, posting job openings, finding local career fairs, and learning about hiring incentive programs such as the Work Opportunity Tax Credit. ODJFS employment specialists also can help employers learn more about the demographics of veterans in their areas, including their education levels, skills and cities of residence. During PY 2015, businesses submitted 695 requests to the Veterans’ Business Support Center.
Oklahoma

To help Oklahoma workers struggling with the downturn in the Oil and Gas industry, the Oklahoma Office of Workforce Development partnered with the Greater Oklahoma City Chamber to host two networking/hiring events. Due to increased partnerships with their state agencies and business partners under the Oklahoma Works initiative, these events were envisioned, developed, and implemented in a short amount of time to respond to the significant layoffs. The two events provided more than one-hundred pre-registered job-seekers, at each event, the opportunity to interact and network with employers who were hiring. The first event was held on March 10, 2016 at the Embassy Suites in Oklahoma City. The event included several prominent Oklahoma City employers looking to hire including PayCom, Boeing, and Love’s. The second event was held on June 7, 2016 at the Chevy Bricktown Events Center in Oklahoma City, and included Tinker Air Force Base, among other prominent Oklahoma City employers. Both employers and job-seekers were surveyed immediately following both events, and after a three month period. Employers found the job-seekers to be highly qualified and prepared for work in new careers. The majority of job-seekers found the events to be helpful in their search for new employment.

Oklahoma Military Connection

The Oklahoma Military Connection is a state initiative sponsored by the Oklahoma Department of Career and Technology Education CareerTech for Vets program, the Oklahoma Department of Commerce, the Oklahoma Employment Security Commission and the Oklahoma National Guard Employment Coordination. There are numerous hiring events that are coordinated around the state every year. Pre-event workshops are held two weeks prior to the event to help prepare job-seekers with interview preparation, resume pointers, and advice on appropriate attire. Job-seekers who preregister are matched to companies based on what positions employers are looking to fill. Three Oklahoma Military Connection Hiring Events were held during PY 15. Oklahoma Military Connection held a hiring event in Durant, OK on May 6, 2016 at the Kiamichi Technology Center. More than 30 employers participated, and more than 70 job-seekers attended. Additionally, Fort Sill hosted its third Oklahoma Military Connection hiring event on September 25, 2015 at the Armed Forces Reserve Center on post. More than 50 companies were on hand with jobs open in Oklahoma. CareerTech's Amy Ewing-Holmstrom stated, “We find this to be very successful in preparing for this event. It leads to a direct connect between the employer and potential employees. The hiring rate is higher when there is a pre-match situation. When we held a similar event in Norman using this same formula, we had job offers and soldiers hired, and that is what we want.”
Also, Oklahoma Military Connection held a hiring event in July 2015 in Enid, OK. Out of the 66 Veterans that attended this event 7 of them gained full-time employment. The Oklahoma Office of Workforce Development is continuing to develop processes that accurately track employment that is gained from these events. This program has grown and will continue to be a priority of the State Office. Col. Warren Griffis, director of the Oklahoma National Guard Employment Coordination program said job seekers can find meaningful, reputable employment and become contributors to Oklahoma’s economy, and employers can find high-quality employees with good work ethics and values learned through military experience.

Pennsylvania

JobGateway® was launched in July 2012 to more effectively connect job seekers and employers in Pennsylvania. JobGateway® posts more than 150,000 job openings per day, giving job seekers access to nearly every profession in the commonwealth. Job seekers can create or upload resumes and can choose to make them visible to over 125,000 registered employers. JobGateway® can also notify registered users when jobs are posted that are a potential match for their skills. Employers can easily search the talent pool in JobGateway® and receive detailed information about job seekers. Employers can also create job postings, filter or sort their candidate referrals by education, job type, location, occupation and salary, and connect with candidates for free. All candidate search activities are managed from one location. Since the launch of JobGateway®, the Department of Labor and Industry (L&I) has continued to improve the site with updates approximately every 60 days. These continuous improvements ensure that JobGateway® meets the evolving needs of Pennsylvania’s job creators and our talent pool. They make JobGateway® an unparalleled job-matching system, with resources to assist employers in finding the talent they need while helping to find a job for every Pennsylvanian who wants one. The enhancements made in PY15 focused on improving site functionality and ease of use for both employers and job seekers. During PY15, JobGateway® registered 7,586 new employers to the website.

South Carolina

Addressing Gaps in Business Engagement

The State Workforce Development Board (SWDB) wanted to address the gaps in business engagement in South Carolina. Many being company owners and leaders themselves, board members were cognizant of the underutilization of resources available through SC Works. They also understood the positive ramifications that trickle throughout the state when businesses take full advantage of programs offered. After much planning and discussion with partners, a business engagement strategy was implemented with a goal of engaging 10,000 new employers in PY 2015. Resources were put in place to make local areas successful, including:
The launch of the Customer Relation Management (CRM) Module, allowing staff to document engagement efforts.

- An Employer Database DVD used to develop a target list of employers per area.

SWDB allocated $120,000 in incentives for the initiative with $10,000 reserved for each local area who met their Business Engagement goals for PY 2015. Nine of the 12 LWDA's achieved their goal. The remaining three achieved 70 percent or more, with one of those, Trident, obtaining the most engagements in the state.

Future business engagement efforts will transition from a “quantity” to “quality” focus.

**EvolveSC, Rapid Response, and Incumbent Worker Training**

Funded by SWDB, EvolveSC provided training opportunities for employers to upskill their existing workforce and provided training opportunities for individuals to be hired into positions that require a certification. As a result of this innovative training program 37 employers received $740,869 to train 831 new and incumbent workers.

While the goal of SC Works is to support businesses and supply a workforce for industry, there are times when it is critical that resources be provided to help individuals who have been affected by business layoffs or closings. Early intervention services help workers make informed decisions concerning their future. The Rapid Response team served 130 companies and 7,090 employees.

The Incumbent Worker Training (IWT) program provides funding for training needed in current businesses due to: expansion, new technology, retooling, new services/product lines and new organizational structuring or a part of a layoff aversion strategy. SWDB awarded $720,000 in PY 2015 to provide local IWT training. As a result of the IWT grants 88 employers and 2,000 employees received training.

**Tennessee**

**Incumbent Worker Training Grant**

Homeland LLC is an Information Technology Staffing and Service company with facilities in Linden and Franklin, TN. The company upgraded skills to their current employees at both the Linden and Franklin facilities. These training opportunities were online courses and several obtained nationally recognized certifications after completion of training and exams. Company officials felt that being able to advance the entry level of employees with greater knowledge and skills, allowed them to advance their placement within Homeland, which directly impacts the company’s ability to retain and hire employees. Some of the training courses provided were introduction classes for the Homeland employees that are newer to software programming on up through the more advanced courses for the employees working through a series of courses for advanced technology
and certifications. All training validated fundamental concepts and provided a foundation for a career as well as confidence for success. The IWT grant for Homeland LLC provided training for 8 employees and the final cost of the grant reimbursed to the company was $24,397.74. Homeland LLC knows that in an increasingly competitive IT world, the most direct path to success is knowledge and to prove your knowledge is through certification. These certifications enabled the company to provide the stepping stones for their employees to have a successful and fruitful IT career path.

Utah

Veterans' Initiatives Employer Strategies

In 2010, Governor Herbert and DWS implemented the employer recognition program called the Utah Patriot Partnership (UPP). UPP allows employers to pledge that they will hire qualified veterans for their job openings. In return, they receive a certificate signed by the Governor that can be posted in their place of business, and a star symbol is placed next to their job orders in the labor exchange system at jobs.utah.gov.

From May 2011 to October 2014, 1,170 employers had pledged membership in UPP. In the last Federal Fiscal Year (through October 2015), an additional 395 employers have signed up for the program for a total of 1,545 participating employers to date. More than 43 percent of all participants have posted a job in the last 6 months. Five Hero 2 Hired Job Fairs were conducted this past year in collaboration with the Salt Lake Chamber of Commerce and the Utah Veteran and Military Employment Coalition. Over 300 employers participated in these events. Various Service Areas throughout the rural parts of the State hosted separate Veteran Job Fairs in conjunction with local chambers of commerce and institutions of higher education. This expanded the number of employers by an additional 80 employers. An additional effort to create and enhance veteran employment launched a Veterans Business Partnership Committee coordinating efforts with the Governor’s Office of Economic Development, the US Small Business Administration, the Utah Department of Veteran and Military Affairs, the Utah State Office of Rehabilitation and community veteran groups. This committee works to help veterans start or expand their own business creating employment for themselves and others.

Vermont

Vermont Continues to “Make Vermont Home”

Now in its fifth program year, the “Make Vermont Home” project continues to be a rich source of employment leads and a valuable opportunity to connect with Vermont employers. This cross divisional project between the Workforce Development and Economic & Labor Market Information divisions within the Vermont Department of Labor communicates
daily with Vermont employers to better understand their labor force needs. During this past program year (July 2015 through June 2016), the “Make Vermont Home” initiative successfully completed 4,367 employer contacts which identified 13,061 open positions in the Vermont economy. These identified open positions are recorded and distributed daily to the local Career Resource Centers or America’s Job Centers to help in further placement activities. In addition, monthly compilations of the daily data are produced to assist in understanding broader trends within the Vermont labor market such as identifying the industry with the most openings and the occupational group employers are having the most difficulty recruiting qualified individuals. This program continues to be successful because of its tailored approach to employer outreach. The call list can be adjusted to focus on a particular region or industry in response to changing economic conditions.

Outreach to Agricultural Employers

PY 2015 has seen yet another increase in H-2A visa requests within Vermont. The state has approximately 47 employers, up from 44. These employers placed 90 job orders up from 73, resulting in the certification of just over 700 positions, up from 509 the previous year. Outreach to Agricultural employers in Vermont has increased significantly by expanding the partnership with the Agency of Agriculture to provide overall improved service to the farming community. The Agency of Agriculture, Departments of Health, Fire Safety, Community Development and Labor have all come together with numerous non-profit and advocacy groups (both Farmer organizations and Farm Worker groups) to create and maintain an eight-page document titled “Vermont Farm Worker Wage, Hour and Housing Fact Sheet” in both English and Spanish. The document is intended to be an outreach tool to help raise awareness, for both employers and employees, of Rights and Responsibilities, of both groups, within Vermont law. The Vermont Department of Labor has continued to strengthen relationships with the Consul General of Mexico and other groups through the Vermont Farm Health Taskforce.

155 prevailing practice surveys were sent out to the diversified and expanding crop growers (fruit, berries, vegetables, and apples) to better understand the changes in the agricultural businesses. 3 major growth areas are organic crop production, funding and sales through the creation of Community Supported Agriculture (CSAs) and farmer’s markets, and the production of marketable products from the raw product such as cider from apples and wine from grapes. This diversity and growth changes the employment requirements for some agriculture workers including experience and education level of the employees. These same employers are also surveyed for a total of 570 Prevailing Wage surveys to capture the most accurate picture available for Vermont Agricultural Wages.

“Barn Pitch”

As a Business Engagement activity, the Northeast Kingdom Regional Supervisor attended the 3rd Annual Fresh Tracks Capital Road Pitch event in Lowell, Vermont hosted by NEKTI Consulting. This local event is dubbed the “Barn Pitch”, as it was held in the 150-year-old
barn on the NEKTI Consulting property. The Road Pitch event is a five-day tour of Vermont in which a gang of “business bikers”, comprised of entrepreneurs and business advisors travel around the state stopping in various towns. These sessions allow selected local entrepreneurs to pitch their business concepts.

The ultimate goal of the Road Pitch sessions is to bring advice and possibly investment to businesses around the state in an effort to grow a strong small business economy. Additionally, the entrepreneurs are connected to various resources available to them as current or future small business owners including banks, regional economic development partners and state resources.

The Vermont Department of Labor is an important resource for information on many facets of small business startup. There were five local businesses pitching their products and ideas at the Barn Pitch event in Lowell, which are summarized below.

1. The Hive is a Place to Come Together for All Who Ride. It’s a knowledge & maker space for riders of bikes & boards who want uninhibited learning and community connection. The Hive is a destination for developing creativity with sports & recreational tools, discovering old & new concepts in bike technology, and sharing ideas & information fostering growth in new business markets located near Kingdom Trails, in Burke.

2. Maple Hill Farm Winery is a recent entry into Vermont specialty wines using the maple syrup produced on the Maple Hill Farm. The wine is one of several products made by the WIA/WIOA PY 2015 Annual Report and is expected to join the growing Northeast Kingdom wine and spirits industry. As there is only one other maple wine produced in the state of Vermont, Maple Hill Farm Winery expects to be the leading producer soon.

3. New England Wireless Co (NEWCo) provides affordable high-speed broadband Internet service to underserved remote rural areas of Vermont with high quality customer service. NEWCo plans to double its subscription base with investors who value low-capital expenditures per customer, deploying in areas of rapid growth and liquidity through distribution and sales.

4. Sumptuous Syrups makes premium Farm to bar cocktail syrups in small artisan batches. Sumptuous Syrups is looking to scale up production to meet increasing demand from sustainable mixology movement for cocktails as well as DIY flavoring water and culinary creations.

5. Tara Lynn is a custom women’s wear designer that builds beautiful creations for clients who enjoy experiencing wearing garments made personally for them. Tara Lynn Apparel Manufacturing is considering three opportunities that could scale up production and increase return on investment: wholesale bridal wear, hemp men’s wear and private label design & production.

The Regional Supervisor was able to speak with all the principals of these businesses and provide an overview of VDOL services. This specifically included how the Workforce Development division could assist with training under WIOA or other programs and recruitment. Also, the Regional Supervisor offered to provide connections to UI Employer Services, VOSHA and Worker’s Compensation. Tara Lynn Schreiber of Tara Lynn indicated that she may be looking
to hire one or more employees in the next few months so an onsite follow up visit has been scheduled. This event supports the regional workforce development system and promotes the creation of jobs and small businesses. It allows VDOL to work collaboratively with other state and local workforce development entities and allows services to be provided across the business cycle.

Virginia

VOLVO Facility in Dublin, VA

On December 3, 2015, Virginia’s Dislocated Worker Unit received a WARN notification of a permanent workforce reduction at the VOLVO facility in Dublin, VA that would impact 734 employees. The reduction was based on economic shifts in market demand and was scheduled to begin on February 5, 2016 and continue through February 19, 2016. By the time of the actual workforce reduction occurred in February 2016, the number of employees laid off was reduced to 599 people.

Upon receipt of the notification of economic action, workforce partners (New River/Mt. Rogers Local Workforce Development Area, One Stop Manager, Virginia Employment Commission (VEC), Economic Development, and New River Community College) and local elected officials were advised. The Western Region Rapid Response Coordinator contacted the company and arranged a Management Briefing on December 11, 2015 in which employee benefits, unemployment compensation, dislocated worker services, and an employee briefing timetable were discussed.

A company meeting was followed by a Workforce Resource Fair on January 17, 2016, that was attended by 245 employees and family members. The Workforce Resource Fair included the following agencies: Rapid Response, One Stop/WIOA, VEC, Department of Social Services, Enroll VA, FAMIS, Veteran Services and area Community Colleges. Pulaski County Public Schools provided application forms for free and reduced lunch program with the encouragement that reapplication may be warranted at this transition phase. Other services provided to the Volvo Workers include Dislocated Worker Program Enrollment and Testing Sessions and Marketing Your Skills Workshops. Due to the demographics of this layoff group, all four Workforce Development Board Areas in the Western Rapid Response Region were affected, as well as North Carolina and West Virginia. Meetings were scheduled in various parts of the region to be closer to the employee’s residence. Union leadership made suggestions that included having one point or a centralized site that employees could be directed to for all events and meetings. Taking that suggestion, the Rapid Response Coordinator and New River Community College’s IT department created a webpage dedicated to the Displaced Volvo Workers including a calendar of workshops and recruitment activities.

The CDL program was a newly offered credential program for New River Community College and the instructor was on site to provide flyers for the program and discuss the labor
market needs within the industry. The Transition Survey used to assess the needs and future interests of the employment group showed a significant number with potential interest for the new CDL program. Many of those stated that they saw the CDL option as having the potential for quick reemployment in a demand occupation. A job fair was held in February 2016 with 16 employers in attendance and many community resource partners. The job fair was specific to the Volvo Dislocated Workers, spouses, and those impacted in the Volvo supply chain. Employers attending the job fair were targeted to match the skills of the Volvo employees, thus allowing many to have on-site or scheduled interviews.

Washington

Olympic Consortium Workforce Development Council WorkSource
Bremerton Youth Hiring Event

The Olympic Consortium’s Youth Program, “Pathways to Success,” partnered with the WorkSource Business Team to host the first Youth Hiring Event in Kitsap County. The event was a great success. Over 30 employers participated with youth job seekers. Employers included: Washington State Patrol, Martha and Mary Health and Rehab Center, Kitsap Bank, Central Kitsap School District, Midway Inn, Corner Bakery Café, Goodwill, Lowes, Cares of Washington, and Olympic College. Over 200 youth attended the event. They were enthusiastic about the opportunity to speak to so many employers at one time. Many youth received interviews and job offers on the spot. Both youth and employers commented that it was an “amazing” event and they hope that it will become an annual opportunity.

Evaluation comments on the Hiring Event included: “This helped me learn about more opportunities for my career. I am now interested in pursuing a career with the State Patrol.” “I didn’t think so many youth would attend.” “This was an awesome event.” “I got a Job!!” “This event exceeded our expectations!” “I hope you will continue to hold this event, we really need young people in our industries.”

Business Services in Jefferson County

Port Townsend Paper Corporation (PTP) is one of the largest employers in Jefferson County, offering a living wage job opportunities to community members and beyond. It is critical that they hire the best candidates that the job market can offer, resulting in the valuable partnership with the Jefferson County WorkSource Affiliate Center to achieve this goal. Port Townsend Paper Corporation has partnered with WorkSource to fill their employment needs for many years with wrap-around services from initial hiring to rapid response during tougher economic times. This includes support for recruitment, screening, testing, job placement, work-based training in the form of on-the-job training through the WIA / WIOA Adult and Dislocated Worker programs. In fact, over the past year 12 month period, we filled 19 career positions through OJT or direct hire.
Since August 2014, PTP Corporation referred 295 applicants for KeyTrain as part of their screening process with a focus on passing scores in Listening, Workplace Observation and Teamwork. This has significantly influenced the quality of job candidates entering their career pathway pipeline for skilled trade positions.

**Northwest Workforce Council (NWC) Job-Driven Sector Strategy**

NWC engaged key industry employers to review the design and participate in the delivery of an innovative pre-apprenticeship program, Manufacturing Academy. Manufacturers’ roundtables were convened where employers defined the needed skills of entry-level workers and offered labor market insight on job growth. Manufacturing Academy’s 11-week curriculum, with its mix of technical and soft skills, was deemed a great fit for entry-level positions. Employers hosted plant tours and provided graduates job interviews. The work-based learning equipped participants with employer-valued skills and a solid foundation for those interested in pursuing apprenticeship. The curriculum includes hands-on training in metal fabrication, composites, assembly, blueprint reading, forklift, welding, and intensive math. Graduates earn college credits and certificates including: OSHA-10, forklift, First Aid & CPR, and Lean Manufacturing (Six Sigma–Yellow Belt). Under contract with NWC, the Aerospace Joint Apprenticeship Committee (AJAC), in partnership with local colleges, provided day-long classes with hands-on content to simulate the manufacturing work environment and its standards. The Academy provided pre-apprenticeship training for cohorts of eligible youth (18-24), adults and dislocated workers. In addition to industry credentials and college credit, outcomes include manufacturing employment or entry into registered apprenticeship programs. To date, 38 students completed training and graduated with credentials, 87% entering employment or post-secondary training.

**South Central Workforce Development Council Embarks on New Local Employer Engagement Model**

Forging ahead with full implementation of WIOA, the South Central Workforce Council has rolled out their new employer engagement strategy as part of their local workforce plan. The model employs a full time council staff who manages and oversees the coordination and collaborative efforts of the partners. Board oversight is conducted by the Business, Industry, and Education Committee which consists of council and employer representatives who provide feedback and guidance for continuous improvement of services to employers. The local employer engagement team is comprised of a broad range of entities that include workforce agencies, chambers of commerce, economic development organizations, educational institutions, and community based organizations. The partners have jointly developed a cooperative agreement that identifies roles, responsibilities, processes and methods for how the team will communicate and coordinate activities that meet hiring or training needs of local industry. Accomplishments of the employer engagement team include:
A uniform interview tool for assessing employer workforce needs and skill gaps.
- A new “Menu of Services” that communicates the range of workforce activities and incentives available to employers in an easy and understandable way.
- Organization and support of an employer skill panel who are aiding in the development of plans for incumbent worker training.

To address the gap in connecting postsecondary students to business, the employer engagement team is in the process of launching an “Internship Portal” for the South Central region. When complete the online application will serve as a marketplace for companies to post internship positions and for internship seekers to post resumes. Additionally, the team will outreach and make the application available to secondary and postsecondary institutions to be used as a tool to connect students with internship needs to companies with internship openings.

West Virginia

**Hilton HHonors Program/Operation Opportunity Initiative**

WorkForce West Virginia (WFWV) has a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Hilton Worldwide Inc. in order to assist WV service members, prior service members, and their spouses, gain employment faster and easier. The 13 program consists of a donation of 100,000 reward points to eligible persons who are screened and submitted by WFWV staff. Qualifying activities include a verified job search, registration for a training workshop, registration for job fair, housing searches for employment, job interviews, or training for a new job. Once approved, the points are entered into a HHonors account for purposes pertaining to seeking employment. The value of the points varies by location, but on average, it is equivalent to three nights at any Hilton Worldwide Inc. hotel. Eligible applicants include veterans, active service members, National Guard and Reserve members, and military spouses. During PY15, 38 veterans utilized the program to gain employment, interview, gain training/certification, and gain housing in a new area of employment within the state.

Wisconsin

**Southeast Wisconsin Workforce Development Area #1**

In a true public-private partnership, the Boot Camp program offered by Gateway Technical College, in partnership with SE WDB and Local Economic Development, has renovated the Elkhorn campus to offer the program in Walworth County with donated equipment from Precision Plus. The primary goal of the program is to offer fully funded non-traditional programming for adult learners who require entry level skills to obtain employment. To date, 56 boot
camps have been offered by Gateway in CNC, Industrial Machine Repair (IMR) and Welding/Fabrication. Other industry responsive camps include Medical Receptionist, Telecommunications, Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA) and Logistics. The Boot Camp program has evolved to include high school students seeking career-ready skills, English language learners entering into healthcare, and reached into the prison system to prepare those re-entering the workforce to have a marketable skill for employability. The program continues to develop and evolve to align with the needs identified in industry, workforce agencies, and economic trends. Secondary goals are to provide opportunities for stackable credentialing to increase workforce opportunities to align with governmental initiatives, and a career and educational pathway. In Kenosha and Racine Counties, the Urban League discontinued providing work permits to youth and employers. The SE WDB saw an opportunity to make sure businesses in the area were getting the service they needed to put youth to work and processed just over 4,100 work permits in 2015.

**Workforce Development Area #3: Meeting Employers Needs While Connecting Job Seekers to Employment Opportunities**

The WOW WDB planned and coordinated three premier job fairs within the tri-county area including the Washington/Ozaukee Job Fair, Autumn Recruitment Fair and Spring Job Fair. In PY15, more than 1,900 job seekers made meaningful employment connections with 396 employers from across the region at the events. Job seekers met with company recruiters and hiring managers from in-demand industries including customer service, healthcare, hospitality, IT, logistics, manufacturing, sales and more.

**Workforce Development Area #7: Industry Partnerships**

The Northwest Wisconsin Workforce Investment Board (NWWIB) is continuing to build upon existing and forging new relationships to expand work in a variety of industry sectors, including retail. Despite high unemployment rates in Northwest Wisconsin and an abundance of open retail positions, employers are stating that many vacancies are going unfilled. To address this challenge, the NWWIB launched a pilot training program called Make Your Career in Retail. The training is based on curriculum from the National Retail Federation (NRF) and is designed to increase awareness of and improve skills related to frontline work in a retail environment. During the inaugural training session, 100% of participants succeeded in earning the NRF’s Customer Service and Sales Certificate. Expanded work continued in the agriculture and food systems industry sector through the Outreach and Training Support for American Indian Farmers in Northwest Wisconsin (OATS) project. This project, funded by the Office of Advocacy and Outreach, United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), supported the growth and development of American Indian farmers. The project assisted farmers in enhancing their business practices to allow them to succeed in promoting their business in food markets and by connecting them with USDA programs. OATS was led by the NWWIB with other project partners, including the Land Stewardship Project and Wisconsin Tribal Conservation Advisory Council.
Alabama

Ladarius’ Success Story

Ladarius is a Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) graduate in Registered Nursing from Beville State College. He is employed at Princeton Hospital in the Neuro Intensive Care Department. His salary is $21.00 per hour. When he came to Workforce Development Office for assistance, he was employed at St. Vincent Hospital as a Patient Care Assistant at $11.46 per hour. Ladarius initially approached Jefferson County seeing assistance starting a new career as a Licensed Practical Nurse (LPN). His paperwork arrived too late to complete the assessment for the current semester. He had no other source of funding to cover the cost, so he could not start school that semester. Since he did not meet the initial deadline, he was encouraged to reapply to school and for WIOA assistance. He was also encouraged to apply for the Registered Nursing (RN) program. Ladarius showed determination and persistence. He applied and was accepted into the RN program at Beville State. He maintained his schedule and grades and graduated without a hitch.

JaQuese’s Success Story

JaQuese came to WIOA office requesting assistance for training. She was a divorced, low-income, 22-year-old single parent and looking for a career in the medical field. Employed at Lowe’s, JaQuese was making $8.90 per hour. After an extensive assessment and with the assistance of WIOA funding, JaQuese earned a degree in Registered Nursing from Jefferson State Community College. She is currently working for the University of Alabama at Birmingham as a Registered Nurse and earning a starting wage of $21 per hour. This new wage more than doubled her wage prior to training.

Souleymane’s Success Story

Souleymane was born in Niger in West Africa. Thousands of miles away he decided to enter this country to study. “I love helping and caring for people, and it has been my dream to become a doctor since I was little boy.” Souleymane was admitted to medical school in his home country, but he couldn’t transition his status from Africa. He decided to attend the University of South Alabama and enroll in the Cardiorespiratory Care program. After many long days and hours of study, strenuous clinicals and more studying, he is now a registered respiratory therapist. He received his Bachelors of Science degree in Cardiorespiratory Science. “I am so grateful for the help from Mobile Works. It was really hard for me to work more hours per week and study hard for grades and be successful,” states Souleymane. “I had the peace of mind of not worrying too much about how I am
going to pay for school, which allowed me to focus more on my studies and graduate with more knowledge to serve my community.” Now, Souleymane plans to work locally at Mobile Infirmary Medical Center as a respiratory therapist and someday hopes to get into medical school at the University of South Alabama and fulfill his childhood dream.

Alaska

Clifton’s Success Story

In January of 2009, Clifton began taking classes toward his Culinary Arts Certification with the assistance of the Pell Grant and student loans. In March 2009, he had to face criminal charges, which prevented him from continuing his education. In March of 2014, while a resident of the halfway house, he began working with the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR). DVR assisted Clifton with re-entry job placement and counseling sessions. DVR referred Clifton to the Career Support and Training Services (CSTS) team in August of 2014 to inquire about financial assistance to obtain his Culinary Arts Certification. Obtaining this credential would possibly lead to career advancement and increase hourly wages to assist Clifton in becoming financially self-sufficient. CSTS staff determined he was eligible and suitable for the Adult Program and enrolled him August 11, 2014 to assist with achieving his goal. In May 2016, he obtained his Culinary Arts Certification, allowing him to gain employment with Denny’s Restaurant as kitchen assistant at the hourly rate of $10.00. Shortly after that he was offered full-time employment at Gambardella’s Pasta Bella as a kitchen aide, where he started earning an hourly rate of $12.00. Within 3 months, he was promoted to night shift lead cook earning an hourly rate of $14.00. Clifton exited from the Adult program on May 12, 2016 and is happy at his new job. He appreciates the support he received and thanks the Department of Labor for believing in him and giving him another opportunity.

Rebecca’s Success Story

Having heard about the Adult program from fellow students, Rebecca (Becca) came to the Peninsula Job Center to inquire about Career Support and Training Services (CSTS) in September of 2014. Resource room staff assessed Becca and referred her to CSTS for further assistance. Her goal was to become a Firefighter/Paramedic in the local area. CSTS staff determined Becca eligible and enrolled her in the Adult Program on September 5, 2014 based on her family size and income. Becca had been attending the Paramedic Program at Kenai Peninsula College since August of 2014 and was doing very well in the program but needed assistance with training costs and clinical
requirements that would take her 150 miles one way from her home. She would also need assistance with transportation to a very expensive internship that was required for her to complete her Associate’s in Paramedic Technology. Becca completed her paramedic program in September of 2015 and, of her own accord, went on to completed Firefighter I, a semester-long program that made her more employable as a Firefighter/Paramedic. As a volunteer with the local fire departments, she had logged a slew of hours learning her trade and keeping her ears open for upcoming job openings. Her hard work paid off when she was hired by Central Emergency Services in April of 2016 as a Firefighter/Paramedic. Her starting wage of $22.50 per hour was more than enough to make her self-sufficient. She receives medical and retirement benefits, but, most importantly, attained the non-traditional goal she originally set out to achieve.

Her hard work paid off when she was hired by Central Emergency Services in April of 2016 as a Firefighter/Paramedic. Her starting wage of $22.50 per hour was more than enough to make her self-sufficient.

Arizona

Jessica’s Success Story

Jessica was a veteran and a single mother with two boys. She had been attending Central Arizona College for her pre and co-requisites for the nursing program. She was accepted into the program and was in need of assistance to complete her training and was enrolled in the Adult program in 2014. The program provided assistance with books, transportation, car repair, testing and licensing fees. She graduated from Central Arizona College in December 2015, passed the State of Arizona Registered Nursing exam and became licensed in February 2016. She found employment as a registered nurse with Correctional Corps of America in Florence, earning $34.00 an hour.

Arkansas

Alexis’ Success Story

Life is pretty good now for recent college graduate Alexis. She’s working as a computer programmer for one of Arkansas’ biggest companies, J.B. Hunt, and is mostly debt free with no student loans hanging over her head. She graduated from Arkansas Tech University in the tough Computer Science curriculum with an impressive 3.85 grade-point average. But things weren’t always so rosy. Not long ago, Alexis was struggling to keep up with the cost of tuition and living expenses, working as much as she could at her $7.50-an-hour job at a
After she was accepted as an Adult client in the WIOA program, the financial stress melted away, she was able to reduce her work hours and her GPA reflected that. She had lucrative offers from two major companies more than six months before graduation. “I could get a job so easily because I had higher grades and was able to take time to come interview,” Alexis said. “(WIOA) allowed me to get better grades the last two semesters because I was in tough classes.” Now, her classmates are looking at student-loan debt of $25,000 or more. “I don’t have that burden,” Alexis said. “I can start saving for whatever I want in life right now.”

Alyssa’s Success Story

All the pieces were in place for Alyssa to accomplish her goal of becoming a nurse. Except one. She had long set her sights on becoming a Licensed Practical Nurse (LPN); she had the intellect, earning good marks in her first semester in the associate’s degree nursing program at the UA Community College at Morrilton; and she had the background, having earlier worked as a nurses’ aide. The one thing she lacked was the money to continue. “Things got tough that first semester,” said Alyssa, whose Pell Grant didn’t even cover the cost of her textbooks. She was working as much as she could but earning only $8.25-an-hour at the drug store. Her husband worked fulltime, but staying in school was a losing battle financially. Then a woman in the school’s financial aid office handed her the business card of WIOA Specialist Martha. Alyssa told Martha about her predicament, and Martha got her approved to receive training funding under the WIOA Adult program. That was the missing piece for Alyssa. She cut her work back to weekends, and without the financial strain, her grades climbed even higher. By the time she graduated, she had a nursing job waiting on her where she had worked as a nurses’ aide years earlier, and now earns an hourly wage of $20.50.

“I love nursing,” she said, just as she always expected she would. “Just the financial [assistance] is all we can do [be]cause we can’t study for them,” Martha said. “But just taking that burden away is a big help.”
California

Malena’s Success Story

After being on the verge of homelessness, classes and WIA On-the-Job Training funds help Malena find employment. Malena needed to quickly find a job to support herself and her son. Through a recruitment fair held by the San Bernardino County Workforce Investment Board’s Business Resource Team, she was hired by Patton Sales Corporation.

Before:
- Single mom with a son, laid off and applied for unemployment
- Nearly evicted from her apartment
- Attended recruitment for Patton Sales Corporation hosted by the San Bernardino Workforce Investment Board

After:
- Hired at Patton through WIA’s the On-the-Job Training program
- Two years later, Malena is promoted to sales and trains all new cashiers

Hawaii

Core Partnering to Advance Real-World Training:
Brian’s Success Story

Brian’s ailing, elderly father needed help, so he relocated 2,877 miles from Anchorage, Alaska to Hilo, Hawaii to become his father’s primary caregiver. When Brian arrived he was collecting Unemployment Insurance, Food Stamps and had a limited skill-set. Brian wanted a career that would allow him to support himself and take care of his father. With assistance from his Workforce Development Division case manager and through the WIOA Adult Program, Brian was placed in a six month On-the-Job-Training (OJT) position at the Lokahi Treatment Center as a Peer Support Specialist. Throughout his OJT, Brian had excellent progress reports stating that “He was open to learning, has good communication skills and interacts well with clients.” When his Case Manager suggested Adult Basic Education courses to improve his writing and math skills, Brian knew it would only benefit him and enrolled. The Lokahi Treatment Center recognized his efforts and promoted him to Residential House Manager in May 2016. This meant not only a pay raise, but also room and board as part of his new employment package. Brian continues

2 This material was approved for publication on the Workforce Investment Works campaign website hosted by the National Association of Workforce Boards. The full story may be viewed at www.WorkforceInvestmentWorks.com.
to enjoy his career and working on his own achievements. He arranges intakes, provides 15 supportive counseling and teaches life skills such as budgeting and mediation. With aid from the Department of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) he was able to acquire a computer and printer to continue honing his skills. Brain feels fortunate to have a fulfilling career that grants him flexibility and allows him to be part of others’ success.

A Dream Come True: A Success Story

“My childhood dream was to become a nurse. At the time I was not sure what type of nurse but I knew I wanted to work in the hospital helping people. However, as I approached high school my dreams of becoming a nurse were slipping away. Due to poor financial planning and choices in life my parents were unable to provide me with any guidance or money to pursue my dream. So in my senior year I joined the U.S. Navy. I knew that the military would pay for my education while I served my country. But I was injured while at boot camp and learned that I had Osgood Schlatter disease in my right knee. Although the military was therefore unable to pay for my schooling, I never gave up on my dream. I worked as a Chiropractor Assistant where the doctor encouraged me to return to school, pursue my dream and someday become a great nurse. I then found Oahu WorkLinks, an American Job Center, with the resources to help me achieve my goal. The WIOA Adult Program paid for my tuition and books enabling me to complete my schooling and receive my Associate degree with double honors from Leeward Community College in spring 2014. Subsequently, in May 2016, I received my Bachelor of Science in nursing degree. I’m currently employed with Waianae Coast Comprehensive Health Center and furthering my education to become a Nurse Practitioner with plans to return to the Center as a Registered Nurse. My ultimate goal is to open my own Skilled Nursing Facility on the Leeward Coast that will incorporate native Hawaiian healing techniques, with an emphasis on homeopathic remedies, therapies and other forms of healing while incorporating Western medicine. By becoming a nurse, my commitment to my community is making a difference in people’s lives. I am highly aware that being a nurse is hard work, but am determined to use my knowledge to become a competent, compassionate, loving and skilled geriatric nurse and use my education to the fullest.”

Idaho

Lori’s Success Story

Lori, 32, had seven years’ experience in home care but was working less than 15 hours per week. She needed a Certified Nursed Aide (CNA) certification to work fulltime to earn more and cover child care expenses for her two children. Through WIOA, she enrolled in a new program at College of Western Idaho, allowing her to take her CNA training online and attend a skills class once a week. After the successfully completing the training and obtaining her certification, she was placed in a WIOA funded internship at Cascade
Medical Clinic. After three weeks on the internship, a CNA opening became available at the clinic. They were so pleased with Lori’s hard work and attention to detail, they hired her full time without completing the internship! She now has close to a year under her belt with the clinic and is thrilled with her job and the benefits it offers.

Iowa

James’ Success Story

James, 33, is a convicted felon without a driver’s license. Enrolled in the adult program, his goal was employment. James had a great support system from his mother and girlfriend who were able to provide transportation to and from campus for him to attend class. With assistance from Title I services, he attended Northeast Iowa Community College (NICC) for the Electrician Diploma program. He graduated August of 2016 and is employed as an electrician.

Margaret’s Success Story

Margaret was a 40-year-old single mom of three who enrolled with WIOA in the Adult program. She moved to the United States from Sudan and at first had an English barrier. She took the ESL classes offered at the Workforce Center and learned to speak English well but had difficulty comprehending what she was reading. Because of this she had great difficulty in securing employment after losing her production job in 2012 and for 3 years went from interview to interview with no success. This caused a massive financial hardship on Margaret and she wasn’t sure how she was going to be able to provide for her family much longer. She knew that the key to building a lasting career was to improve her skill set and that’s when she came to WIOA for help. Margaret had always wanted to work in the medical field and with the assistance available through WIOA she realized this dream could become a reality. In February 2016, Margaret began taking CNA classes at Signature Health Care in Waukee. She loved the classes she was taking and the knowledge she was gaining, but was very afraid that she would not be able to pass the final certification exam due to her reading comprehension issues. Disclosing this to her Employability Services Specialist (ESS) was an anxious experience for her, but she knew she had to be proactive in dealing with this challenge. Her ESS helped her explore her options and discovered that she could be allowed to have an interpreter available for the written portion of the exam if she took the test in Marshalltown. WIOA was able to arrange for her transportation to Marshalltown and made an appointment with the interpreter to help Margaret meet her goal. This came as a great relief to her and she ended up passing the exam and receiving her certification. She went on to successfully pass the skills portion of the exam and secure full-time employment at Mercy Urgent Care in Ankeny as a CNA making $14.86 per hour to start. It is Margaret’s hope to continue on in her education and eventually become a registered nurse.
Margaret had always wanted to work in the medical field and with the assistance available through WIOA she realized this dream could become a reality.

Jodie’s Success Story

The Challenge: Jodie was a single mother on Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits looking for assistance in completing her Registered Nurse/ Bachelor of Science in Nursing (RN/BSN) degree when she came to the Workforce Center (WFC). She was working three part-time jobs trying to make ends meet and had to travel from out of town to attend training and work. Jodie qualified for financial aid, but her award level left her with a significant level of costs to cover.

The WFC Solution: Both the WIOA Adult program and the Kansas Health Professions Opportunity Project (KHPOP) worked collaboratively to assist Jodie with funds for her training and employment goals. She received financial assistance for training costs and ongoing case management from her Employment & Training Specialist (ETS). The ETS monitored her progress in classes and provided job search assistance counseling as Jodie approached program completion.

The Outcome: Jodie obtained her RN license and her BSN in May 2016 and immediately started work as an RN with strong starting wages and a retirement plan. Jodie said she was very grateful for the assistance she received from Heartland Works, Inc. (HWI). She said it really helped to take the financial burden off of her while aiding in her success. Jodie said of her ETS – “I’ve been so thankful for the assistance of Heartland Works, but especially for your assistance. You are very easy to work with and seem to truly care about the people you are helping.” (p. 14)

Gabriella’s Success Story

Gabriella is a single mom with 3 children. She was working as a CNA with Our Lady of Lourdes while attending Delta College of Arts & Technology in the nursing program. She was doing extremely well in all of her coursework and came to the Lafayette Business & Career Solutions Center for possible assistance with tuition. Meeting lower living standard guidelines, she applied and was approved for a scholarship. We then helped with tuition costs for her LPN training.
Gabriella went on to graduate, take and pass the NCLEX, and is now working as an LPN with the Iberia Parish School Board earning $15.00 per hour. Even though she enjoys her work, she has high aspirations for herself. She plans to continue her education and go on to become an RN, and then a BSN. Even though Gabriella is 28, she says that she is determined to advance her career and accomplish all of her career goals by the age of 36. She is glad that we were able to assist in the process.

Maryland

Jasmine's Success Story

Workforce Challenge: After serving four years for committing a theft that triggered a violation on a former assault and battery conviction, Jasmine exited prison with the desire to work and improve her life.

Workforce Solution: While in prison, Jasmine had been told about the services and programs available at the American Job Centers (AJCs). Determined to change her life, Jasmine entered a Baltimore City AJC with renewed hope. Staff assisted her with upgrading her résumé and also referred her to the Women Behind the Community (WO-BE-CO) for clothing assistance—both for interviewing purposes and for her eventual job. Jasmine actively worked with staff and attended workshops and weekly Job Clubs offered. Recognizing Jasmine’s interest in the culinary arts, the AJC Career Development Facilitator referred Jasmine to the “Next Course” Food Service Training offered by St. Vincent de Paul in Baltimore, Maryland. “Next Course” offers a 17-week program and an opportunity to obtain ServSafe Food Handlers Certification and the ServSafe Manager’s Certification. She was accepted into the program and gained hands-on experience with the St. Vincent’s KidzTable, a production kitchen providing over 11,000 quality meals to head start programs, daycares, shelters, and after-school programs throughout Baltimore.

Workforce Outcome: Jasmine was accepted into the training program. She also attended the AJC’s recruitment for Hospitality Staff and secured a part-time position in food service for 20 hours per week at $8.75 per hour. Her training prepared her for her job, and WO-BE-CO provided appropriate clothes for her interview and two uniforms for work. Jasmine has achieved her goal of “securing stability with employment and adding plenty of certifications under my belt to make me more employable.”
Michigan

Kimberly’s Success Story

Kimberly was attending Ferris State University to receive her Associate of Applied Science (AAS) in Respiratory Care. During her last year of school, Kimberly came to Michigan Works! seeking tuition assistance. While she did have a full-time bartending job, the costs of tuition, fees, transportation, and lodging during clinicals was more than Kimberly could afford. She was worried she would have to drop out of school. Since Kimberly was working towards a degree in an in-demand occupation, Michigan Works! was able to help her pay for her tuition, books, and fees needed to obtain her degree, as well as help pay for mileage, uniforms, hotel stays while at clinicals, and her Certified Respiratory Therapist exam fee. With the financial aid Michigan Works! was able to provide, Kimberly was able to finish her degree. She passed her exams and gained employment at St. Mary’s making $17.10 per hour as a Respiratory Therapist.

“I was going to have to drop out of school because my clinical schedule was very demanding. I couldn’t juggle work and school. Michigan Works! made it possible to manage both. With the financial support they provided me, I was able to work, do my clinical rotation and finally graduate. They have gone above and beyond to help me achieve my goal and now I am employed in my field of study. I am very grateful and I couldn’t have done it without them.” says Kimberly.

Minnesota

Ndi’s Success Story

“What a wonderful blessing it has been for me and my family to be able to gets this training so that I can support my family. On September 24, 2014 I came to America from Cameroon, Africa with my wife and three children, seeking safety and a better life for my family. When I arrived I was reunited with my Cameroon community and that is where I heard about Angela and the Washington County Workforce Center, and that she might be able to help me with tuition costs to further my education. Angela assessed my previous work experience and interest, which lead to me attending Century College to get my Class A CDL training. In January of 2015 I started working with Denise and Velvet at Century College to get enrolled. I am really grateful to Nick, an Instructor at Century, who didn't give up on me when I kept on having trouble backing up my 53 foot rig. Right after passing my Class A CDL license, I started working for Meister Transportation, which brought me to Illinois, Missouri, Kansas, North Dakota and Indiana. A year later I still continue to make runs for Meister Transportation and I also work for Our House of Minnesota. I am
Brooke’s Success Story

“When I came to Rural Minnesota CEP, Inc. (RMCEP) I was looking for the right job. My previous employment was in production but I have 5 years’ experience in office related positions. I knew what I wanted and just needed a little help. I knew my capabilities and was not just going to settle for any job. The staff at RMCEP enrolled me into the WIOA Adult program and helped me become career ready, create a good resume, obtain a Gold level National Career Readiness Certificate (NCRC), and assisted me with some specific Microsoft Office 2013 training and as well as work training experiences. The staff at RMCEP were absolutely amazing. Nicole could not have been more supportive to me. She understood me and what I was looking for and needed. I am currently working as an administrative assistant and absolutely love what I am doing. I would highly recommend the MN Workforce Center and RMCEP. They will not let you down; they will help you in every way.”

Mississippi

Carlos’ Success Story

Carlos lost his welding job after being employed for only two years. He was a single father of three and only had a high school diploma. He had worked numerous jobs over the past six years, but needed full-time permanent employment that would support his family. Carlos went to the Clarksdale WIN Job Center to apply for a job at MAP of Easton. He was hired as a Molder Machine Operator Trainee on December 7, 2015. As an untrained worked in this field, Carlos qualified and was enrolled in the On-the-Job Training (OJT) program where he was granted 600 training hours. The future looks bright for Carlos. He is providing for his family by working full-time at MAP of Easton. Kern’s work ethic, initiative, and quality of work have impressed his employers, and they plan to hire him as a permanent employee when the OJT ends.

Matt’s Success Story

Matt’s last two jobs, driving a dump truck hauling materials and driving a log truck hauling logs, were seasonal work and subject to the weather. He needed a more stable income and preferred employment that would allow him to work close to his home. Matt decided to pursue employment with Mississippi Silicon and learned that in order to apply with the company, he had to pass the Career Readiness Certification test and the Job Pass test. He went to his local WIN Job Center for assistance where he enrolled in the WIOA program. He successfully earned the required scores on both tests and completed the company’s application process. In December 2015, he was hired as a furnace operator with Mississippi Silicon. Matt’s beginning hourly wage is $17.00 per hour and his commute to work is only fifteen minutes. As a result of his efforts and assistance from the WIN Job Center staff, Matt has achieved his goal of earning a good living close to home.
Montana

Deleen’s Success Story

Deleen was working as a home health Personal Care Assistance (PCA) and wanted to advance her career to earn a sustainable wage. She was identified as a client with a Help-Link survey. An appointment was scheduled to go over the survey and assist her with a career path. She enjoyed working with individuals and wanted to work full time with an employer who would offer more hours and benefits. After reviewing the local labor market and reviewing her assessments the plan was created to obtain her CNA license. Deleen was co-enrolled into Help-Link and Adult. She currently is in the final days of the class and will have employment upon completion of the CNA license.

Amanda’s Success Story

Amanda is a single mother of two children. She came to office seeking financial assistance for skills upgrade. She completed her HelpLink Survey in office and eligibility for WIOA Adult and HelpLink Adult fund sources was established. Staff assisted with her short and long term employment goals. At time of enrollment she was employed as a Personal Care Attendant (PCA). The initial goal was attain a CNA certification which she received in June 2016. Her next goal is to attend Phlebotomy training in Missoula this fall and with her long term goal being a Registered Nurse. After she completed her CNA training in Polson, she received a $1/hour raise. Amanda also stated that for the first time since becoming a mother she felt that she is becoming a role model for her two children and expressed her gratitude for this opportunity.

North Carolina

Ruby’s Success Story

Ruby came to the NCWorks Career Center in Columbus County as a dislocated worker, laid off from her employer of 10 years. She had applied for several jobs but realized that she lacked transferable job skills. Passionate about employment and wanting to make a difference, Ruby decided to return to school to pursue a nursing career. After meeting eligibility requirements and guidelines for the dislocated workers program, she enrolled in the Associate Degree Nursing (ADN) program at Southeastern Community College in the fall of 2012. While she was attending school, her youngest son was diagnosed with a learning disability. As a result, she lost focus of her studies and had to withdraw from her program in spring 2013 after she failed to maintain a 2.0 GPA. During this time, Ruby received guidance and counseling from her instructors and staff at the career center. Determined not to give up on her dreams, Ruby enrolled in the Practical Nursing Program.
She completed the program in December 2013 and successfully passed her state exams. In March 2014, she returned to the nursing program with continued support from the WIA program. She developed a study plan and met with tutors, who ensured that she would accomplish her goals. In May 2015, Ruby graduated with honors and a 3.2 GPA. She is now a registered nurse. Ruby is currently employed as a licensed practical nurse at Columbus Regional Healthcare System in the medical surgical department. She successfully completed the ADN Program, graduating on May 8 with honors. She is scheduled to soon take the state nursing exam. Upon successfully completing the state board exam, she will be promoted to a registered nurse in the same department. Her job tasks vary daily. Typically, as a nurse in the medical surgical department, she provides care for all adult patients before and after medical procedures. She is truly impacting lives and giving back to her community and can now devote more time to her sons and her family.

Ohio

A Dream Delayed but not Denied: William’s Success Story

William came to OhioMeansJobs Stark County in January 2015 to inquire about a WIOA training scholarship to attend the Akron Testing Laboratory and Welding School. He said he had been exposed to the welding field since his youth, and it "marveled" him. However, he had been convicted of aggravated robbery at age 20 and served six years in prison.

William obtained his GED while in prison. After his release, he worked temporary jobs until he attended barber school in 2009. He worked as a barber until 2014 but could not achieve self-sufficiency. He got by for a while by doing odd jobs and bartering his barbering skills for a couch to sleep on.

As part of the WIOA scholarship application process, William was asked why he should be selected to receive the scholarship, and this was his response: "If given the opportunity, I would like to be one of the many success stories of the WIOA Scholarship Program, and an example to those who are as less fortunate as I am, [to show] that this program really works. Let me be the one to show others that it is possible to achieve. I want better. I am tired of being poor. I am tired of asking can I sleep on a friend’s couch because I have no other place to go. I am tired of being a burden. I want to stand on my own two feet with no help. I want to give back to those who helped me when I needed help. Help me make that possible. Help me make that possible. They say if you give a man a fish, you’ll only feed him for a day, but if you teach a man how to fish, you’ll feed him for a lifetime. I don’t just want this scholarship. I need this scholarship. It would change my life tremendously. That’s why I feel I should be awarded this scholarship."

William was approved for a WIOA scholarship to attend the 18-week welding program at Akron Testing Laboratory and Welding School. He was emotionally overwhelmed with
gratitude when he heard this news. “It was genuine because the doors had been shut on him for so long that he felt that he would never have a chance to succeed,” said a WIOA program specialist who helped him. “He had lost faith, and we gave it back to him,” she added.

Near the end of training, William was in an auto accident that kept him from completing the program on time due to transportation issues. However, the school was willing to work with him, and he completed the program five weeks later, earning welding certificates – including Section IX ASME Boiler and Pressure Vessel Code and 6G Pipe Performance – for all positions. The school declared him one of their best welding students, possibly because of the dexterity and precision skills he had developed as a barber, and recommended him for the Cleveland Boilermaker Union’s Registered Apprenticeship program.

Now 36, William is in the Cleveland Boilermaker Union, is completely self-sufficient, and works at a natural gas facility in Carrollton, Ohio, where he earns $26.16 an hour.

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Tennessee

Christa’s Success Story

Nashville Career Advancement Center (NCAC)’s workshops, networking events and career coaching provide job seekers with the tools needed to excel in their job search. These resources helped Christa find gainful employment and learn more about herself in the process. Christa came to NCAC unsure of what career to pursue. She had worked with her Career Coach to develop an action plan that would work best for her and her goals. Christa began attending various workshops and taking assessments of her skills. Following the plan that she and her Coach developed, Christa found employment in the healthcare industry. Not only has Christa utilized the skills she had learned from the American Job Center and her Career Coach to gain employment, she has also put them to use in her community. Christa took the lessons she had learned and has applied them to volunteering. She has created panels and workshops around the topic of volunteering to educate her community and get them more involved as volunteers.
Michelle’s Success Story

Michelle is a former hairstylist. She is a single mother and was struggling to support her family. She had a goal of self-sufficiency in an in demand occupation when she sought a WIOA scholarship. Michelle completed her prerequisites and began Surgical Technologist training through Tennessee College of Applied Technology (TCAT) Hohenwald in January of 2015 with a WIOA Scholarship. Michelle also received mileage support in order to offset the cost of traveling to TCAT Hohenwald. She excelled in her course and passed her Certified Surgical Technologist exam on 12/08/2015. Michelle accepted a position with Saint Thomas Midtown Hospital as a surgical technologist on 01/11/2016. She is working full time making $16.35 an hour. She enjoys her position and is grateful for the opportunity the American Job Center provided her to find a career she loves.

Vermont

A Success Story

A young woman who came into the Springfield, Vermont American Job Center to explore career assistance and training options. She had an idea that she would like to become a pharmacy technician but needed information about obtaining the training. The client received assistance applying for a non-degree grant and was enrolled and completed courses through the WIOA adult Occupational Skills service line and River Valley Community College’s Ed2go course for Certified Pharmacy Technician. The WIOA case manager contacted a local pharmacy to discuss On-the-Job Training. After interviewing the client and reviewing the course description, the pharmacy decided that they would offer part-time, non-subsidized employment while she was pursuing her certification. She has since completed her course work and is preparing for her National Certification exam. She will be working full time upon receiving her certification.

Virgin Islands

Saida’s Success Story

Saida, who recently relocated from St. Croix, came into the Job Center on St. Thomas seeking employment. She had been a customer of the Job Center on St. Croix and was familiar with some of the services provided. She was however, new to the Virgin Islands Electronic Workforce System (VIEWS). The Customer Service Representative provided a demo of VIEWS and highlighted the features that she could utilize to help with her job search activities. Saida and the Customer Service Representatives spent some time reviewing positions she might qualify for based on her experience and skills. She expressed some interest in a food service worker position opened at a Restaurant she and the Customer Service Representative
agreed might be a fit for her. The referral was made and Saida was asked to go to the employer immediately to fill an application on site. The employer was in walking distance from the Job Center, but just relocating to the island and not too familiar with the area, Saida was apprehensive about finding the employer. The Customer Representative then walked with Saida to the employer and assisted her with filling out the application. Saida began work the next month and is still employed.

**Chorester’s Success Story**

Chorester came into the Job Center after being terminated from her position as a Teacher’s Aide. Ms. Harris was a little distraught because the termination was unexpected and she was very concerned about finding another job. She expressed her concerns to the customer service representative and was assured that with her help she would get her back to work by the end of the month. Meanwhile, she filed a claim for Unemployment Insurance benefits. The Customer Representative noted that most of her work experience was as a cashier referred her to a local retail store to fill a cashier position that was open with the business. Chorester was offered an opportunity to interview for the position in a couple of days. The Customer Service Representative shared some interviewing tips and information on positive attitudes in the work place to help her prepare for the interview. Chorester interviewed as scheduled, was hired and began work the following week.

**A Success Story**

“Education is costly; price is usually one of the main factors that hinder people from furthering their education. Fortunately, there are government funded programs that can assist in covering tuition expenses. The Virgin Islands Department of Labor is one the local Institutions that offer tuition assistance. The Virgin Islands Department of Labor has a well-organized team that meets the challenges of the 21st century and ensures the success of the territory in a global economy by pooling resources to produce a work ready labor force that is dynamic, career driven, adaptable, literate and can meet the demand driven work environment. I was afforded the opportunity to pursue a rewarding career in the Hemodialysis Technician Program. I successfully completed the course, passed the national exam and am now employed as a Certified Clinical Hemodialysis Technician at the Schneider Regional Medical Center. As a Certified Hemodialysis Technician, my duties include but are not limited to: assembling the machine and ensuring that it is sterile, initiating and terminating treatment, recording patients’ vitals, and monitoring and adjusting fluid removal. The program has greatly impacted my life. As a single mother, this program has allowed me to remove financial barriers. I am now self-supporting and enjoy an affordable lifestyle. My skills have immensely improved, and I am able to work independently. I would like to take this opportunity to thank the team at Department of Labor for giving me the opportunity of having a rewarding career as a certified Clinical Dialysis Technician. There is no hassle with the application process and it is available to the general public once you are deemed eligible. I am contented with my career of choice, and my intention is to continue to grow and excel.”
Virginia

Lisha’s Success Story

Lisha frequently came into the South Hill, VA Workforce Center to support and assist her husband in his job search. Over time case managers were able to get her to admit that it was time for her to do something for herself. She had been a housewife and mother of two children for many years. She spent many hours as a caregiver to multiple family members over the years. In her heart she longed to be a Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA). Within several weeks of coming into the Workforce Center, Lisha made the decision to enroll in the CNA program at Southside Virginia Community College. She continued to stop by the Workforce Center several times per week to express her excitement about being enrolled. Williams fell deeper in love with her career choice during her clinical. Upon completion of the CNA program, which included her passing the Virginia State Boards, Williams immediately obtained fulltime employment as a CNA at a local retirement home. When her follow-up contacts were performed, the employer praised Lisha’s work ethic and love for others. The employer stated they were proud to say she was an employee. She feels accomplished and successful because she not only obtained her credential, but she has a job that she loves and where she feels appreciated.

West Virginia

A Single Mom’s Success Story

A single mom who was always stuck in entry level jobs in the cleaning industry. She was referred to WIOA by a friend to get help with revamping her resume. The WIOA Career Coach was able to blend her previous experience, along with her aspirations to do accounting, into a perfect OJT. The Employment Specialist referred the customer to a company that was in desperate need of just that type of help. The employer interviewed the customer and it was a perfect match. She was hired as the Office Manager in December 2015. While on the job, she obtained both bookkeeping and Quickbooks certifications through BRCTC and loves her job!

The WIOA Career Coach was able to blend her previous experience, along with her aspirations to do accounting, into a perfect OJT. The Employment Specialist referred the customer to a company that was in desperate need of just that type of help.
Wisconsin

Jessica’s Success Story

After working in the customer service industry for over four years, Jessica made the decision to prepare for a career in the healthcare industry. Becoming a nurse was Jessica’s dream job, especially after several family members were diagnosed with cancer. She knew firsthand the compassion, dedication and hard work that would be required for this new occupation. Jessica started her career path by attending a WIA information session at the Marathon County Job Center. There she met with a Career Services Specialist who provided assistance with researching LMI, refining her training goals, and developing her employment plan. Together, they also developed a plan to address her stress during the challenging training program, and her employment barriers related to childcare. As Jessica reached graduation and began studying for the nursing exams, the Career Services Specialist also assisted with reviewing her resume and practicing with common interview questions. Jessica is now gainfully employed as a nurse in a local hospital, preparing for classes for her Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN), while also providing for her three children. In Jessica’s own words, “I would be honored to be one of those nurses and be able to be there for my patients, both physically and emotionally.

I’m still so grateful for the [WIA] program. I couldn’t have done it without [the WIA program]! I love how [my Career Services Specialist] has always been there for me too, and think it’s great that [she] is still checking-up on me. The extra support means a lot!”

Wyoming

Dustin’s Success Story

Dustin was released from prison on August 14, 2013. Prior to his release, he had been in and out of prison for his whole adult life. Since his release, he successfully met his treatment, probation and rehabilitation requirements dictated by the state. Unfortunately, his criminal record prevented Dustin from being able to find work with a self-sustainable wage and a working environment that supported his personal and job skills growth. After meeting Dustin, his case manager, Jamie, at the Sheridan Workforce Center, could immediately tell he needed workplace and professional guidance because of his questions related to today’s workplace. He was unsure of what he would be good at and what a healthy working environment looked like. So, Dustin and Jamie first started working on career assessments and identified an interest in Heating Ventilation and Air Conditioning (HVAC) installation. Because of his need for income to support himself, they decided to
look into on-the-job (OJT) options. Jason, owner of Total Comfort Heating and Air Conditioning was interested in providing an OJT opportunity for Dustin, in order for him to become skilled in the trade and to make a positive contribution to the Sheridan community. DWS and WIA has been beneficial in helping employers, like Jason, to defray the cost of training new workers, and in supplying workers for positions that otherwise would be difficult to fill. As Dustin’s case manager, Jamie assisted him by providing WIA financial support for his tools needed to do the job, reimbursing 29 percent of his wages for almost six months of the HVAC training process, and car repairs in order for Dustin to get to work every day. Jamie maintained monthly contact with him to make sure he was doing well and to answer any questions he may have. Dustin communicated that not only did he enjoy his job, but he was in a supportive working environment that made him feel like part of a team. Dustin finished his WIA participation in February 2015, but continues his employment at Total Comfort Heating and Air Conditioning, and is thriving.

Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI)

Marie’s Success Story

“Hafa Adai! My name is Marie. I was born and raised on Saipan. On May 2003, I graduated from Kagman High School. A few days later I moved to Tomball, Texas to further my education. In 2008, I became a mother. Although, I was a single mother, I was determined to receive my diploma. It took a lot of determination and reminder that I needed some sort of degree or certification to be able to succeed in life. In 2014, I moved back to Saipan to be with my father. It took a lot of courage to leave my second home. Although life here in Saipan is not the same as the life I had in Texas, I at least achieved another goal in life. My father mentioned a program that the Workforce Investment Agency was offering. I enrolled under the Medical Billing and Coding Specialist program. After 80 hours of lecture about Anatomy and Coding, I passed the National Health Career Association Certification Test as a Medical Billing and Coding Specialist. On June 13, 2016 I was hired at Kagman Community Health Center as their Medical Billing and Coding Specialist. I am honored to be working at KCHC. There’s no easy way out of life. I was hopeful that I will one day find the career I wanted. My parents have always told me being “patient” is important in life. One day I will look back and be proud that I didn’t give up in my education. Never give up on your education. Never say it’s not possible.”

Vanessa’s Success Story

“I am grateful for the 6 months training that I had from WIA. It has given me the opportunity to better enhance my career. To be honest going through the process was scary for me because it was my first time to go out and look for a job, so I had to try my luck by going to WIA for their help. The staffs at WIA are friendly and helpful, so once again I would like to thank the WIA staff for all their help. Without the 6 months training from WIA I wouldn’t be where I am now an office clerk at SHEFA.”
Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act

YOUTH SUCCESS STORIES
Brittany’s Success Story

Brittany is a youth who came to Jefferson County Workforce Development seeking to earn her Patient Care Technician (PCT) certification and gain employment in the medical field. Lacking the needed occupational skills that were in demand in the local labor market, she was referred to The Dannon Project. During the course of her training, two of her relatives were killed in separate fatal car accidents. Brittany wanted to give up training as it was difficult losing two family members in such a short amount of time. With some counseling and encouragement from the workforce development staff and The Dannon Project, Brittany completed her certification January 22, 2016. She gained employment at Kentucky Fried Chicken to support herself while she secured a job in her field. Then on February 2, 2016, Brittany attended a job fair at the Birmingham Career Center and interviewed with Southern Hospitality. She was hired on the spot and began working as a PCT three days later. She is now well on her way to a career in the medical field.

Janaye’s Success Story

Janaye, a Mobile Works youth participant and recent GED graduate, was recently selected as a recipient for the Pete Turnham GED Merit Scholarship by the Alabama Association for Public and Continuing Adult Education (ALAPCAE). The scholarship award is $500 to pay for tuition and/ or books at the college of the recipient’s choice. Janaye is enrolled in Certified Nursing Assistant training and will begin on July 11, 2016. She will continue her education this fall at Bishop State Community College. She traveled to Birmingham, Alabama in June to receive her scholarship at the ALAPCAE Awards Luncheon. Below is her scholarship submission expressing both her financial need and her educational plan.

“Financially, I have endured tremendously over the past few years. After abruptly leaving high school to become my mother’s caretaker, I struggled several years to find ways to provide for my family. I finally decided to enroll in the GED program at the Dearborn YMCA!’s Pathway to Employment Program (a Mobile Works WIOA supported program). I have struggled to care for my mother who was diagnosed with clinical depression as well as my daughter who was born two years ago. The cost of living and trying to improve myself has been very challenging. I have enrolled in a Certified Nurse’s Assistant program at Bishop State Community College to make a better life for myself and to give my daughter a reason to look up to me. I am constantly spending money to provide for my family, which makes it difficult to save for school. Any additional help makes things go more smoothly for me. I know that the road ahead will have more challenges, but I believe that I will be able to reach my goals with the help of scholarships and financial aid. I chose the field of nursing because I am a lover of people. I naturally have the heart of a caretaker. I have always wanted to nurture people and save lives, even as a little girl. Helping to make people feel better comes naturally for me/ I have already enrolled in a Certified Nurse’s Assistant program and after graduating with my associates from Bishop State, I hope to continue working towards my goal of becoming a registered
nurse in the next few years. I would love to eventually become a traveling nurse and help people all over the country. My dreams are becoming true right before my eyes and this is just the first step.”

**JoMorris’ Success Story**

JoMorris lived in a rural area of Clarke County with a lack of work history and was also a food stamp recipient. He was certified eligible for WIOA services by the Jackson Career Center and met the requirements for the Work-Based Learning (WBL) Program. JoMorris had taken some night welding courses at Alabama Southern Community College but was not interested in enrolling full time. His goal was to gain employment in the welding field. Jackson Metalworks, Inc., a metal machine shop in Jackson, AL was contacted about participating in the Work-Based Learning Program since the company was familiar with the On-the-Job Training (OJT) Programs. They interviewed JoMorris and offered him an internship in the position of a Machine Shop Attendant. If he showed interest, dependability, and a good work ethic, they would then offer him an OJT in the position of a Welder. The work-based learning internship began in mid-November 2015. In January 2016, JoMorris successfully completed the WBL internship, and an OJT contract was signed for JoMorris to be trained as a Welder with comparable pay. He said, “I got the Job! I just wanted to call and say thank you so much for giving me this opportunity.” Now JoMorris through the OJT program will be trained as a Welder with comparable pay.

**Alaska**

**Katrina’s Success Story**

Katrina was a low-income individual who required additional assistance to enter or complete an educational program and to secure employment. She had taken and enjoyed several welding classes while in high school and desired to enroll in a Welding Non-destructive Testing Program. With the assistance of her Youth Program Career Planner, Katrina was guided to Vigor Industrial Inc., a shipbuilding organization with 11 large shipyards in the Northwest. Vigor is supportive of training young talent as welders and hired Katrina to work as welder/laborer at their Seward shipyard. To do this Katrina would need to relocate to Seward and was co-enrolled with the Adult program to assist with the transition. She was provided support services of transportation to Seward and housing and food for the first two months through the Adult program. The Youth program assisted with purchasing welding safety gear such as steel toe boots, welding jacket, and gloves; helped her obtain her driver’s license, and assisted with math tutoring. Katrina has now been employed nearly one year. She has received additional in-house training and obtained additional welding certifications through Vigor and continues to grow and develop her welding and employment skills experience.
English as a Second Language Doesn’t Have to be a Barrier:
Peleiupu’s Success Story

Peleiupu sought services from Nine Star Enterprises in October 2014. She was 21-years-old, had never worked before and was in need of employment assistance. Nine Star staff arranged a paid work experience at a local Subway Restaurant to help develop her employment skill sets. The work experience was key in getting her hired as her English skills were still lacking after recently moving from America Samoa. In spite of her developing English skills, she excelled in her position at Subway and after a year and a half, become a candidate for the assistant manager position. Subway assistant managers are expected to drive to the district office daily for errands, and unfortunately Peleiupu did not possess a driver’s license, which disqualified her from applying for the position. The WIOA Youth program made drivers training available to her and she successfully earned her driver’s license in August 2016. Once she obtained her driver’s license, she was promoted to an assistant manager position. The combination of WIOA Youth Services and the participant’s motivation to succeed resulted her being firmly placed on a path to sustained employment and independence.

Arizona

Max’s Success Story

Max, an out-of-school youth who heard about programs through one of our community presentations was looking at training opportunities. After an initial assessment and WIOA Career and Individualized Career Services, he became interested in Pharmacy Technician training. He attended a WIOA Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL) approved training program in Tucson, Arizona, and the WIOA program was able to provide transportation to and from training. Max completed his training, received his certificate and was certified through the Pharmacy Technician Certification Board. He is currently working in his related field.

Arkansas

Dominick’s Success Story

One short conversation proved to be a turning point for Dominick. The Crossett High School graduate had found some direction and discipline in his life after three summers in the WIOA Youth program. One of three children of a single mother whose fast-food income and SNAP benefits barely kept the family at subsistence level, Dominick had already come a long way, raising his grades to qualify for the A-B Honor Roll and the leadership organization DECA. Still, he had no definite plans other than finding what would inevitably be a low-paying job.
“But, we had a talk,” said Dominick’s case manager, Laura, who emphasized to Dominick the urgency of continuing his schooling right then, before the weight of children and adult responsibilities interfered. Dominick also had a talk with other close family friends who are welders. “It’s like a family tradition,” said Dominick. He decided to apply for the program at UAMC and was accepted. Dominick did find a job and works a full schedule at KFC while attending school. But he also found a future, thanks to a persistent and conscientious case manager. “I’m glad we had that talk,” Laura said. So is Dominick.

“I always said I wanted to go (for post-secondary training), but the only influence I had to go was that program (summer youth WIOA program). I’m glad—just to know the feeling that somebody cared.”

Holy’s Success Story

Former WIOA Youth program participant Holy is considered a whiz kid at her job as a drafter for GW Communications. The Paragould Company plots out computer maps of telecommunications transmission lines and infrastructure for AT&T engineers. “She is amazing,” Holly’s supervisor, Danyell exclaimed. “She went into a job she had no experience in that is very difficult to learn, and she picked it right up. I would say right now she is the best drafter on our (2nd shift) team.” Less than three months on the job, Holly was singled out, along with a drafter on the day crew, for additional training at the company’s headquarters in Texas. Conceivably, that could lead to a leadership role in the company down the road. It’s been a rapid ascension for a 22-year-old without a college degree. Holly’s above-average competency on computers and an intuitive understanding of digital applications and software became abundantly clear during her WIOA work experience assignment at the Paragould Workforce Center. That is what led a member of the Employment Assistance staff to recommend she apply for the job—that, along with her out-sized work ethic and positive disposition. “I just want to show people that I can be better than what I came from,” said Holly. “I want people to think of me as being independent and motivated.” By all accounts, she has done that, and she’s well on her way to becoming a star in the field of drafting.
California

Ashley’s Success Story

Ashley couldn’t find a job in an economy with youth unemployment estimated around 30 percent. She entered the WIA youth program and received life skills training, work experience and an entry into the professional world through WIA Youth on the job training. She is now a full-time college student and part-time team member of the San Bernardino County Economic Development Agency.

Before

- No prospects for finding a job and was competing with better skilled dislocated workers for entry-level positions
- Enrolled in the Summer WIA Youth program and received career mentoring and training through the PAL Center

After

- Hired by the San Bernardino County Economic Development Agency
- Full-time student at Cal State San Bernardino

Guam

Tasha’s Success Story

In line with the U.S. Department of Labor, Employment and Training Administration’s vision for serving youth, the Classroom-to-Careers (CTC) Program continues to promote collaboration between the public workforce system, education, human services, juvenile justice, and others to better serve youth that are most in need and have significant barriers to employment, and to connect youth to education and training opportunities that lead to successful employment. A combination of sixty (60) CTC and Adult High School participants had attained their high school diplomas during PY 2014.

Tasha was enrolled in the CTC program during SY2012-2013 and SY2014-2015 where she was assigned to the University of Guam as a General Office Clerk Trainee participating during the summer, winter and spring school breaks. She entered employment at JK Tiles as a Sales Representative.

3 This material was approved for publication on the Workforce Investment Works campaign website hosted by the National Association of Workforce Boards. The full story may be viewed at www.WorkforceInvestmentWorks.com.
Sunshine through the Storm: Erviann’s Success Story

After dealing with some personal storms in family relationships Erviann found the courage to peek through the clouds, hoping to see rainbows and sunshine even on the gloomiest days. Returning to Hawaii from Washington part way through her senior year, Erviann was haunted by thoughts of failing to graduate. Once here, she decided to attend Youth Challenge Academy (YCA) believing that it was a great opportunity to obtain her diploma through a non-traditional high school. Erviann was pleasantly surprised to hear of YCAs’ partnership with the WIOA Youth Program which assigned her a Case Manager to provide support throughout her time at YCA as well as through one year of follow-up during her transition into post program activities. While at YCA, Erviann worked with the Family Tree Project, another WIOA Youth Program partner. She received counseling to help deal with the personal storms. She stayed the course even when it was mentally, emotionally and physically challenging. With graduation approaching, she attended the WIOA Youth Job Fair. A little nervous and hesitant about the application process, Erviann completed Lowe’s online application. Her good attitude, great smile and confidence shone through during her interview. She was first offered part-time employment, then a fulltime job which offers great benefits and a wonderful team environment. Erviann’s long term goal is to become a nurse.

With assistance from Leeward Community College’s Academic Counselor for Admissions and her WIOA Case Manager, she will enroll in the fall or spring term. The entire WIOA Youth Program staff is proud of what she has accomplished so far and will continue to support, encourage and empower her to fill her life with good choices.

Go with the Flow: Victor’s Success Story

Victor enrolled in the Oahu Worklinks Youth Program in December 2015 and earned his high school diploma six months later in June 2016. He has dealt with a lot in his young life. His mother has been in and out of prison since he was 5-years-old. His father was deported back to Korea for bad decisions he made around the time Victor was born. His grandfather who was his only positive male figure, passed away when he was in 7th grade. Life seemed stacked against him. This affected his attitude toward school and others and he considered himself a “punk.” Victor feared that if he stayed on his current path he would end up on the streets. With the help and support of his grandmother who is his guardian, and a social worker, he discovered the Oahu WorkLinks Youth Program and Honolulu Community Action Program (HCAP). He showed how intelligent he was by not needing tutoring services before starting HCAP’s diploma program. He loved the new school environment provided by HCAP. In his own words, “the staff was so welcoming
and it felt like a family. Victor breezed through his Competency Based classes averaging 95% on all his tests. He then completed the Phase II requirement of gaining work experience. He wound up doing volunteer work at River of Life Mission where he helped with food preparation for their soup kitchen. It was a good way for him to see the struggles of others and grow to appreciate what he has versus what he doesn’t. With this valuable volunteer experience, he was able to land his first paid job at Jamba Juice. Victor doesn’t know what’s in store for him but is better equipped to deal with any adversity that comes his way. He still has that go with the flow attitude, but the flow seems to be better focused. He has already applied to start classes at Honolulu Community College in the fall of 2016.

Idaho

Shelby’s Success Story

Shelby first came across WIOA while participating in mock interviews with the area high school students with disabilities. She was a foster child, and after enrolling in to the WIOA Program, she had aged out of care a few weeks later. With the program’s help, she was able to graduate from high school and enroll at Idaho State University. Shelby had never had a job and needed to gain work readiness skills. By participating in a WIOA work experience, she was able to acquire these skills at the State of Idaho Human Development Center as her worksite. Her confidence, pride and self-worth has changed dramatically after enrolling in WIOA, especially once she started her work experience.

Sayed’s Success Story

Global Talent Idaho (GTI) was contacted by a man who was mentoring a new refugee, Sayed, and his family, wondering if they could offer him help through their program. Unfortunately, the refugee didn’t meet GTI’s criteria, but felt that IDOL could help, which led to a referral to the WIOA program. His resettlement case manager from World Relief (a refugee resettlement agency) and his mentor came in with him to meet with WIOA staff. A young man in his 30s with a wife and two small children, his father owned an auto mechanics shop in Afghanistan where the son had maintained and repaired automobiles since he was seven years old. Although he completed high school, Sayed was unable to take all the tests necessary to obtain his diploma due to the dangerous and hostile war environment. Eventually, the conditions became so bad that he could no longer continue working in his father’s shop and he made the decision to work with the United States Army in a security patrol position as a TOC (Tactical Operations Center) operator. This decision put his family Idaho in extreme danger and led to a very disturbing result. But because of his service, he and his family were granted SIV (Special Immigrant Visa) status. Arriving in the U.S., the family needed help. Although he had years of mechanic experience, his lack of tools and English proficiency prevented Sayed from finding a sustainable position that could utilize his skills and abilities. Through the help of his agency, his mentor and WIOA, a willing employer hosted an internship with him. The
internship required tools which WIOA paid for some while the company covered a majority of the remaining equipment. Once he began earning money, he purchased the additional tools needed. Dessert Industries offered him the proper work attire. The family who owned company hosting his internship was very impressed with the good job he did. He knew a lot and the things he didn’t know, he learned quickly. The company said they would hire him full-time if he had a driver’s license. The driving test could be translated, but only in Farsi; Sayed’s native language is Dari, which is similar but not the same language. Meanwhile, he continued studying in English. He failed the test multiple times, and it looked as if things might not work out. But WIOA staff contacted the English Language Center, which provided him a translated copy of the driver’s manual. Using that as a study guide he was able to pass the driver’s test and now he’s been hired on by the company in a full time capacity with benefits.

Iowa

Mitch’s Success Story

Mitch was an in school youth who was served by our WIOA Youth program and went on to reach success despite having multiple barriers. He was enrolled during his senior year of high school and was on an IEP for a learning disability and struggled a lot with test taking and anxiety. His tentative plan was to pursue Diesel Technology at the local community college with WIOA assistance as well as the assistance of Vocational Rehabilitation. He was very nervous about school and his ability to be successful and struggled in making the necessary steps to pursue college. With the help of a tutor in his math and language arts classes, he was able to get through those required classes. He did very well in the diesel technology courses receiving all A’s and B’s in those major classes. He was able to secure employment with an area employer doing diesel mechanic work about 6 months prior to graduation and the position would lead to a full-time job following graduation.

Jazzmine’s Success Story

Jazzmine entered the WIOA youth program with little to no work experience and was homeless at the time of enrollment. Jazzmine successfully completed a Work Experience with the Neighborhood Center of Johnson County (NCJC) as a Teacher’s Assistance. While working at NCJC she was also enrolled in Nurse Aid Training. She successfully completed Nurse Aid Training and became certificated Nurse Aide. She gained interpersonal skills, employment training skill as well as soft skills during her Work Experience. Jazzmine successfully completed her Work Experience and moved on to work in the Nurse Aid Health field where she is earning $14.00 an hour. Jazzmine is employed at Briarwood Health Care Center as a Nurse Aid and is also starting Kirkwood Community College this fall. She is no stranger to hard work and was able to move into her first apartment.
Kansas

John’s Success Story

The Challenge: John faced many barriers when he came to the WIOA Youth Program. A 22 year-old high school graduate, John had a very limited work history. He had two prior jobs in retail/fast food, both ended due to performance concerns on John’s part. He had no family support, had problems with alcohol abuse and was currently residing at a local homeless shelter.

The WFC Solution: The Neosho County Community College WIOA Youth Program connected John to the Lawrence Workforce Center (LWFC) where he began working on Career Ready 101 and his WORKReady! Certificate, two programs which would help him improve his basic skills. The youth program helped John coordinate living resources so that he could obtain Section 8 Housing and utilize public transportation. On his own initiative, John began to attend AA meetings. The youth program also helped John enroll in a local welding course.

The Outcome: John is progressing very well in his welding training program where he has had great attendance. He has obtained a full-time job, even taking a third-shift assignment so he can complete his 2nd semester in school. He is taking the necessary steps required to regain visitation with his child, continues to attend AA meetings and is saving money to buy a used car.

Becky’s Success Story

The Challenge: Becky was a senior in high school when she came to the USD #501 WIOA Youth Program. Her prior work history consisted of fast food experience. While in school, she received special education services for a learning disability. She had also attained a Certified Nurse Assistance (CNA) license, but had no related work experience to showcase her skills in this area. Becky needed assistance with a work site placement and strategies to stay engaged at school.

The WFC Solution: The USD #501 WIOA Youth Project assessed Becky’s skills and interests and developed a service plan which included services in leadership development, tutoring and paid work experience. Her work experience was located at a local hospital. Becky did struggle at the work site with issues of working with others and following directions, however the youth project staff worked with her to improve her performance in these areas.

The Outcome: While in the youth program, Becky attained another part-time fast food position and also graduated from high school. Project staff continue to work with her on follow-up activities to help her transition to full-time employment in healthcare.
**Louisiana**

**A Success Story**

A female youth and single parent of 3, who was unemployed and a Food Stamp, FITAP, and Medicaid recipient, was referred to the Iberville/West Baton Rouge Career Solutions Center for STEP services on 01/14/2016. She came into the office on 1/19/16 to complete her FSA (Family Success Agreement) with a program specialist. At this point, it was determined that this client needed a job/vocational education, childcare, and transportation supportive services. She was referred to CCAP (Childcare Assistance Program) for the Childcare Services and STEP provided a transportation stipend. She was unemployed and had limited skills. This client expressed an interest in going to school to obtain her CNA training. She was then referred to WIOA (Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act) to seek possible training funds to attend school. She attended WIOA orientation on 1/27/16. A WIOA application was established and the TABE test was administered. Career Counseling was administered to the client by the WIOA Customer Service Specialist. The client met the criteria for entry into the Julian Certified Nursing Assistant training school in Plaquemine, LA. Due to lack of WIOA youth funds, we were unable to provide the scholarship. She was then referred to our partner agency, Iberville Office of Community Services. This office approved a $1000.00 scholarship for her to attend the CNA training. She began the training program on 2/22/16 and completed the program on 3/11/16. She is now employed full time at Plaquemine Caring as a CNA at $9.00 per hour. Fringe benefits will be offered after one year of employment. She has become successful in her endeavors with the assistance of WIOA and partnering agencies.

**Destiny’s Success Story**

Destiny dropped out of traditional high school in the 9th grade and for the following 3 years was home schooled. During this time, she was not motivated to excel and did not take academics seriously. She was clearly headed down a path with an uncertain future at best. As her 17th birthday approached, Destiny decided that a change needed to be made if she was going to have any kind of success on the horizon. With returning to a traditional school not being a viable option, Destiny applied to get into the Lafayette Business and Career Solutions Center Keeping You Trained and Educated (KYTE) program. She was accepted into the program and embarked on a journey to obtain her high school equivalency diploma. Under the tutelage, support, and guidance of the KYTE instructor, as well as the WIOA Youth Counselors, Destiny thrived and in a short period of time took and passed the HiSET exam.

The next step was for Destiny to obtain some valuable real life work experience. She was placed at the Lafayette Business and Career Solutions Center office working as a clerk. She worked assisting the youth counselors with administering the KYTE program. Under this environment, Destiny excelled and gained the necessary confidence that had been lacking previously. The youth and management staff were so impressed with Destiny’s
performance and transformation that once the work experience program concluded, she was hired to continue working as a part time employee of the center. In addition to working part time at the center, Destiny also obtained another part time job at a local shoe store. She plans on continuing her education in January 2017 at South Louisiana Community College majoring in general studies. Although she has not made a final decision on her long term career path, Destiny is now more focused and confident that she can achieve any goals that she sets for herself in the future.

**Michigan**

**Aaron’s Success Story**

Aaron struggled in math and didn’t know what he wanted to do with his life. He lacked organizational skills and didn’t have any work experience. Aaron began working with the Jobs for Michigan’s Graduates Specialist to overcome these challenges. In addition to working through the Jobs for Michigan’s Graduates curriculum, he began to meet weekly with the Jobs for Michigan’s Graduates Specialist at Orchard View High School to monitor his academic progress and receive tutoring. During Aaron’s first year participating in a summer work experience, his employer decided to continue his employment after his subsidized work experience ended. With the help of his Jobs for Michigan’s Graduates Specialist, Aaron participated in the Early College program with Orchard View High School and Muskegon Community College. He earned over 30 college credits as a high school student and graduated second in his class. Aaron is currently participating in the Jobs for Michigan’s Graduates summer work experience, working with Muskegon Charter Township’s Department of Public Works in the morning, part-time at the Pita Place in the evening, and taking a summer class at Muskegon Community College. In the fall, Aaron will be a full-time student at Muskegon Community College. After earning his Associate’s degree, Aaron will transfer to a four-year university where he will major in Environmental Science.

**Minnesota**

**Brandi’s Success Story**

“Before starting to work with the Stearns-Benton Employment & Training Council’s Youth Program I was a single mom, working 3 jobs and a full time student. I was struggling to make ends meet and to have enough time to succeed in school. I received help with career advice, budgeting, tuition, and occasional child care. I now know how to budget and set priorities. I couldn’t have stuck through school without my Career Planner. I am a Certified Surgical Technologist at SW Minnesota Orthopedics and Sports Medicine, and I recently bought a house.”
Hajir’s Success Story

Hajir was a refugee who had been in the United States for two years when he was referred to the Southwest Minnesota Private Industry Council (PIC) Youth and Young Adult Programs. In the summer of 2012, Hajir was placed in a work experience position at Goodwill and was later placed in a work experience at the Marshall Public School during the school year. When the school year came to an end, Hajir was kicked out of his home and dealing with being homeless. Through integrated partner services, he was able to obtain his own apartment. Hajir began a work experience at the Marshall Area Technical Education Center (MA-TEC) where he was also attending classes. He graduated from MA-TEC with his high school diploma on May 20th, 2016 and will continue his work experience at MA-TEC while focusing on additional advanced training options, tentatively in the healthcare field.

Mississippi

Tiara’s Success Story

When Tiara enrolled in the Counseling to Career (C2C) Program at the Golden Triangle Planning and Development District in February 2015, she was 20-years-old, unemployed, and the mother of a four-month-old daughter. Tiara graduated from Choctaw County High School May 2014, and had not found employment that would provide for her family since graduation. She went to the WIN Job Center hoping to find help. During the initial interview, Tiara shared that she desired to continue her education, but that she needed to work to provide for her family at this time. Tiara was enrolled in the C2C program and began the three-hour work ethics training sessions that were held twice a week for 3 ½ weeks. During the training, she learned the skills needed to successfully attain and maintain a job. Child care and transportation were an issue, but Tiara never missed a training session, proving that she had the desire and self-motivation to do whatever it took to secure employment. Tiara completed the work ethics training in February and immediately began the paid work experience component of the C2C program. She worked as an assistant to the Mayor’s secretary at Starkville City Hall with her salary and workers’ comp insurance being paid through WIOA funds. The worksite supervisor taught Tiara many aspects of the job and was very complimentary of her work as evidenced by an excellent score (29 out of 30 points) on the final evaluation. Tiara was hired to work part-time at the site when she completed the work experience hours of the program. Her supervisor shared how much she appreciated the training and support the WIOA staff had given Tiara, because she had proven to be an excellent employee. According to the supervisor, Tiara was very dependable. She always worked her scheduled time, was always on time, had proven to be a team player, possessed great people skills, and had a positive attitude. On July 28th Tiara was promoted to a full-time temporary secretarial position to the Mayor until the vacant position could be filled by someone with the required degree.
Tiara was very excited for this opportunity but continued to look toward the future by applying for other full-time positions. On September 9th, Tiara became the full-time secretary for the Street Department in Starkville where she continues to work today. Tiara has not met her dream of continuing her education, but she has secured employment that is helping provide a secure financial life for her family.

*Her supervisor shared how much she appreciated the training and support the WIOA staff had given Tiara, because she had proven to be an excellent employee. According to the supervisor, Tiara was very dependable. She always worked her scheduled time, was always on time, had proven to be a team player, possessed great people skills, and had a positive attitude.*

**Charles’ Success Story**

Charles chose success by participating in the Counseling to Career (C2C) program through the WIN Job Center in Amory. The C2C program provides youth with work ethics training, necessary skills training, and work experience. Charles was hired for the work experience component at HomeStretch Inc. in the packing department. HR/Safety Manager, Jon commented, “The packing department is a small department that is fast paced work. Every piece of furniture that we produce passes through that department before going to the finished goods warehouse. It requires determination and a dedication to team work for the department to succeed. Charles fit right in and proved that he was willing to work hard, take instruction, and work as a team with co-workers and supervisors.” Upon completion of the required 240 work experience hours in the C2C program, Charles was hired as a full-time employee at HomeStretch, Inc. His earnings went from $8.00 per hour to $13.75 per hour. The C2C program provided the opportunity to gain work experience while learning necessary skills to get and keep a good job. Jon said, “Charles continues to do well and we expect him to be a valuable part of the HomeStretch Inc. family and team.”

**Montana**

A recent success story in the Youth Employment and Training Program is Kennedy. Kennedy enrolled in the program last fall as a 20-year-old single mother and high school dropout with limited work experience. Less than a year later, she has earned her HiSET through HRDC’s Alternative Education Program and is now working toward her goal of becoming a certified childcare provider. Kennedy is happily employed as a childcare assistant, through our program, at the Center for Children and Families and is pursuing CPR and Infant/Toddler Caregiver certifications through HRDC’s professional development courses.
**Chesa’s Success Story**

Chesa, a 20-year-old youth from Crow Agency, has also shown great progress in the WIOA this year. Chesa dropped out of school in her junior year of high school and struggled to maintain steady employment in the small reservation community in which she lives. She enrolled in the WIOA program in April and is now thriving as an activities assistant at the Awe Kuialawaache Care Center in Crow Agency while pursuing her HiSET through the Hardin Adult Education Center. She anticipates completing her HiSET in August with the incentive from the nursing home of unsubsidized employment as a personal care attendant and then as a CNA after she completes a certification course.

**New Mexico**

**Kevin’s Success Story**

Kevin began the WIA Youth program as a 17-year-old, unemployed West Las Vegas High School student in the summer of 2015. Upon joining the program, Kevin’s goals were to graduate from high school, obtain unsubsidized employment, and enter post-secondary education. Through his great efforts, he obtained each goal for which he strived. He began his work experience in June 2015 at the local SEARS store. He quickly learned his duties and responsibilities and became an asset to the store owner. After completion of his work experience, Kevin was hired by SEARS. He was provided with supportive services to assist him in transportation and fuel costs to participate in the program. He received an incentive for obtaining his high school diploma. During his participation in the youth program, Kevin completed the required financial literacy course, Money Smart. He also explored his career interests by completing an interest profiler and examining career choices. Through the Youth program, Kevin learned the importance of professionalism, hard work, communication, appearance, and maintaining a positive attitude. Kevin continued working at SEARS while completing his senior year at West Las Vegas High School. He received his high school diploma on May 21, 2016 and entered his post-secondary school of his choice, New Mexico Highlands University.

**North Carolina**

**Galo’s Success Story**

“His long-term goal is to open an organic farm.”

Galo had some personal challenges in high school, but the support of Charlotte Works and the Urban League have helped this former offender start his career. After he graduated high school and moved from Concord to Charlotte with his mother and stepfather,
Galo joined Charlotte Works’ Youth Works program. He completed a work-readiness program and a forklift-driving course. Even though he had the certification, Galo couldn’t find a job that didn’t require at least three years’ experience. He spent a few months in New York—his native state—before he returned to Charlotte and applied for “mediocre” jobs at local restaurants.

Galo stumbled upon the HVAC certification offered by the Urban League of Central Carolinas. He discovered that he was still eligible for funding through Youth Works, joined the four-month course, and graduated at the top of his class. Galo’s stepfather, who worked for a temporary staffing agency, encouraged him to submit a resume to the agency. He did and was offered a maintenance position the same day he sent it in. He has since worked for four different apartment complexes—all of which were so happy with his performance that they offered him permanent positions. Saladin enjoys the experience he gets from working with different people in different situations. His long-term goal is to open an organic farm.

“I wouldn’t be where I am today without Charlotte Works and the Urban League,” he said. “Some of the kids in the apartment complex have asked about jobs, and I recommend them to these programs. They don’t discriminate—you could have felonies, you could be a straight-A student. You’re going to be accepted and not have to worry about being poor or having something going on at home.”

**North Dakota**

**Cameron’s Success Story**

Cameron was a high school graduate with a disability. He applied for WIOA and was determined eligible as an out-of-school youth. He was working part-time at local restaurant earning $8.50 per hour. Cameron was interested in training in the Occupational Therapy Assistant (OTA) program or in the Plumbing and HVAC areas. Cameron was approved for a training program through Northland Community and Technical College as the first semester courses applied to either program. To help Cameron narrow down his occupational decision, a job shadow was set up with a local plumbing and heating business. After his first semester of school, Cameron decided he wanted to major in Plumbing. A graduation plan was submitted and he would still be able to graduate within the two-year training approved training period. Cameron expressed an interest in a job for the summer months between college years. The business where Cameron had completed the job shadow was contacted to see if they would be willing to be a work site for an On-the-Job (OJT) training position. An OJT was set up and Cameron worked full-time during the summer and continued working part-time during the school year learning the trade both in school and in a hands-on experience in the plumbing field. When Cameron graduated with a degree in Plumbing, the business that provided his job shadow and on-the-job training hired him in a full-time position.
Helping Youth Overcome Barriers: Jeremy’s Success Story

Jeremy was interested in a career in sports medicine, but he had limited work experience, no high school diploma and transportation challenges. In August 2015, he enrolled in OhioMeansJobs Columbus-Franklin County’s Future Talent Recruitment program, which was designed for unemployed, out-of-school 16- to 24-year-olds interested in health care, IT, hospitality and culinary arts careers. Jeremy’s primary goals were to get his high school diploma and to secure gainful employment.

Working with a career coach, Jeremy developed and executed a strategic plan to meet those goals. He took the Test of Adult Basic Education (TABE), which showed that he was basic-skills deficient, so staff showed him how to use the online tutorials at the Learning Express Library to get up to speed. They also gave him transportation assistance and referred him to a partner for help enrolling in a flexible, nontraditional high school for teenagers facing special challenges.

Jeremy’s school attendance was exceptional, and before long he improved his TABE scores by two levels. In May 2016, he was hired for a full-time job at an indoor sports facility at a starting wage of $10.15 an hour. In June 2016, he obtained his high school diploma.

Still committed to pursuing sports medicine, Jeremy returned to his career coach for help.

The career coach helped him customize his resume and cover letter, helped him apply for new opportunities, and arranged for him to tour the worksite of a possible future employer.

Securing Her Country While Securing Her Future: Kyianna’s Success Story

Kyianna is a former WIOA participant who is now at one of the country’s leading technology defense firms. A graduate from Lake City High School, she attended Benedict College to pursue a degree in Computer Science Engineering. Not only did she complete her training and attain her degree, she graduated from the school of honors, Magna Cum Laude. Shortly after graduation, Kyianna was hired by the Lawrence Livermore Laboratory in California as a Cyber Defender in
conjunction with the Department of Homeland Security. Knowing that her future is still full of possibilities, Kyianna plans to enroll at MUSC to obtain a Ph.D. in Biomedical Engineering.

**Going the Extra Smile: Ashton’s Success Story**

Ashton had limited employability skills and was only able to find work waitressing part-time, barely making ends meet. She enrolled as a participant with the ResCare Workforce Services WIOA Out-of-School Youth Program once she graduated high school.

Through the help of her talent engagement specialist and talent development facilitator with the program, Ashton decided that she wanted to become a Dental Assistant and eventually work in an orthodontics office.

To improve her employability skills, Ashton attended work-readiness sessions to better prepare herself for the workforce. To gain the critical skills she needed, she enrolled and began classes at the Palmetto School of Career Development, a school that provides entry-level career courses to become certified in specific career paths. Through her training, she became certified in chairside dental assisting, OSHA and radiation safety.

Only a month after she became certified, she began working with Victory Dental Center and began developing the entry-level experience that she needed to advance her career. However, she wanted to be closer to home. Having the education and work skills she needed, Ashton was able to find employment that suited her situation when she got a job with Kids First Dental. This position is not only closer to her home, it allows her to work full-time while completing her degree at York Technical College.

*Having the education and work skills she needed, Ashton was able to find employment that suited her situation when she got a job with Kids First Dental.*

**Tennessee**

**Ken and Gerald’s Success Stories**

Two youth who participated in paid work experience during the summer months of 2015 with the Youth Employment Success Program through the South Central TN Workforce Alliance (SCTWA) were recognized by the Columbia City Council. The goal was to provide youth with valuable summer work experience so that they could successfully transition to the world of work. Through this activity they had the opportunity to develop the skills necessary
to meet present and future employment needs. Ken worked as a Sanitation Technician for City of Columbia and is now enrolled in Columbia State Community College and works at Burger King. Gerald worked with Street Maintenance for the City of Columbia and is now enrolled in Columbia State Community College and working at Walmart. Both of these youth graduated from Columbia Central High School in May 2015 and were part of the Jobs for Tennessee Graduates program taught by Chana (SCTWA staff). The youth also earned bonuses because of their perfect attendance and completion of a resume.

**Martin’s Success Story**

Martin enrolled in the Computer Information Technology class at Tennessee College of Applied Technology (TCAT) Shelbyville in the September of 2014 at the age of 21. Martin had no job at the time and had a limited work history and no experience working in a computer related field. His family's only income was from Social Security Disability payments. He received a stipend from the Workforce Solutions Youth Program and the PELL grant to assist with the cost of his education. While enrolled at TCAT-Shelbyville, Martin maintained a 93 or higher grade point average in computer classes and worker ethics class. He worked various part time jobs while in school. In June of 2015, Martin participated in the Workforce Solutions Youth Work Experience program. His first work site was at the Bedford County Business complex assisting staff in setting up their computer system. When this was completed, he went to work at Community Clinic of Shelbyville and assisted their staff in updating that computer system. Martin completed the CIT program in December of 2015 with a diploma as a microcomputer specialist, three certificates, and six professional certifications including CompTIA Network+, MTA - Microsoft Technology Associate, and CWTS Wireless Certification. After graduation, Martin went to work for Community Health Systems in Franklin TN as a full-time IT service Desk associate making $22 per hour. He was recently promoted to coordinator of training for new personnel. Martin made the transition from unemployed youth to educated and valued employee in a short 18 month period. His younger brother is now enrolled at TCAT-Shelbyville and is looking forward to a successful future as well. Shawn’s story demonstrates the power of short term, skill based training that the TCAT’s provide and the effect his success has had on his entire family.

**Vermont**

**Dustin’s Success Story**

Dustin was 18-years-old when he applied to the WIOA Youth program. At that time, he was charged with an aggravated assault while armed with a deadly weapon. Given this charge, which is a felony, he was facing the possibility of a 5-years maximum penalty in prison. The day before he applied, he heard on the news about a job fair for youth, and how youth involved with the justice system may have an opportunity to improve their
situation if they take steps to work. Dustin followed through and successfully completed an eight-week, full-time work experience as an Auto Detailer with Freedom Nissan of South Burlington. Staff members at the site repeatedly mentioned how he did a good job. Through this experience he was offered a full-time job at $12.00 an hour. As a result, his charges were amended and then suspended with probation for a term of six months. Dustin is aware of the importance of finishing high school and he is continuing to participate in the WIOA Youth program to work toward this goal.

**Belle’s Success Story**

Belle sought services from the Youth Program as a recent high school graduate who was below basic skills in math, a teen parent, and aging out of foster care. Belle, having given birth at age 14, had not been able to concentrate on developing employment skills or devote time to understanding herself as a worker. Belle recognized that she needed a mentoring employer who could accommodate her schedule and parenting needs while training her in work skills. Belle engaged in two Work Experience sites supported by WIOA funds. The first site was a local non-profit retail store that provides job and training skills, by accepting donations of home goods that are then offered at a reduced price to individuals and families in crisis. Belle’s training focused on research and pricing higher value items for resale, communicating with collectors, and completing internet sales. Belle took to the position quickly and increased her network. Simultaneously Belle trained at a local cake boutique. Belle is very artistic and had an interest in cake decorating. It was difficult to find a formal baking classes that can accommodate a young mother’s schedule; however, Belle quickly transitioned to the Wednesday Team, which produces a weekly take home catering meal. After two months Belle was responsible for identifying a meal plan, organizing the inventory, cooking and assembling the take away meal, and advertising. Belle sells nearly 55-70 meals each Wednesday. Throughout both Work Experiences Belle met with WIOA staff weekly at the Barre American Job Center (AJC) to learn networking skills, increase her math skills to above basic skill level, and explore LMI. Belle recognized that her barriers of housing, transportation, child care, and professional as well as personal development required a strong team. Belle was unique in that she accepted case management support and ran her own monthly team meetings held at the Barre AJC. Belle networked with Washington County Mental Health, the Youth Service Bureau for case management with DCF after care supports through the Youth Development Coordinator, and remains in contact with the parent support through Capstone Community Action, the original referring entity to WIOA. 10 months after engagement in a WIOA training plan, Belle is now employed by both training site and has increased her basic skills. Belle continues to engage with the Youth Program for follow up support to address barriers and develop a long term career plan. Belle has expressed an interest in working with younger at-risk teens to provide peer mentoring and to teach self-advocacy. She has many interests in counseling, biology, science, and criminal justice and will continue to work with VDOL to develop a career pathway.
10 months after engagement in a WIOA training plan, Belle is now employed by both training site and has increased her basic skills. Belle continues to engage with the Youth Program for follow up support to address barriers and develop a long term career plan.

Kristopher’s Success Story

Kristopher spotted the Opportunity Inc. Youth Career Center of Hampton Roads while shopping in Pembroke Mall one day. He thought the center was just for middle and high school students, and therefore would not help him, a sophomore in college. After walking in and asking about the center’s services, Kristopher learned that it serves anyone ages 14 to 21 whether they are in middle school, high school, college or no school at all. That was music to his ears.

“I was coming up on my junior year in college and I knew I needed to land an internship quickly to gain experience,” says Kristopher, a Virginia Beach native who attends the University of Virginia in Charlottesville. Jaedda, the center’s career coach offered him assistance with résumé writing and researching and contacting local companies for internship opportunities. “Internships are a must in today’s economy,” says Kristopher. “College graduates with paid or unpaid internships on their résumé have a much better chance at landing a full-time position upon graduation.” After applying and interviewing for several positions, he landed a fellowship with the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee as a campaign assistant. In this role, he worked with a local congressional campaign team to help organize activities in the community — definitely a plus on this political science student’s résumé. But, that wasn’t all. To supplement his income, Kristopher also needed a part-time summer position. He contacted the center again and found out that Ocean Breeze Waterpark was hiring. A couple of weeks later he had an interview, and was offered a part-time position as a bag checker. “I probably would not have either one of these positions if it weren’t for the center helping me with my resume and giving me job search tips,” said Kristopher. “The staff is just so good at what they do, I’m thankful to have such a great resource.”

“I probably would not have either one of these positions if it weren’t for the center helping me with my resume and giving me job search tips;” said Kristopher. “The staff is just so good at what they do, I’m thankful to have such a great resource.”
Thomas’ Success Story

Thomas’ graduated from high school in the summer of 2013 hoping to join the workforce, but lacked the necessary work experience. Thomas eventually found his way to the SkillSource One-Stop Employment Center in Alexandria, where he was enrolled in the WIOA Youth Program. His WIOA Youth Employment Specialist provided Thomas with career assessments and helped him create a strong résumé that emphasized his volunteer experience and hardworking nature. Thomas also attended job-readiness workshops, practiced basic and academic skills, and applied for jobs.

The Youth Employment Specialist connected Thomas to an opportunity with a local pet grooming business, Pretty Pet Salon, which was looking for a short-term volunteer, with the potential for a paid internship. After two full days of volunteer work, Pretty Pet Salon hired Thomas permanently as a Groomer Assistant. After almost a year of employment, Thomas has steadily increased the number of hours per week in this position and his hourly rate from minimum wage to $10 per hour. While helping Thomas find and maintain employment, the WIOA Youth Program also helped him obtain his Driver’s License and expand his academic abilities. Thomas has increased two functional levels (almost 4 grade levels) in the areas of literacy and numeracy. Thomas has now decided to pursue a career working with animals and will soon complete the Veterinary Assistant Program with Fairfax County Adult and Community Education. He also hopes to enroll in college after completing his training. Thomas expressed his thanks to the WIOA Youth Program for giving him the opportunity to expand his knowledge and career skills. Thomas said, “The WIOA Youth Program helped change my life by putting me on a path that led me to getting my first job, which also led me to getting my own car. The program helped me to get back into going to school to be a Veterinary Assistant.”

“The WIOA Youth Program helped change my life by putting me on a path that led me to getting my first job, which also led me to getting my own car. The program helped me to get back into going to school to be a Veterinary Assistant.”

Wisconsin

Jordan’s Success Story

Jordan is a 20-year-old high school graduate who entered the 4-week 2016 Spring WORKS Crew. Jordan is a non-custodial parent who has had involvement with the juvenile and adult justice system. While on the WisCorps crew, he participated in resume and cover letter writing skills, interviewing skills, as well as workshops on: diversity conservation, goal setting, apprenticeship, job search skills, and career opportunities. He earned certifications in ServSafe Food Handler Safety, CPR/AED/First Aid, Forklift Operator, and FEMA ICS-100. In addition,
Jordan participated in the Sales Management Academy, a tour of Western Technical College, and financial literacy workshop and entrepreneurial skills workshops. After completing the Crew, Jordan moved out of our service area to Hibbing, MN where he is currently working three jobs: Menards, Natural Harvest Food Coop and Dairy Queen. His long-term goal is to work in the agriculture industry and eventually own a small farm. He states that he is doing very well at all three and credits his success to the skills that he learned while at WisCorps.

William’s Success Story

William came to the Job Center because he was looking for direction in a career path. He was enrolled in the Title I Youth Program where he began to develop a plan. Through assessments, William learned he had an interest in manufacturing, and had a natural fit due to his mechanical abilities. William’s Youth Career Service Specialist encouraged him to attend the CNC short-term training informational session. William was very excited about the opportunity to utilize his talent, and the possibility of earning a living wage. To cover the cost of the short-term training and to address his barrier of transportation, William was co-enrolled in the Adult Program. The Career Service Specialists in both programs coordinated WIOA services and provided the encouragement and support William needed to be successful in the rigorous training program. As he approached completion of the five-month program at North Central Technical College, William received assistance from both Youth and Adult Career Service Specialists on how to job search; prepare a stellar resume and cover letter; and practice his interviewing skills. The Business Solutions team also assisted by providing job leads. William also earned a Platinum level NCRC to further prepare him for employment. William is now employed by Wausau Window and Wall, earning one of the highest wages in his class.

Wyoming

Amber’s Success Story

Amber graduated from high school in June of 2015. She came into the Rock Springs workforce Center, in April of 2014, looking for a summer job. Amber had never had a job and was looking to gain some work experience as well as earn her own money. Before being placed, Amber completed some pre-employment activities, with the assistance of her case manager, Kaylene. She created a resume, completed a booklet titled “Now Hiring Apply Yourself” that covered how to get a job, how to keep a job and how to leave a job. Amber also learned how to successfully interview for a job and answer basic interview questions. Once she completed all her activities, an interview was set up with Vicki at White Mountain Library. Amber’s interview went well, she was hired and started work on June 9, 2014. Amber completed a work experience at White Mountain Library working in youth services. Amber states she remembers being really excited about getting
the job, but a little nervous when she started working. She wondered if she would be able
to perform the job because there was so much to learn. In the beginning, she learned books
were organized by the last names of the authors and put in alphabetical order. Later on she
picked up new skills such as checking out books, returning books and learning how to do a
book search. She eventually became skilled at this and moved on to cutting out crafts and
setting up activities for the children’s reading program. She was also involved in helping
hand out prizes and toys given to children who accomplished their reading goals.

Taylor’s Success Story

Taylor, 16-years-old, came to the Sheridan Workforce Center to inquire about the Scope Pro-
gram in January 2014. He had dropped out of high school after completing 8th grade and was
on probation for substance abuse. Taylor lived in a single parent household, with his mother
and his sister. Both his sister and his mother have disabilities. His father has been in prison since
Taylor was three. Taylor has been diagnosed with depressive disorder, attention deficit hyper-
activity disorder (ADHD), anxiety disorder, post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), oppositional
defiant disorder, obsessive defiant disorder, reactive attachment disorder and substance abuse.
Taylor stated that he has very low self-esteem and self-worth. With the assistance of his case
manager, Christina, Taylor was enrolled in the spring session of Scope a 12 week program that
offered tutoring, work readiness skills and life skills. Taylor kept hitting bumps throughout the
program. He didn’t have a ride, so would have to walk to the workforce center or find other
means to get to the program, which affected his attendance. Taylor violated his probation and
had to appear before the court. Taylor came to Christina fearful of his future, after finding out he
was going to have to go to the Juvenile Detention Center (JDC) for a week. He wanted to flee:
escape his reality. After Taylor visited about his goals with Christina, he decided to take the bull
by the horns and come back into the WIA program in a week, and further change his future.
Taylor was placed on probation by the Drug Court with strict guidelines and he continued to
do the Scope program. In May 2014, he completed the Scope program and his High School
Equivalency Certificate (HSEC) test. At Sheridan College’s graduation ceremony, Taylor stated
this is the first thing in his life that he completed, as his face beamed with confidence, and as he
wore his cap and gown. Taylor participated in a work experience at the Dog and Cat Shelter to
further develop his skills. After a few weeks of working at the work experience, Taylor quit show-
ing up to work. He lost his job placement. Reality hit Taylor when he realized he was going to be
a father in a few months and needed to get back on the right track. He had accomplished many
of his goals, but still needed to find self-sufficient employment and complete his probation.
Taylor came into the workforce center and used available resources there to find a job at Perkins
Restaurant and Bakery. He had searched for employment for months; he was not going to let
this job slip through his fingers. Taylor maintained his employment. In July 2015, Taylor gradu-
ated from Drug Court. He has 12 months of sobriety. He also decided that his job at Perkins will
not support his child. He has filled out his FASFA application and is applying to the University
of Wyoming to further his education. It has not been a straight, easy path for Taylor to meet his
goals and he is still traveling this path, but he now does it with confidence and knowing his
self-worth. “I have realized that when there are things blocking my way. I need to figure a way
to move around them and keep pushing.”
It has not been a straight, easy path for Taylor to meet his goals and he is still traveling this path, but he now does it with confidence and knowing his self-worth. “I have realized that when there are things blocking my way. I need to figure a way to move around them and keep pushing.

Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI)

Roque’s Success Story

Roque, an out-of-school youth, participated in 2015 Summer Youth Employment and Training Program (SYETP) and continued training as a Front Desk Clerk with Saipan World Resort. At the completion of training, he was then hired on with the company in the same position and to date is still employed.
Carnesha’s Success Story

Carnesha has become a believer in Dr. Maya Angelou’s statement - “I’ve learned that people will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel/” Angelou believed your actions towards someone could impact the course of their life. In Carnesha’s case, interaction with nurses turned a negative experience into a life altering event. Carnesha remembered telling her mother she wanted to become a model. She envisioned walking the runway and living the dream of a model. In 2007, she found her true passion- her true calling. Her path was forever changed when her father was involved in a car accident. “I saw how the nurses treated my dad in the hospital,” Carnesha stated. “They encouraged him with their kind words, cared for wounds and ensured he received the prescribed medications.” The nurses’ treatment of her dad was a turning point for Carnesha. Their actions inspired her to become a nurse. Years later she followed her dream. She enrolled at USA and was eventually accepted into the nursing program. Carnesha learned to adjust to her rigorous schedule and coursework. “Typical days consisted of going to class, twelve hour clinicals, going to work, studying from sun up to sun down, paperwork, taking exams, more studying and little sleep,” Carnesha said. Also, she elaborated on how the stress and time commitment for school was worth it. “It wasn’t easy, but it was worth it. Nursing school was hard,” Carnesha said. Now she’s working at a hospital as a registered nurse. When asked was the stress and rigorous training in nursing school worth it, she boldly declared “I love my job. It was worth it. Every tear I shed was worth it.” She’s thankful for the training scholarship from Mobile Works.

“Nursing school was expensive, tuition and books were expensive,” said Carnesha. “Without the help of Mobile Works, it would’ve taken longer to complete the program. Without the training scholarship I would’ve worked overtime and cut back on school hours.”

Bernice’s Success Story

Bernice qualified as a Dislocated Worker after her separation from her employer in Russellville. The Sheffield Career Center certified her eligibility and enrolled her in an IT to pursue an Associate’s Degree in Computer Information Systems at Northwest-Shoals Community College. Bernice graduated in December 2015 with her degree. She was hired by the Computer Laboratory at Northwest-Shoals to work part-time as a Computer Lab Assistant in January of 2016. In March of 2016, she was hired full-time by Freight Car America as a PC Technician Specialist. She sent the following email to the Sheffield Career Center.
“Before I go any further, I want to say, THANK YOU and the program that allowed me a second opportunity to further my education and I’m blessed and thankful for being able to complete my courses and become a 2015 graduate.”

Janette’s Success Story

Janette came to the Decatur Career Center after the closure of International Paper in Courtland. She was certified eligible for WIOA services as a Dislocated Worker as well as the Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) Program. When she took the required assessments during the enrollment process and it was determined that she would need some remedial training, she doubted her abilities to complete the training. However, Janette successfully completed her remediation, and was enrolled into a TAA funded ITA at Northwest-Shoals Community College in the Medical Assisting Technology program. As she worked through the program, she maintained high grades. Janette was offered the position of Medical Assistant with OB/GYN Associates in Decatur, upon her graduation. She graduated in May of 2016 with an Associate’s Degree in Medical Assisting Technology.

Alaska

From Displaced Homemaker to Registered Nurse: Jessica’s Success Story

Jessica came to the job center shortly after her husband had been laid off from his job. She had been dependent on his income and was determined, through an assessment, to be a displaced homemaker. She had worked in the medical field at a local clinic and was enrolled at Kenai Peninsula College working on her prerequisites. Jessica was accepted into the RN program at the University of Alaska, Anchorage and successfully graduated in May 2015. During this time, she utilized funding through the Dislocated Worker and National Emergency Grant programs. Upon completion, she gained employment as a Registered Nurse at Central Peninsula Hospital earning $30.53 per hour plus benefits. She was exited on August 27, 2015. Jessica appreciates our ability to help her through her training, and stated, “I could not have done this without all the help you provided me. Thank you so much!”
Arizona

John’s Success Story

John was a Disabled Veteran raising four grandchildren. He was laid off from ASARCO in August 2015. He attended the Rapid Response presentation held at his jobsite and was provided information on benefits and programs available to employees. He was enrolled in the Dislocated Worker program in October 2015 and requested assistance with commercial driver’s license (CDL) training. He received his CDL license in December 2015 and was employed by Right Away Disposal in January 2016. He is currently working full time and earns $17.00 an hour.

Arkansas

Alex’s Success Story

Alex was a 22-year-old mechanical engineer and was miserable in his career. However, after a series of unexpected events and a job loss, he found the Medical Billing and Coding certificate program with the University of Arkansas at Fort Smith—and the Job-Driven National Dislocated Worker Grant that paid for it. “It essentially provided a crash course and a new door to where I didn’t feel hopeless,” Alex said. The change in Alex’s career pathway started when he lost his job—a relief to Alex, who knew in his last year of college that he did not enjoy that field. Alex went to the Arkansas Workforce Center in Fort Smith to learn about his options. Upon leaving the workforce center, he stepped on a pamphlet about the coding course. He was told about the JD-NDW grant and directed to case manager Wendy. The serendipities continued when he got the last spot in the class. The strenuous course demanded all his time, and while his education expense was paid, he was eating through his savings to pay living expenses. He passed—one of only four in the class of 30 to do so on the first try. He has added seven additional billing and coding certifications and works from home for two hospital chains and a large health insurance provider. Alex takes as much work as he wants and says he is on pace at the age of 24 to earn $120,000 this year.

Colorado

Diane’s Success Story

Diane is a Long-term Unemployed individual who had not been able to reconnect with a job that provided comparable responsibility and pay. At her last place of employment, Diane was a Regulatory Compliance Specialist in the Oil & Gas industry. Diane came to Employment Services of Weld County seeking to enhance the skills that she gained while in the Air Force.
She drove various trucks and heavy equipment and is seeking to obtain her CDL to become more marketable in a high demand industry. She was enrolled in the Dislocated Worker Governor’s Long-term Unemployed program. Diane successfully completed her CDL-A training through Sage Technical Services. She obtained full-time employment with an Independent Electrical Company as their Compliance Manager, with prospects of growth and advancement.

**John’s Success Story**

John came in for a 1:1 intake session and comprehensive assessment in March 2016. John came from a mechanical drafting background, over 20 years, had been unemployed for more than 6 months and was struggling financially to the point where he and his wife were thinking of selling their home. He came to Arapahoe/Douglas Works for assistance with Solidworks training. From the beginning, John took advantage of the general workshops, available labor market information and job search strategy tips. He revised his resume, attended interviewing workshops and completed his training request packet thoroughly. He was approved to attend Alignex Inc. for Solidworks training, paid by the grant. Immediately, his resume was recognized by recruiters and online applications and he recently obtained a mechanical drafting position with RK mechanical making $33 an hour! John is also on track to finish his training to successfully to become a Certified Solidworks Professional (CSWP)!

**Hawaii**

**When One Door Closes, Another Opens: Bradley’s Success Story**

Bradley arrived at Oahu WorkLinks on August 24, 2015 having just been involuntarily terminated from his job. He was planning a career change, looking for a RN program, since he already had a bachelor’s degree in Psychology and Art & Technology. When initially seen by one of the Case Managers, career options were discussed at length. He was advised to do more research to find a locally “in demand” occupation that WIOA would be able to fund. Bradley was referred to Kumu A’o and the other websites that would become instrumental in discovering his career path. Bradley then decided that he could not meet Nursing Program prerequisites that had to be completed by September 1, 2015 for admittance in the spring semester nor could he afford living expenses during the two year nursing practicum. A short time later Bradley was granted unemployment insurance (UI) benefits. As a Dislocated Worker receiving UI benefits, he decided to go to DevLeague, an institution that specializes in Web Developing where he would be certified upon course completion. It’s an intense course taught from Monday through Saturday where students often don’t get enough sleep. DevLeague provided him with insights to his inner strength, connected him with valuable friends and fostered a camaraderie that gave him a sense of belonging. In his own words, Bradley says, “The days at DevLeague
were a minimum of 11 hours but typically I spent 16 or more there and they moved at an extremely fast rate. So completing that program showed me what I was really capable of! I feel so grateful for Oahu WorkLinks and the counselors there. Everyone who worked with me was compassionate and understanding of my situation. I never dreamed I would be a dislocated worker. Being unemployed deteriorates your self-confidence and self-value. The counselors were always understanding of this but invariably very encouraging. I’m also thankful for the WIOA and the On-the-Job Training opportunities Oahu WorkLinks orchestrated for me. Without these programs, I definitely would not be in the position I am in today. They really gave me the tools to redirect my life. Yes, it took a lot of work, but I am so very grateful to be given the chance at a new career that has a good outlook predicted for it!

“I’m also thankful for the WIOA and the On-the-Job Training opportunities Oahu WorkLinks orchestrated for me. Without these programs, I definitely would not be in the position I am in today. They really gave me the tools to redirect my life.”

Idaho

John’s Success Story

A veteran with disability, John, came to WIOA for help obtaining employment. His work experience consisted of harvest truck driving trucks along with some equipment maintenance. While in the military, he was a Weapons Squad leader but still found himself looking for work for more than a year to support his family after his tour of duty ended. Permanent truck driving positions, as he found out, meant obtaining a CDL. Based on assessments, John emerged as a good candidate for CDL training. Through the JD NEG program, he began training in December 2015. Once he completed the training, John had multiple job offers for his skills. He was soon employed with a local trucking company at $14/hr. with benefits. Update: As of September 2016, John is now earning over $21/hr. with full benefits.

Illinois

Michael’s Success Story

“Due to a merger of my previous employer with another company, I was laid off and was unemployed for about one year. I have an associate’s degree in science from the College of DuPage and a bachelor’s degree, NEG Participant also in science from DePaul University. I applied for many positions while out of work but received few responses and even fewer interview opportunities. Through the assistance and training provided
by TEC Services, I was able to earn my CompTIA A+ certification. The ITLaunch program also enabled me to acquire real-world work experience that helped me rebuild my confidence after being out of the workforce for so long. TEC Services also helped me to identify a career pathway that would help me to continue to develop in my professional employment opportunities. Finally, through TEC Services’ job placement assistance, I was able to find my current place of employment. Currently, I work for Support Techs, LLC, which provides technical support for one of the largest manufacturers of wireless networking equipment in the industry. My day-to-day duties include assisting customers and troubleshooting their technical issues. Without the technical skills and work experience provided by TEC Services and the ITLaunch program, I would never have been capable of tackling the wide range of daily challenges that my current position presents. I am very appreciative of the investment that DCEO, Will County and TEC Services made in me and my career path. I hope that programs like this continue to assist others that are in the long-term unemployment situation that I was able to overcome.”

Ashley’s Success Story

Ashley was laid off in November of 2012. When she applied for Accelerated Training in Manufacturing (ATIM) services she had exhausted her Unemployment Insurance (UI) and had worked a few different places part time for short periods. We did a full assessment and she appeared to be a good fit for the manufacturing industry. Ashley was placed in the Machinist Program at John Wood Community College. She started in April of 2014 and finished her training in June of 2015. She went through all of the MSSC components. Ashley was placed at The Knapheide Manufacturing Company from May of 2015 to the end of July 2015. She was working in Logistics and Inventory Control. She did so well that Knapheide extended her internship on their own. Ashley was hired on at Knaphiede 8/13/15 as a Receiving Clerk. She has mentioned that she likes the job a lot and is looking forward to long-term employment at Knaphiede.

Leon’s Success Story

Leon was laid off as a delivery driver for IV Container in April, 2015. He performed part time seasonal work for a local farmer that lasted only into fall of the year. He was having no success finding employment. As he completed the selection process to receive training, he recognized the value of obtaining additional industry recognized supply chain technology certificates to enhance his resume. He also recognized value of the individualized employment counseling, enhanced career services, such as resume preparation, interviewing skills, and participating in an employer panel workforce discussion. He was also able to take advantage of the NEG grant transportation assistance benefits. He elected to go into the Manufacturing Skill Standards Council (MSSC) program where he successfully earned his OSHA 10, Fork Truck, Logistic Associate and Logistic Technician certificates. Leon then completed his training by obtaining his
CDL Class A license. He was immediately offered employment with ADM Trucking with an OJT contract. Archer Daniel Midland (ADM) Trucking is a large trucking employer transporting ADM products locally and regionally.

**Gloria’s Success Story**

“I met Gloria several months ago when she started coming into our office searching for employment. Gloria did not have much work history and lacked English skills. I referred her to ESL, Title II at Iowa Central so she can improve her English skills. Her goal was to find full time employment in the construction field. She started attending ESL and did with full dedication for the past six months. Her English Skills are now at a good level where she feels comfortable to start looking for employment. We assisted her with the creation of her resume, practice on interviewing skills, and assisted her with job searches. She had an over the phone interview with HTH Construction Company about a week ago. She called me right after her over the phone interview to tell me that she was able to understand everything she was asked and able to respond to the questions she was asked. She has another interview scheduled this week and that one will be face-to-face. We did practice on interviewing questions, and gave her suggestions on how to respond to the questions. Now, this would be Gloria’s very first employment interview in English. Staff told her to talk about her skill and qualifications and to speak slow and enunciate the words so the interviewer can understand her better. She was so excited when she called today 03/14/16 to tell me that she has been offered a full time Insulating Position at HTH Construction Company. She also informed me that her hourly starting wage is $19.00 per hour. She has little experience in construction but due to the language barrier it kept her from advancing to other than construction laborer. Gloria stated that attending the ESL Classes made a huge difference, and had us to thank for encouraging her to take ESL Classes. She said, “I did not think I could actually learn, but I did”/ Gloria is a single mother of three children and going back to school to learn ESL was a difficult thing for her to do because her income is the only resource coming into the household. We were able to assist her with child care supportive services. She is so happy to be back to work and so thankful that we assisted her with so much support and encouragement.”

**Leo’s Success Story**

Leo found himself unemployed after a plant closing. He was a supervisor and had been making a good wage to support his family of 5. He came into the center inquiring about assistance to possible return to school to get his high school diploma and then pursue a career as a master Electrician. Having not been in school for many, many years this was a very big decision for Leo. He was enrolled as a Dislocated Worker in WIOA and began skills upgrade via the HSED program. By the end of 10 weeks of study and taking the Hiset tests, Leo had earned his High School equivalency diploma!! Throughout this time he continued to watch for employment opportunities. He was pursued by a couple of companies who were
aware of his previous skills and experience. Leo did accept a position as a supervisor making nearly the same wage he was making at the point of lay off. He said the fact that he had achieved his diploma was a huge plus in obtaining that same level. And he was most proud that he could model for his children the importance of education. He has not given up on his original goal of Master Electrician, but for now will work to support his family.

Deloss’ Success Story

Deloss is a young man who was an assembly line operator at Great Plains Manufacturing. He was there for 4 yrs. He was the only employee in his department that was laid off. He happened to come into the office one day and a WIOA referral was completed. Deloss was very excited knowing that he was now eligible for training. Upon our initial assessment Deloss had no direction and didn’t know what his next step was since recently being laid off. After talking with him we discovered he had the skills to be a good machine tooling technician. He discovered that tooling and machinery was a passion. After we overcame the hurdle of not having specific direction, he was excited to have a new goal in front of him which was achieving a Certificate of Advanced Machine Technology at SATC.

Deloss went from coming in the office and not knowing what to do to regain employment, with no since of direction, to discovering his skill set, enrolling at SATC for the Advanced Tooling Program, receiving his certificate and regaining employment. Deloss began as a laid off production assembly line operator to an employed Manufacturing Machine and Tooling Technician.

Karen’s Success Story

The Challenge: Karen had been unemployed for two years when she came to the Topeka Workforce Center (TWFC). Terminated from her last position, Karen had exhausted her unemployment benefits. At 49 years old, she was ready to begin a new career but very nervous about taking the first steps. Her husband was an over-the-road truck driver. With their children grown and out of the house, Karen wished to join her husband as a team driver but needed help getting started.

The Workforce Center (WFC) Solution: Karen’s WIOA ETS worked with Karen to connect her to a local truck driving training program. After an elevated blood pressure condition delayed the start of her training, Karen was discouraged, but stayed in close contact with the school and her ETS to stay on track and was able to start her training program after a slight delay. WIOA Dislocated Worker funds were utilized to help pay for the course. The WIOA ETS provided vital case management services and the school provided additional instruction on the weekends to help Karen complete training.
The Outcome: Karen successfully obtained her commercial driver’s license and obtained a team driving position which allowed her to go over-the-road with her husband. She has expressed much gratitude to Heartland Works, Inc. (HWI) for making this possible for her and even brought in flowers for her ETS when she completed the program.

Louisiana

Lee’s Success Story

Lee is a navy veteran who has worked in the oilfield industry for quite a number of years. He has a solid history of achievement in safety, maintenance, and operation of vessels inshore and offshore. He was working as a boat captain with Trinity Lifeboat Services for over 6 years when he was laid off due to a reduction in the workforce. He came into the Lafayette Business & Career Solutions Center for possible financial assistance for training in a new career. At the same time, he had applied and was receiving unemployment insurance benefits. Interested in training to become a CDL Driver, he was approved for tuition assistance through the JD-NEG grant. As a husband and father of two, he wanted secure employment. Lee attended Coastal Truck Driving School in Opelousas and was a diligent student. After his training, he had several trucking companies to choose from for employment. He decided on Schneider National and began work as a driver, earning $22.50 an hour, just a few weeks after he received his diploma and obtained his Class A License. Lee was very appreciative of our assistance and says he could not thank the program enough for helping him get back on his feet.

Dwayne’s Success Story

Dwayne has a diverse employment history. He has worked as an inventory control manager, an insurance representative, and a branch manager. He also has more than 6 years of experience in warehouse and employee management. He was last working as a warehouse supervisor for Coastal Electric Supply when he got laid off due to the decline in the oilfield industry. He tried applying for different jobs but with no success. He came to the Lafayette Business & Career Solutions Center for help. He asked for any assistance we could possibly give him. We first looked at his resume to see if possible improvements could be made. Since Dwayne was applying for different positions, we advised him to customize his resume for the jobs he was looking into – in effect, having more than one resume for each field of work he was interested in. We worked closely with Dwayne, formulating two distinctive resumes for specific jobs that were posted on HiRE. A staff referral was made for a warehouse personnel position at BMS of Acadiana. Dwayne was contacted, interviewed, and offered the position with BMS of Acadiana. Even though he would be making $10.00 per hour, he was told by his new employer that within 90 days they would look to move him into a supervisory position based on his previous experience. At that point, his wages would also be bumped up to $15.00 an hour. Dwayne called the office to share the good news, telling them he had accepted the job. He thanked them, saying they had gone far beyond what he had expected in assisting him in acquiring a new job.
William’s Success Story

Workforce Challenge: After working for the same home improvement company for nearly two decades, William found himself laid-off and in need of a new job. While he had been a dedicated employee, his existing skill set did not transfer well to non-manual labor positions.

Workforce Solution: William partnered with a Frederick County American Job Center Employment and Training Specialist to identify new job opportunities which would be a good match for his interests and abilities. After completing career assessment tests and reviewing options, he decided to pursue a job as a driver. William also took advantage of the Résumé Doctors expertise to ensure that his résumé would appeal to prospective employers.

Workforce Outcome: Upon successfully completing his CDL training, William obtained a full-time position as a dump truck driver with a local company.

Terrance’s Success Story

Workforce Challenge: Terrance registered with the Maryland Workforce Exchange Virtual One Stop (MWE-VOS) after he was discharged from the United States Army. He faced challenges transitioning from military life to civilian life as well as being unemployed. Seeking employment assistance, he attended the Job Match Program Orientation at Waldorf’s Southern Maryland JobSource.

Workforce Solution: Terrance took full advantage of the many resources available at the AJC. He attended the weekly Southern Maryland JobsSource Job Club to receive vital information that would help him in his job search. In addition, he completed the Reemployment Opportunity Workshop (ROW), Job Match Program, and advanced résumé workshops. He also worked on his elevator pitch, résumé, interviewing skills, job fair etiquette, and he participated in local customized recruitments to improve his chances of obtaining employment. His WIOA Career Counselor provided him with countless tips on how to successfully find employment.

Workforce Outcome: Terrance attended a job fair marketed on the WIOA Job Club “Hot Jobs” list. He was selected for an interview and utilized all the techniques he had learned from the many workshops, the WIOA Job Club, Job Match sessions, and ROW workshop. Terrance demonstrated impressive qualities during the interview and was offered the position of Supervisor of Production Assembly in Williamsport, Maryland. His starting salary more than met his financial needs. Terrance’s remarkable delivery of his talents also led to a sign-on bonus with benefits.
**Michigan**

**Katherine’s Success Story**

Katherine had been in the banking business nearly all of her adult working life. When the industry started to decline, she found that her life in the financial industry came to a halt. She decided to change her career entirely. As a single parent collecting unemployment insurance benefits, Katherine decided to visit Michigan Works! to research the possibilities. In the beginning, she considered training as a Radiological Technician. After completing the O*NET Career Interest Survey, a self-directed career exploration/ assessment tool that helps individuals discover and plan their career options, Katherine decided to train as a Medical Assistant. Katherine enrolled in the Associate degree program at Macomb Community College in August 2013. A Pell Grant and WIA Dislocated Worker training funds were used to meet the costs of tuition, books, and supplies. She was on the Dean’s list and excelled each and every semester. Less than two and a half years later, Katherine graduated from Macomb Community College and was hired by Alliance Health as a Medical Assistant.

**Minnesota**

**Tracy’s Success Story**

Tracy was working as a Systems Administrative Assistant at McKesson Medical-Surgical when she lost her job due to a company layoff. Shortly after, she was referred to HIRED’s Dislocated Worker Program to help her get back to work. In working with her employment counselor and reflecting on her next career move, she realized that returning to an office job would not suit her interests at this stage in her life. She wanted a career in which she could work with her hands, remembering her days of working as an electrical assistant as a teenager. Her HIRED employment counselor suggested that she consider HIRED’s Green Construction training program offered in partnership with American Workshop Construction Training Center, and Tracy jumped at the opportunity. She started the program in January of 2016, and by February, she had become one of the best in her class and graduated with top marks. She visited a career fair as she was wrapping up her coursework, and that is where she met a representative from Carpentry Contractors Company (CCC). She sent in an application, knowing that CCC was a company she wanted to work for, and within one week, she got the job and started working. Since then, Tracy has put her training to the test, learning how to build a house from the ground up. She has coworkers that support her, teaching her new tips on the job, and she has leaders who value hard work. She has already received one raise and is poised for another in the coming weeks. Most importantly, she has a new career that allows her to problem solve in new ways and use her physical strength.
A Success Story

“In July of 2013 I was laid off from my job as a Spectroscopist. A quick scan of the job market showed that I would not be able to find another job in this field. I enrolled in the Dislocated Worker Program and discussed my options with my Counselor. We decided that I would look for a position as a Quality Engineer. It seemed right for me since I had done QE work many years ago and I love Math, Physics and Engineering. I took a QE Certification class and the Dislocated Worker Program helped with some of the expenses which was good since I was on a very tight budget at the time. During this time, I attended the Veterans Networking Group at the Anoka County WorkForce Center, as I am an Air Force Veteran. While studying for the QE Certification test I interviewed at numerous companies. Both the Veterans Networking Group and my Counselor provided encouragement when I failed to get hired again, and again… Finally, in June 2014 after a mere 11 months of being unemployed I passed my CQE exam and was hired as a contractor for a QE position. When I became unemployed again, I re-enrolled in the Dislocated Workers Program and continued attending the Veteran’s Networking Group. They provided me with the encouragement that I definitely needed at this time in my life. In September 2015 I was hired as a QE contract employee at a small, privately owned company in Saint Paul. I absolutely love the work, the owners are great and my coworkers are just as odd and nerdy as I am. Last week I was made a permanent employee and two weeks from now I will be celebrating my 60th birthday. I have no intention of retiring early I love this job too much. This testimonial is a tribute to the folks at the Anoka County and Teamsters Dislocated Worker Program, and those that run the Anoka County WorkForce Center Veterans Networking Group. Without them I don’t think I would have made it.”

Mississippi

Avery’s Success Story

Avery had been employed in maintenance for nearly 15 years at Harrah’s Casino, but was laid off since 2014 due to closure. Even though he had applied for numerous jobs, he had not been contacted for an interview. Avery’s family had been dependent on his wife’s financial provision for over a year when he decided to seek assistance through the National Dislocated Worker Grant (NDWG) program. He needed to find full-time employment and he needed help. NDWG staff worked with Avery to improve his interviewing techniques which helped him successfully complete the interview process at Feuer Powertrain. He began working at Feuer through the NDWG Internship Program and also began training in the Combination Welding program at Coahoma Community College. The Harrah’s NDWG provided supportive services, financial assistance to purchase work boots, and work related item assistance during the Welding and Internship Training. As a full-time employee in Facilities Maintenance at Feuer Powertrain, Avery has gained marketable skills for an emerging industry and has become self-sufficient with the ability to provide for his family.
Avery stated, “I am glad I came here and that the NDWG program has been very helpful to me. It has provided skills that I always wanted to learn and those skills will help me in the long run to further myself in the workforce!”

Chaneyce’s Success Story

Chaneyce was a Dislocated Worker with a dream of becoming a teacher. She enrolled at Delta State University but due to financial struggles was on the verge of dropping out. Desperate, she talked to one of her professors about her financial hardship and learned about the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) program. She eagerly contacted the local WIN Job Center. Chaneyce was awarded an Individual Training Account that provided the tuition assistance she needed to complete her Bachelor’s Degree. Chaneyce accomplished her dream of becoming a teacher when she graduated in December 2015. She is happily employed with the Holmes County School District and teaches first grade at S. V. Marshall Elementary.

Chaneyce said, “Thank you for the financial assistance that helped me achieve my dream. Now I can give back to my community and help my students achieve their dreams just as WIOA helped me.”

Montana

Chris’ Success Story

Chris is a veteran who was unable to obtain suitable employment since his release from military duty in November 2015. He felt that on the job training was the most cost effective suitable training available to him. We were able to connect him with a local company that does computer consulting, repair, and management. He was able to utilize his transferable skills that he received while in the service. He was excited to be earning an income while being trained in a field he wants to make a career. Chris successfully completed the OJT and has continued his employment with them receiving a good wage with full benefits.

Bradd’s Success Story

Bradd was a dislocated worker from Sanjel who needed assistance in obtaining his CDL. He was laid off in late 2015 and wasn’t sure where to turn. He has always worked so this kind of took him off guard to now not have a job. We visited with him during Rapid Response meetings and also one on one. I worked with him to develop a plan to attend the CDL Training at Miles Community College. It was something he had interest in but didn’t realize that the
training was so accessible. He attended the training and graduated in mid-March. He soon became employed full time in Miles City as a CDL driver making $16.00 per hour. The company is also assisting him with obtaining additional training as he is a new driver.

New Hampshire

Laid-off After 27 years: Bryant’s Success Story

After working for Goss International for 27 years as a Manager in several departments, Bryant was earning $30 an hour and suddenly found himself part of a mass lay-off at the company in December 2015. Fortunately he attended a Rapid Response session where he learned about the WIOA program. Within a week of being laid off Bryant contacted a WIOA Employment Counselor. An initial assessment revealed that Bryant is a veteran who has some college, but no formal degree. He developed skills in sales, engineering and purchasing while working at Goss as a manager in several departments, learning everything on the job, but he didn't have credentials to support his skills.

Being unemployed was a new experience for Bryant and one he wasn't prepared for; he had been employed his entire adult life and he was quickly learning that the world of work had changed during this time. Through the process of searching for a new job, he soon discovered that employers were looking for Managers who were either certified as a Project Manager and/or had a degree. Working with an Employment Counselor he engaged in career assessment and labor market research activities, which helped him learn what jobs would be best for him and what was required to apply for them. It was through this process that he was reminded once again that many of the jobs he was interested in preferred or required project management certification. It was clear that he would greatly benefit from a Project Management Certification to fill in the gap in his skill set, and perhaps more importantly, be able to validate his skills to a new employer. Bryant chose to attend New Horizons Project Management Professional training in January 2016. He found the training to be challenging, but he completed his training in April. He updated his resume to include the training and immediately began a new job search. In May, five months after being laid off, he was hired as a Project Manager for AZZ Inc. at $43.27 an hour with full benefits.

New Mexico

Dixie’s Success Story

Dixie attended a Rapid Response event following a mass layoff at Sumitomo Electric Device Innovations (formerly Emcore Corp.). Dixie had been employed for twelve years and held a Master’s Degree in Sociology and a Bachelor’s in Sociology and Psychology.
With over ten years of progressive work experience in human resources Dixie recognized she was lacking an important credential, Professional Human Resource Certification, which many employers required for human resource directors. Dixie worked with a Career Development Specialist to identify local training providers available to provide the necessary training. Dixie received an Individual Training Account (ITA) to the University of New Mexico Continuing Education to attend the Human Resources Professional Program. She completed the Professional in Human Resources (PHR) certification and three months later was hired by X-Ray Associates of New Mexico as the Director of Human Resources.

North Dakota

Matt’s Success Story

Matt came to the WIOA program looking for financial assistance with welding training. He relocated from Western ND where he had been employed as a supervisor at a transport hub. With the downturn in the oil industry, he was terminated from his job and was living on savings with his girlfriend and their young child.

Matt was eligible for the WIOA Dislocated Worker program. He explored training options and was enrolled in a 12-week training program. Matt was a model student, passing all his industry recognized training certifications. He also worked full time during the 12-week training.

After graduation, Matt applied for and was hired in a union welding position. His starting wage was $18.52 per hour with full benefits. He will be eligible for a $3.70 per hour wage increase in each of the following five years of employment. He loves his work and is very appreciative of the WIOA assistance.

Chelsea’s Success Story

Chelsea came to Job Service North Dakota to ask about services for dislocated workers. She had recently been laid off from a job due to the slow-down in the oil industry. She was determined eligible for WIOA services as a dislocated worker.

After the approval process, Chelsea began training in the non-traditional occupation of welding. She completed the welding program with certifications in SMAW Stick Pipe Welding. Since graduating, Chelsea found a position with a construction company earning $24 per hour. WIOA helped with support services needed so she was able to accept the position. She now has a marketable skill and Chelsea should always be able to find employment.
Ohio

Dislocated Nuclear Engineer Finds Job: Dave’s Success Story

Dave was receiving unemployment benefits when he visited OhioMeansJobs Lawrence County for help finding work as a nuclear engineer. Kim, a customer service representative, helped him learn about three open positions. He applied for them and accepted one, which paid a starting salary of $100,000 a year. Although the job required the family to relocate, they were more than willing to do so. In addition, Kim helped Dave’s wife find work in their new location, as well.

Oklahoma

Sherry’s Success Story

When Cheryl, the WIA Specialist for Community Development Support Association (CDSA) at the Stillwater Workforce Center, first met Sherry, she was depressed and hopeless. She was very distraught over the recent news that the company where she had worked for 6 years was closing its Stillwater location because of the economic downturns. To make matters worse, she was not given an opportunity to move with the company. The financial battle she had been fighting to pay for her education just intensified by the loss of her job. Basically, she was at the point of quitting, giving up on her dream of becoming a Registered Nurse. She was anxious to find financial assistance to complete her training at Northern Oklahoma College. She had completed her general education and had begun the RN training. During Sherry’s training, there were many instances that she felt insecure and uncertain of her ability to complete the training. She would call the Specialist for support and a word of encouragement to continue on the course. Well, Sherry did succeed in completing the RN program and graduated on May 12, 2014 with an Associate Degree in Applied Science Nursing-Registered Nurse. She then took the NCLEX Exam on June 18, 2014 and received her License. By July 28, 2014, Sherry was hired at OU Medical Center, Critical Care Unit in Oklahoma City, OK. In the meantime, Sherry’s Dad assisted her with the purchase of a brand new car so that she would have better, reliable transportation. This would be the first time in many years that she would be on her own without being dependent on anyone and did not know how to act. When the Specialist had last seen Sherry, she looked like a new person. Her face was glowing and her eyes were sparkling. She was so excited and could not wait to begin a new chapter in her life. After commuting to Oklahoma City for nearly two months, she was able to rent an apartment close to work. Once Sherry had worked for a few months, the Specialist asked her how she was adjusting to becoming self-sufficient. Her exact statement, through tears of joy, was “I have to keep pinching myself to make sure it is really real, especially when I look at my paycheck and there is money left over after all my bills are met.” Sherry and Specialist, recalling the first day that they met, were both amazed at
the transformation that this accomplishment had made in her life, especially the Specialist. Sherry’s perseverance to succeed made such a huge impact that, more than a year later, the Specialist uses it as an example for others that face difficult moments and decisions during their training program. Sherry is such an inspiration.

“I have to keep pinching myself to make sure it is really real, especially when I look at my paycheck and there is money left over after all my bills are met.”

Puerto Rico

**Dislocated Worker Enters Employment through OJT: A Success Story**

This dislocated worker program participant is currently 52-years-old, divorced and lives alone. He had limited economic resources and has an Associate Degree in Accounting. Noel was referred for an interview with service provider Destilería, where he was selected to work as Sales Manager in an On the Job Training project. The participant successfully completed the 1,040 hour training, meeting all its requirements.

Due to his excellent performance, he was promoted to Production Supervisor, after demonstrating to have all the qualities that the company needed for the position. Currently, the participant continues to be an employee of the company. Noel is an example of commitment, discipline, responsibility, good attitude towards employment and dedication to achieving one’s goals.

South Dakota

**Carey’s Success Story**

Carey initially contacted the DLR for help with her resume. She had received notice from her employer, Trussbilt, that her position was being eliminated due to economic conditions. She had been employed there for over 23 years as an Inventory/Office Clerk. After visiting with Carey it was determined she was a dislocated worker.

Carey completed the Career Insite Interest Inventory and KeyTrain pre-testing. Together Carey and the Employment Specialist reviewed the assessments and worked together to develop an employment plan. It was discovered Carey possessed excellent computer skills,
but lacked computer experience in the area of bookkeeping and several of the positions she was interested in required QuickBooks knowledge.

The Employment Specialist looked into QuickBooks training and the next available class was scheduled through The Training Place in Aberdeen. The Employment Specialist coordinated the dates and times with Carey for the course and completed the initial paperwork to get her enrolled into the class. The workforce training program assisted Carey with class tuition, motel expenses and mileage to attend the QuickBooks course in Aberdeen.

In the meantime Carey heard AA Motorsports was looking for an office manager, so she went to their offices and completed an application and left her resume. Carey communicated to her Employment Specialist at DLR that Ray Glanzer, Owner of AA Motorsports had asked for an interview. The Employment Specialist offered to conduct a mock interview, however Carey felt comfortable without it after reviewing the “How to Survive After a Layoff” brochure. After the interview with Ray, Carey stopped out to visit with the Employment Specialist and let her know the interview went very well.

The Employment Specialist met with AA Motorsports and an OJT contract was written with AA Motorsports for Carey. She successfully completed her training course in QuickBooks.

Carey loves her job! The business is thriving and was recently awarded the Polaris dealership.

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**Tennessee**

**John’s Success Story**

John, a veteran, was laid off from Loretto Telephone Company in Lawrence County 12-31-2015. He had worked 25 plus years in the network security field. He was registered with the American Job Center in March 2016 and received. His assessments indicated an interest in Truck Driving, so an ITA was written with Superior Truck Driving Institute. After completing his training he is working as a truck driver at Howard Transportation in Ellisville, MS.
Vermont

A Success Story

After experiencing a layoff after 15 years of employment, a participant was referred to the Barre American Job Center for job search assistance: “I found myself floundering in a world of resumes, cover letters, copying, pasting, and attaching which were scary to say the least. I had no idea where or how to find gainful employment. I was afraid my work history would not lead me to the kind of job I really wanted. Thank goodness in seeking help with Economic Services, I was told to go upstairs to the Resource Center (Barre’s American Job Service Office).”

The Barre office staff helped her not only with her resume, but also with her confidence, identifying the many transferrable skills that she had to offer. After attending an interviewing workshop, and creating a resume that reflected her skills and experience, she went to her first interview with the confidence to present herself to the employer. She believes the help she received from VDOL has made her a better candidate for employment and she is on her way “to find the career I deserve”. She is now employed at a fuel dealership.

Virginia

Tiffany’s Success Story

Tiffany came into the Capital Region’s Resource Workforce Center in Henrico County by way of the Virginia Employment Commission RESEA (Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessment) program. After a presentation on Workforce Center Services, Tiffany entered the WIOA Program as a Dislocated Worker having been impacted by the closures of Macy’s Department Stores in the region. She had risen through the ranks at Macy’s to the position of Merchandising Manager. Without an advanced education, she realized that she lacked the certification and credential that would enable her to re-enter the workforce at the same level to which she had obtained with Macy’s. Through the WIOA program, Tiffany was able to receive Labor Market Information, job skills and funding to complete the Project Management Professional course through training partner, GIT Services. After successful completion of the PMP course, several opportunities opened very quickly and she recently accepted the position of Operations Manager with a local branch of Burlington Coat Factory. As she ventures through her new employment opportunity, she will be utilizing her hours of experience to continue her track toward her PMP certification. Tiffany has shown great dedication and initiative in the WIOA program and has benefitted through both the training she received and the opportunity for a new level in her career.
Andrew’s Success Story

Andrew, a young military veteran, did what most people do when they visit the Opportunity, Inc. One-Stop Workforce Center in Norfolk – he rang the bell for employment. Recently separated from the Navy and looking for work, Compton came to the workforce center hoping to cultivate a job opportunity. He was given the option to enroll in short-term workforce training and/or receive On-The-Job Training (OJT). After conversations with JobDriven National Dislocated Worker Grant (NDWG) Coordinator Paul, placement into an OJT program seemed appropriate. Andrew began to look for work in a variety of industries including IT, healthcare, advanced manufacturing, logistics and transportation. Heather, a certified Virginia adult career coach at Tidewater Community College, would help him navigate the challenges that lie ahead. Compton worked with Heather to refine some of his “soft skills” and help him prepare for his next interview. That meant writing resumes and cover letters as well as developing interview tactics and strategies. Within a few weeks, Business Services Coordinator Jackie matched Andrew with a job (machine operator) at Hermes Abrasives, a local manufacturer. While he did get an interview, he wasn’t offered the job. But, Compton’s story doesn’t end there. As it turns out, he had written a “thank you” letter after the job interview; a polite gesture that is frequently overlooked by jobseekers but one that can make all the difference in a tight labor market. The letter prompted the folks at Hermes to revisit his application and ultimately make Andrew a job offer, which he gladly accepted. “I was very impressed with the Opportunity, Inc. staff and how they explained the OJT program to me and worked with me on identifying companies that would be interested in somebody with my skills,” Andrew said while reflecting on his experience. “I appreciate all the support and encouragement the staff provided, especially when it looked like I might not get the job after a difficult interview. But it worked out well in the end!” Andrew’s success story would not have been possible without the JD NDWG program and the team efforts of Opportunity, Inc.,

“I was very impressed with the Opportunity, Inc. staff and how they explained the OJT program to me and worked with me on identifying companies that would be interested in somebody with my skills.”

West Virginia

Andy’s Success Story

In March, 2015, Andy, a disabled Veteran, visited the WORKFORCE West Virginia Career Center in Wheeling because he had recently been laid off by his employer where he worked as a Pilot Driver at $13 per hour. The employer terminated his job position entirely. But, his Supervisor did tell him that if he could get a CDL, they would rehire him.
So, Andy enrolled in a CDL training program funded under the WIOA. In May, 2015, Andy successfully completed his CDL training. The CDL Instructor said Andy was “an excellent driver.” Andy then received his CDL license. In June, 2015, Andy’s former employer rehired him as a Water Truck Driver at $16 per hour. Because Andy excelled in this job position, the Supervisor began training him in another job position where he made $19 per hour. In March, 2016 Andy left this employer for a better job opportunity with a new employer where he was hired as a CDL Oil Field Hand. Andy is now driving big rigs hauling pipe earning about $21 per hour. Andy says his new employer is very “Veteran friendly.” Andy really appreciates the training opportunities that were provided to him at the WFWV Career Center.

A Customer’s Success Story

A customer enrolled in the WIOA program as a dislocated worker in September 2015. This customer had taken placement testing at WVU-P the month before, scoring at a remedial level in math. He was unsure of what training program to enroll in, so he decided not to enroll in classes at that time. When the case manager first met with him, they discussed occupational interests, completed career exploration, and then discussed his placement test scores. With the help of the case manager, the customer decided that he needed time to decide on a training and career path. They also decided that he would benefit from working with Adult Education and tutoring in math. His WIOA case manager referred him to the Lincoln Adult Learning Center for soft skills training and academic tutoring, which he began on September 22, 2015. He attended classes four days per week until the end of December 2015. When he began Adult Education remediation, his TABE score in Math Computation was at a 6th grade level; when he retested in December he scored at a 12th grade level. He took the WVU-P placement test again the first week of December 2015 and tested out of remedial level courses. He registered for classes starting in spring 2016, majoring in the Industrial Maintenance Certificate program. He is scheduled to complete the program by December 2016. Adult Education is also providing continuing support to this customer. He is continuing to utilize tutoring services through Adult education and meets with the instructor every Thursday to go over homework, and discuss any other issues he may be having at school. This customer has greatly benefitted from the collaborative relationship between Workforce WV, the WIOA program and case managers, Adult Education and WVU-P.

Wyoming

Michael’ Success Story

Michael had worked for APW Wyott for five years when the plant was closed and relocated out of the United States. Michael was a brake press operator at APW Wyott. There were no brake press operator jobs in Cheyenne or elsewhere in Wyoming when Michael was laid off. He had also worked for APW Wyott for six months in 2000 as a laborer, but was laid off due to a slowdown in work. Michael’s other work experience was primarily as a laborer working for
a local sanitation company and in laborer positions through a local employment placement agency. Michael had also worked in the food industry and was a kitchen manager for a local restaurant for two years. Michael quit school after ninth grade, but earned his GED when he was 29-years-old. He had no other formal education or training, but had some transferrable skills from his job at APW Wyott to the field of truck driving. At APW Wyott, Michael had to adhere to and be knowledgeable in strict safety procedures. The field of truck driving requires that a driver must be safety conscious. Michael's case manager, Terri, at the Cheyenne Workforce Center, helped him become a dual participant in the WIA and TAA programs, which were jointly used to accomplish his training and employment goals. Terri helped Michael hone his work interests through career interest assessments, and assisted with his labor market research and resume development, among other services. She then facilitated his entry into training and helped him apply for a driving position with Gemini Trucking, while he was still in training. Michael was the only one from his class hired. He credited this success in finding employment, especially a job in the oil industry, with Gemini Trucking, to two things: first, his work longevity at APW Wyott and the fact that his job at APW Wyott involved safety procedures; and second, Michael credits the skills he learned at the workforce center as being instrumental in helping him get this job. Michael attended workshops that focused on interviewing and completing job applications. Michael stated he used things he learned in these workshops while applying and interviewing. Michael graduated from truck driving school on September 12, 2014 and began his new job on September 22, 2014. During training he made $800 per week, but now makes a minimum of $1,000 per week equaling $25 per hour. He works evenings, so he looks forward to gaining seniority and moving up with the company and the ability to work day shifts. He stated he is enjoying his new career.

William's Success Story

William (Bill) was a Vietnam era veteran that was a participant of case manager Pam, of the Sheridan Workforce Center, in the Dislocated Worker program. Bill had worked construction most of his life and was laid off for the season. His unemployment insurance was running out. With his age, the physical demands of his current work experience was becoming a factor and Bill needed to continue to work to support himself and survive. Bill had the construction background and had been around trucking for most of his employment but had never received his CDL. Bill wanted to obtain his CDL license and worked very hard at getting his CDL permit and passing his Department of Transportation physical examination. Bill passed the CDL training in Casper, which was received through the Wyoming Contractors Association, and obtained his license. Pam then helped Bill on job searching and interview prepping. Bill obtained employment as a truck driver for a sanitation company and is receiving self-sustainable wages.
Arkansas

Chris’s Success Story

A pay increase of 572 percent is not exactly promised upon certification into the TAA program, but that’s exactly the windfall that came Chris’s way from the time of certification to the time he completed training and began working in his new field. “I went from bringing home $700 every two weeks to bringing home $2,000 a week,” said Chris, who began employment as a TIG welder after completing the Pipe and Structural Welding program at Black River Technical College. Chris was earning $9.27 an hour handling incoming calls for a national cell phone manufacturer. He had only a high school diploma and little hope for further education. Then the cell phone company broke the contract, sent the jobs overseas, and suddenly the door opened for TAA benefits. He didn’t take advantage right away, instead taking a job where he earned experience and a basic certificate as a welder. An instructor at the Black River program told him about the difference in pay with the more advanced type of welding. So, when he got laid off again, triggering the activation of his TAA benefits again, he knew exactly what he wanted to do. “It was amazing,” said Chris, one of the few from StarTek to take advantage of the TAA program. “I don’t understand that because it turned my life around.”

Dallas’s Success Story

Former Bosch Industries plant engineer Dallas twice resisted the offer of help from the Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) program when his first two jobs with the company were swept out from under him and shipped overseas. When it happened a third time, he listened more closely at the Rapid Response meeting of the Governor’s Dislocated Worker Taskforce. Causey decided to take advantage of TAA funds to retrain in a completely new field. He’s now an Occupational Therapy Assistant (OTA) for the Arkansas Therapy Services affiliate in Russellville, something he never would have dreamed of a few years ago. “My only regret is that I didn’t do it sooner, because I love this job,” Dallas said. But why the medical field after a 30-year career as a manufacturing engineer? “To be honest, it was the only degree I researched where I could start out making close to what I was making as an engineer.” Dallas said when Bosch left the state for Mexico and China—not once, but thrice—closing three plants where he worked, he thought he would have a hard time getting another job as a plant engineer outside of that company because he doesn’t have a degree. In deliberating the new course of his life at age 53, he chose wisely—he says he makes as much in 35-40 hours a week as he made in 55-60 hours with a lot less stress.

“My only regret is that I didn’t do it sooner, because I love this job.”
Colorado

Vanessa’s Success Story

Vanessa was laid off from T-Mobile after 7 years of employment. She was a customer service agent earning $21.12 an hour. She only had a high school diploma and could not find a job even close to her previous salary. She has 3 kids and her husband worked two jobs. They were on food stamps and Medicaid. Vanessa was eligible for TAA and WIOA benefits. TAA paid for her tuition to attend school for an AAS degree in Respiratory Therapy, and provided gas cards to assist with the cost of transportation to and from school. After her UI benefits exhausted, she received TRA benefits to help sustain her financially while in school. Vanessa graduated in May 2015 (AAS degree) and received her Respiratory Therapy license in July 2015. In August 2015, she was hired as a Respiratory Therapist by a Denver hospital where she now earns $21.70, which is more than she made at T-Mobile. She is no longer on food stamps and loves her new career.

District of Columbia

Mr. Calvin’s Success Story

Mr. Calvin hails from Oregon as a result of a paper mill closure. He filed for TAA in February 2016, with hopes of starting over. As the child of hearing-impaired parents, Mr. Calvin is very active in the field of hearing-impaired community support. He decided to further his education to become a stronger ally for the community to which both of his parents belong. Through TAA, Mr. Calvin is now enrolled as a transfer student at Gallaudet University pursuing his Bachelor of Arts in Interpretation. Mr. Calvin’s expected graduation date is May 2017.

Illinois

Mae’s Success Story

Mae became an impacted worker when she was laid off from Hostess Brands on October 19, 2014 and she became a client of National Able Network on January 26, 2016. Mae knew that a barrier to her being able to find employment in a field that would provide her with the opportunity to have a career with advancement possibilities was that she did not have her GED. Mae had a plan from the very beginning – she wanted to get her GED and then go on and get her certification as an EKG Technician. Mae was approved
for and entered training at Triton College to get her GED credential in March 2015. In April 2016 Mae completed her GED classes and received her High School Equivalency Certificate from the Illinois Community College Board. Mae then did all the research for her occupational training and decided that she not only wanted to get her EKG Technician Certificate but to also get her certification as a Phlebotomy Technician. She found that both of the courses were being offered concurrently at Triton College where she studied for her GED. Mae was approved for the training and began taking classes for both certifications in June 2016. She successfully completed the EKG certification and the Phlebotomy certification in August 2016. Mae is currently conducting a job search on her own and will be participating in both the Jump Start Workshop and Job Search Work Team programs provided by National Able. Mae is confident that she will find a rewarding position with a health care provider in the very near future that will provide her with the opportunity to support herself and her son now and in the future.

Kansas

Miss A.’s Success Story

Miss A. came to our office when she laid off from as a Senior Customer Service Representative overseeing a team of 15 Customer Service Representatives. Her job had been outsourced to the Philippines and she was entitled to benefits under the Trade Adjustment Act. Previously she had completed two years of college at Tuskegee University majoring in Mechanical Engineering; however, without the full four year degree she was not able to secure a position in that field. After applying to 3-4 positions a week and not getting any response she started to reevaluate what her next career path would be. She expressed serious interest in entering the medical field in some capacity. After discussions with her Case Manager, she decided that entering the Occupational Therapy field might be an alternative. She enrolled in to earn an Associate Degree of Applied Science – Occupational Therapy Assistant. Miss A. maintained high grades during the entire program and graduated that program. She took her boards to earn her license and passed on her first attempt. Within the next two months she received two offers working PRN as an Occupational Therapy Assistant one paying 55% more than what she was previously earning at T-Mobile and the other paying 84% more than she was earning before lay off. Miss A. says, “I really want to show my gratitude for this program, and my case manager. I had no idea of what the future held for me once I was laid off from my job. I didn’t really believe this program was as good as it sounded to be. My case manager took the time to reassure me not only was it true, but if I completed it I could have a chance at a career not just a job. She worked with me every step of the way and made sure everything was taken care in a timely manner. Now that I have completed the program I have a career that love!”
“I really want to show my gratitude for this program, and my case manager. I had no idea of what the future held for me once I was laid off from my job. I didn’t really believe this program was as good as it sounded to be.”

Montana

Janet’s Success Story

Janet relocated to Montana from Washington. She was TAA eligible for a petition out of Oregon. Janet came in to work on her career assessments to determine what direction to go. She first wanted to go the medical route but after completing and reviewing assessments it was determined the best career opportunity using her TAA would be Paralegal. Janet was co-enrolled in DW and TAA, she enrolled at the college in the two-year Paralegal program where she maintained a 4.0 through the program. She graduated this spring with an associate’s degree with highest honors. Shortly after graduation, she went to work as a full time paralegal at the Lake County Attorney’s office.

Rick’s Success Story

Rick was laid off from REC Silicon in November of 2013 and was eligible for TAA under a 2011 petition. Rick started training at Montana Tech in January 2014 in the Civil Engineering Technician program and attained his AA Degree in December 2015. Rick is now a full time Civil Engineering Technician for the Montana Department of Transportation making $16.50 per hour with full benefits.

Vermont

Todd’s Success Story

Todd was laid off from his CNC Machine Operator position at Kennametal in July of 2014 due to permanent facility closure. He had begun employment with the company in May of 1995, and at time of dislocation, had worked a combined 30 years within the manufacturing industry. Todd first learned about the services offered by the Vermont Department of Labor when he attended a Rapid Response session for employees of Kennametal. The company was granted a Certified Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) petition which provided additional services and benefits to employees. Todd met with a case manager and enrolled in both the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) program and the TAA Program; both designed to prepare individuals to reenter the workforce as soon as possible and
provide training if necessary. The Department of Labor discussed different careers and local labor market information with Todd; choosing a new career after 30 dedicated years can be a stressful step. Todd presented many transferable skills including a strong mechanical background, good judgment and decision making skills; he also shared that throughout his career he always had an interest in CDL driving and heavy equipment, yet never the opportunity to make a career change. Todd scheduled informational interviews with several employers before committing to training; he was able to ask specific questions and to feel confident in his abilities to become re-employed after training. Todd began CDL Class A Training with Giroux General Transport in October, 2014. The training was accomplished 43 miles from his home. All expenses including mileage reimbursement, course fees and licensure were covered through TAA funding. Todd also obtained his Hazmat and Tanker Endorsements. In December, 2014 Todd was offered full time employment with Fred’s Energy in his home town of Lyndonville, VT where he continues to be happily employed. He has also completed additional training and is now CETP certified to deliver propane. Todd’s current salary is equivalent to that which he earned before dislocation and will likely increase with experience.

Todd states he loves his new job and feels thankful for the career change made possible by TAA funding and a little help from his local Career Center.

Larry’s Success Story

Larry is a 45-year old Dislocated Worker (DLW) (TRADE) that worked for 19 years at Kennametal, Inc. He was laid off when they closed their Lyndonville, VT plant in July of 2014. Larry worked in a highly specialized position, Vacuum Coating Operator. Due to his excellent work record and positive attitude, he was asked to stay on as a trainer as the work on his machine was transitioned to Greenfield, MA. His final day of work with the company was December, 19, 2014. Upon separation, Larry was very fearful and discouraged about his future. He really had no sense of direction and no plan to become re-employed. We began his re-employment process with a thorough assessment which included an intensive assessment interview that allowed me to understand his personal values and goals. As a first step, Larry was referred to Northeast Kingdom Learning Services as he felt his computer skills needed to some improvement. He went faithfully to their learning center and quickly gained confidence in his computer skills and his ability to be a learner. After assessment of his interests, barriers and skills, he became focused on gaining a Class A CDL license. With the support of TAA training funds, Larry enrolled in a full-time CDL training class and successfully completed. Shortly after completion of this training, he was offered a job as a Highway Maintenance Workers with the Town of St. Johnsbury. He started at $16.31/hr. and over the next two years will be back up to $18.55/hr. He also is provided great benefits including 4 weeks of PTO and excellent health insurance for his family. He is still in this job and reports he loves it and feels very grateful for the opportunity. Throughout my work with Larry, he gained a strong sense of self-worth and confidence. One day during this period, he came into my office with a piece of writing that he wanted to share titled “My Life Story”. He admitted that he had never felt confident in sharing his feelings and certainly had never taken the time to write them down.
Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act

OTHER SUCCESS STORIES
Army veteran Christopher is a great example of a veteran who had a positive experience at an Alaska Job Center. When Christopher first entered the Mat-Su Job Center, he was homeless, depressed, and experiencing personal family challenges. After going through an initial assessment, he was quickly determined eligible for and referred to the Disabled Veterans’ Outreach Program (DVOP). With the help of job center staff, Christopher was quickly connected with a local housing program to help him obtain permanent housing, rather than having to continue to live in a tent. He was also referred to a temporary position working as a skid-steer operator that led to long-term employment as a carpenter earning $17.00 per hour. Upon accepting the carpenter position, Christopher contacted the job center to inform staff of his success. Through the course of the discussion, staff learned that Christopher was in need of basic carpentry tools and connected him with the Dislocated Worker program for assistance with obtaining the tools needed for the job. Unfortunately, three months later, Christopher was laid off and again spiraled into depression. In an attempt to distract himself from his current circumstances, Christopher decided to volunteer to help fight a local wildfire. Christopher was rejected from the first two organizations he spoke with as they were fully staffed with volunteers. Feeling down and rejected, Christopher decided to offer his assistance to one more operation and spoke with the owner of a catering company called The Chocolate Gypsy, who was contracted to feed the fire fighters. The owner reluctantly agreed to let him volunteer but quickly noticed his superb work ethic and informed him she would compensate his efforts. The next day, when Christopher tried to work at the kitchen, he was rejected from the volunteer area, but was instead handed new-hire paperwork. He was hired as the Assistant Kitchen Manager at $14.00 per hour. He continued to work for The Chocolate Gypsy throughout the fire season, showing his value to the company.

By the end of the season, the owner expressed a desire to open a new restaurant in Delta Junction and asked Christopher if he was interested in operating the new venture. He quickly agreed and became the Kitchen Manager/Lead Chef at $18.50 per hour. When Christopher contacted job center staff to inform them of his latest opportunity, he conveyed the following message:

“What I have to say about the Mat-Su Job Center and the wonderful people who work there is, it works! What a wonderful place with fantastic resources!”
Arizona

Partnerships: WIOA, Vocational Rehabilitation program and Employer (WestCare): Janet’s Success Story

Janet was referred to the Bullhead City ARIZONA@WORK Job Center by WestCare. Janet was a victim of domestic violence and was residing at their safe house but was distinguished by the Director of WestCare as a good fit for a Peer Support Specialist/Social Services Assistant at the shelter. The opportunity would provide Janet with the needed work experience to learn the position and its responsibilities, while meeting WestCare’s hiring requirements, such as passing a background check and obtaining her Food Handlers and CPR cards. Janet was also a participant in the Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) program through DES. Partnering with VR, Workforce Development staff were able to work together to provide Janet with the necessary tools to make her successful. The Vocational Rehabilitation program provided hearing aids for Janet, who needed to be able to converse with the safe house residents. WIOA assisted with a 90-day Work Experience, new work clothes and the CPR and Food Handlers cards. WestCare provided the work opportunity, training and mentoring, and the background clearance card.

Through the partnership efforts of these three agencies, Janet was able to obtain full-time employment at WestCare in a position of responsibility, assisting victims of domestic violence, as well as becoming an independent and self-supporting individual.

California

Veteran Retrained via the Desert Green Veterans Grant: Lennie’s Success Story

Lennie struggled to find work after he was laid off from the construction industry. He received skills assessment, career counseling and job-training through the Desert Green Veterans Grant obtained by the San Bernardino County Workforce Investment Board to retrain him as a heavy equipment operator and transfer his skills into a growing industry.

Before

- 170,000 construction workers were laid off in San Bernardino County
- Alvarez was laid off from construction job and at the age of 52, he felt he had no options

4 This material was approved for publication on the Workforce Investment Works campaign website hosted by the National Association of Workforce Boards. The full story may be viewed at www.WorkforceInvestmentWorks.com.
After
- Alvarez discovered new career opportunities at the San Bernardino County Workforce Investment Board Employment Resource Center in Hesperia, CA.
- He received career mentoring and job placement support and qualified for the heavy equipment operator program through the Desert Green Veterans Grant.
- Alvarez received his certification and is now enrolled in a program to receive his Class A license as a heavy equipment operator.

Colorado

Kyle’s Success Story

Kyle was a U.S. Army Transitioning Service Member interested in civilian employment in Operations Management. He contacted Disabled Veterans Outreach Program (DVOP) Pete Hall to learn more about the CDLE Hilton HHonors Military Program paying for hotel stays related to job search. He was eligible for enrollment and his research led him to Orion International, a military talent firm specializing in programs that allow organizations to attract, hire, and retain military talent. He registered with the company and elected to attend a hiring conference in San Diego, CA at the end of the month. He attended two hiring conferences and within four months he accepted a job offer from Cupertino Electric, Inc. in San Jose, CA as their new Project Engineer with a starting salary of $100,000. Kyle contacted Pete Hall with the good news and had this to say about his new job: “It’s a fun job with all sorts of interesting challenges. My wife and I moved out to San Jose, CA in November and are loving it. Thank you again for your help getting the benefit processed promptly. If you ever need a testimonial about the benefit, or CDLE’s veteran programs, don’t hesitate to contact me.”

A Veteran’s Success Story

“I don’t have words to express my emotions properly regarding WIA and your specific support. Know that I hold both very dear to me and I am grateful for my experience. When I walked in the door two years ago, I felt as though my dreams were a distant hope. Because of your efforts, help and kind shoulder, I am here today, as an astrobiologist at NASA.”

When this customer came into the American Job Center he was an unemployed almost homeless vet with a disability, a BS degree in Biology and a strong determination to become an astrobiologist. He received assistance through Veterans programs and Hire for Colorado for classes needed for him to move from his biology degree into astrobiology. The customer has been selected to do an internship with NASA for the summer. He will return to CU Boulder in the fall to begin his PhD in astrobiology (partially funded by NASA).
Connecticut

Job Corps Success

Deana Washington came to Hartford Job Corps Academy (HJCA) with a goal to prepare for and enter college by the fall semester. She also saw Hartford Job Corps Academy as an opportunity to develop herself personally and gain the confidence she felt she needed to be successful in order to live independently. In just a few short months, Deana overcame incredible obstacles, quietly became a student leader on campus, and realized many of her objectives, including bolstered confidence and a confirmed September 2016 start date at Manchester Community College. Soon after entering the Insurance and Financial Services (IFS) trade at HJCA, Deana (pictured at right) earned her “Phase Four” card, a designation reserved for students who exemplify the six core values at HJCA. Although she volunteered for community service projects and tutored fellow students regularly, she did so without missing a beat during the training day. In fact, Deana completed the majority of the IFS coursework within sixty days of entering the class. She excelled in all her certification tests, earning her Internet and Core Computing (IC3) and Microsoft Office Specialist designations in short order. According to Certipoint, a credentialing organization for Microsoft, Deana has been named the 2016 State Champion for her performance on the exam. Another accomplishment for Deana came about when United States Senator Chris Murphy’s office contacted HJCA to see if a student might qualify as an intern for the senator. With her completed application and essay, and recommendations from a number of professionals at HJCA, Deana earned an internship in the senator’s Washington, D.C. office—an exceptional achievement for any Job Corps student since most congressional interns are juniors or seniors in college or have graduated.

District of Columbia

Ellie’s Success Story

Ellie began her employment journey in 2012 through the American Job Center located—Northeast, where she was referred to the Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP). With the help of the program, Ellie attended computer training classes with the non-profit organization Byte Back, which offers free computer training to low-income DC residents. Byte Back also served as her SCSEP host agency site. Ellie challenged herself to learn new technologies while at Byte Back, learning how to navigate eTapestry, a donor management system. In June 2016, Ellie earned a Nonprofit Management Certificate from Graduate School USA. After four years with SCSEP, Ellie secured permanent, unsubsidized employment with the DC Department of Health Care Finance. She started her new job as a Program Support Assistant on September 19, 2016.
Kansas

An Ex-Offender: Daniel’s Success Story

Daniel had been incarcerated for over 2 years. He also had a very spotty work history, and lacked skills that would lead to a self-sufficient job. He needed an opportunity to learn new skills, while earning money to pay off fines and meet financial obligations. With the help of a WIOA Employment Specialist, his self-confidence was strengthened, soft skills improved, and transferable skills identified. His Employment Specialist also helped him develop a plan to avoid or cope with people, places, and things that have caused problems in the past. Additionally, his Employment Specialist helped Daniel set up a viable support structure in the community. Daniel was also set up with an On-the-Job training opportunity through WIOA with an employer in a high demand occupation. Daniel interviewed with the employer while still in prison. Daniel began employment with a manufacturing employer within the first two weeks out of prison. He started as a machine operator and has also taken on additional job duties. He has maintained the job for the past 15 months and now makes over $15.00 per hour. Daniel has a new, positive outlook on his life and career. The future looks bright for Daniel and his family.

Daniel began employment with a manufacturing employer within the first two weeks out of prison. He started as a machine operator and has also taken on additional job duties. He has maintained the job for the past 15 months and now makes over $15.00 per hour. Daniel has a new, positive outlook on his life and career.

Maryland

Alan’s Success Story

Workforce Challenge: Unemployed with a history of legal difficulties, veteran Alan was ordered by the court to become a participant in the Baltimore McVets Program.

Workforce Solution: Alan began the process of becoming connected to Workforce Development at McVets. The Manufacturing Extension Partnership (MEP) was conducting an informational outreach session for potential participants, and Alan realized this program could be what he needed. After being regarded eligible to participate in the MEP, he was referred for services to the Mayor’s Office of Employment Development (MOED). At MOED, he was deemed eligible for services provided through the Job Driven National Emergency Grant (JD NEG). Alan entered into MEP-conducted training – a specialized four week
“Manufacturing Boot Camp” – equipping him with skills needed to reengage with the workforce. Designing a proper résumé, preparing for an interview, and managing time and punctuality were capped off with a two week job readiness training conducted in the workplaces of various manufacturers.

Workforce Outcome: Alan successfully graduated the MEP Boot Camp and was promptly hired by a local Baltimore manufacturing company. Alan started with an hourly rate of $16.65 and has seen his pay rate rise to $18.03 over the last eleven months. In his words, “The MEP program not only prepared me with the proper tools in order to become employed, they also lined me up with different businesses that were hiring. I am currently working at a company that offers competitive wages, health-care, advancement, and – most importantly – retirement. Without the MEP program and their helpful staff, I wouldn’t be where I am at today.” Alan successfully completed a JD NEG on-the-job training in support of his ongoing training to be a Maintenance Mechanic in fall 2015. As of this writing, he is still successfully employed with the same company and regularly receives high reviews when Department of Labor, Licensing, and Regulation (DLLR) grant managers perform employment follow-ups.

Charles’ Success Story

Workforce Challenge: Charles is a service-connected disabled Combat Infantry Army Soldier who was medically retired. He was referred to the Allegany County AJC by a U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs’ Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment (VR&E) coordinator.

Workforce Solution: Through VR&E’s Workstudy program, Allegany County AJC hired Charles to assist with the veteran services program. Hiring Charles through Workstudy afforded him many opportunities; for example, he could, help other veterans with employment needs, gain career choices insight, learn interview techniques, hone his résumé-writing skills, acquire key-wording strategies, and afford his mortgage and other life expenses. Although not easy, Charles attended college as a full-time student while working full-time at the AJC. Realizing Charles’ priority was attaining his education, AJC management catered a work schedule around his classes.

Workforce Outcome: The Allegany County AJC veteran services staff were thankful for the part they played in helping Charles achieve his education and employment goals. After attaining his cyber security degree, Charles was referred through the VR&E program to assist him in his employment needs. He was hired with the Department of Homeland Security in Harpers Ferry, West Virginia.
Mississippi

Curtis’s Success Story

Curtis, then a 61-year-old disabled veteran, had been desperately looking for employment for nearly two years. Even though he was able to attend a few job interviews during this time, he felt that he lost each opportunity because he did not have a high school diploma or a GED. Curtis also was fighting serious health issues. In April of 2013, Mr. Young verified his eligibility to join the Senior Community Service Employment Program. This Title V program helps seniors who are most in need update job skills and requires them to attend GED classes. Curtis was assigned to work as a Stocking Assistant at the Forrest County WIC Food Distribution Center in Hattiesburg. He was soon admired by both employees and patrons for his hard work and never-failing kindness. Curtis is a gentleman who embodies the American spirit of strength and perseverance in the face of adversity. During the three years that Curtis was enrolled in this program, he suffered a heart attack and cancer. Those serious illnesses never stopped him from keeping his commitments to his training program or from attending GED classes.

Just recently, at the age of 64, Curtis obtained his GED and was hired by his Host Agency. Curtis credits the training and support he received from the Senior Community Service Employment Program for making it possible for him to achieve his education and career goals.

New Hampshire

Apprenticeship: Corey’s Success Story

Corey is a 35-year-old married woman and mother of a 13-year-old son. She had been employed for the last two years as a comptroller and was laid off from the company after new ownership took over. She believes the layoff occurred because of a felony conviction back in 2012. Corey shared that the felony occurred while she was a substance abuser. She is open and proud to say that she has been clean and sober since that time. She realized that due to this conviction it would be extremely difficult for her to secure employment in her current occupation. She needed to consider a career change and began to research occupations, industries and employers considered to be open to hiring individuals with criminal record.

Working with her WIOA Employment Counselor, Corey began to see this lay-off as an opportunity for her to explore new interests; she had always preferred physical outside work to “sitting behind a desk” all day. Together they discussed the building trades industry and what that work would entail, including the physical demands, long hours and working in a
predominately male environment. There was also the issue of wages, while construction jobs paid between $11.50 and $21.43 an hour, it would take some time for her to earn close to what she was making in her previous occupation. She understood that this was the starting point for her in a new career and her career pathway in the trades industry offered much opportunity for growth and advancement with higher wages in the future.

Corey was accepted into the Building Pathways NH Union Building Trades Pre-Apprenticeship for Women training program through the NH AFL-CIO Employment Assistance and Education Program, which was a 200 hour training program. Corey excelled in the program and loved every minute of it, successfully graduating from the program in December 2015, at which time she was hired at Federal Concrete out of Massachusetts as a Carpenters Apprentice. This is a full-time 40 hours a week position with a pay rate of $24.00 with full benefits through the Carpenter Union.

*Corey is very excited about her new career and very appreciative for the WIOA services she received.*

North Carolina

**Jason’s Success Story**

Charlotte Works, Charlotte Bridge Home: Newest SNAP site is a partnership “proven to work”. Jason has briefed departing troops, combat generals, and U.S. presidents. But the Air Force veteran couldn't get a job at Burger King because he doesn't have enough of the right kind of experience to work the fryer. Jason shared this frustrating story on his second visit to Charlotte Bridge Home, where Tiann, an employment and education specialist, helped him translate his skills as an intelligence analyst with experience in cyber crimes into civilian terms and beyond—into a job.

Tiann said Jason’s experience is common among veterans. “One of their biggest barriers to employment is not being able to get a foot in the door because they lack corporate experience,” she said. “As a mechanic, if a person can fix an aircraft, I’m pretty sure they can fix a carburetor in a garage! A project manager is another example: if you can get weapons and supplies and people from one place to another, you can move things around in a financial setting.”

Charlotte Works and Charlotte Bridge Home, an agency that helps local veterans successfully transition home after military service, have formed a partnership to better serve this group. Shade’s work with veterans includes helping them translate their military experience into civilian terms to highlight transferable skills, connecting them with hiring managers and veteran recruiters, and/or exploring education options. She built partnerships
with staffing companies and corporations that are committed to hiring veterans and makes use of Charlotte Works’s corporate connections, which proved helpful in placing one client using an On-The-Job Training (OJT) grant.

“It’s evolved into what we were hoping—to utilize all the services Charlotte Works has to offer for veterans,” Tiann said. “Now, any veteran who walks through the door at Charlotte Works is referred to me, which helps not only for employment purposes, but also to connect them to community services. On the flip side, I direct veterans to Charlotte Works for workshops on resume-writing, interviewing, using LinkedIn.” She also requires everyone to register on NCWorks Online and attend a Charlotte Works orientation.

Shade has placed 67 veterans into positions ranging from human resources and project management to general warehouse labor to information technology.

“Veterans are trainable, adaptable and will get the job done,” she said. “And this partnership has been proven to work. The resources Charlotte Works has are the things that get folks hired.”

Puerto Rico

Homeless Ex-Inmate Woman Complete a Credential in Mayaguez/Las Marias: Yadira’s Success Story

Mayagüez/Las Marías Local Area highlight the history of Yadira, a young lady which when first time she gone to the One Stop Center, she had no home, no job, no high school diploma and was an ex-inmate. After being evaluated, her Case Manager referred her to be part of the Ex-Convicts Project. Once she completed her participation, Yadira was given the opportunity to have a Work Experience with the employer Estancia Corazón, Inc., which she completed successfully and developed office work skills. As a mean to further improve her occupational skills, she was then referred to participate in the Basic Conversational English course offered by the ICPR Junior College, from which she obtained a Certificate.

Yadira’s additional limitation for getting a job was not having completed her higher education. For this reason she was referred to participate in the Adult Education and Literacy Project, offered by Advanced Central College. The participant not only obtained her high school diploma, but also graduated with high honors.

Yadira is an admirable person who, regardless of the many struggles she has faced, has never given up.
South Carolina

**Finding Long-Term Employment Vision: Richard’s Success Story**

Richard served in the Army and National Guard Armory for six years, and while he has a disability that affects his vision in one eye, it doesn’t prevent him from performing job duties. However, Richard had yet to find the right career and seemed to be in and out of employment. With the help of the Spartanburg and Cherokee county SC Works offices, he was continually able to find the next job; he was ready to get a vision for his long-term future.

Richard worked with two local DVOP representatives, who informed him of a new Dollar Tree Distribution center coming to Cowpens, South Carolina. He was excited about the prospect of joining a company new to the area, but with a well-established business plan that would offer long-term employment and a career path. In Richard’s eyes, this was the ideal position for him.

Richard applied to work for Dollar Tree Distribution and quickly began his new position. He didn’t let his disability hold him back and is now working in a brand-new facility right down the street from his home.

South Dakota

**Slah’s Success Story**

Slah was referred to the Department of Labor and Regulation from Job Corps upon his transition to the community of Huron. Slah spent two years at Job Corps where he earned his high school diploma and 1000 hours of on-the-job training as a painter pre-apprentice. Slah was a low income English Language Learner with a limited work history consisting of meat production.

While on the Workforce Training Youth Program, Slah earned financial incentives as he worked on his job search skills. This included completing a master application, mock interview and attending the Job Search Assistance Program. Based off Slah’s career exploration results and prior experience, his employment specialist worked with Trussbilt, a local employer, to consider Slah as a Metal Fabricator / Painter in their organization. A work experience was developed with Trussbilt that allowed Slah to further develop his painting skills.
The Workforce Training program assisted Slah in his transition to employment by assisting with a required physical for the job, work attire and transportation until Slah was able to establish a car pool. Based on Slah’s painting skills, dependability and ability to work with a team throughout his work experience, Slah was offered full-time employment at $11.00 an hour with paid time off, health insurance and other benefits available to him.

**Garnett’s Success Story**

Garnett, a Native American Veteran with a back injury, came to the Department of Labor and Regulation in search of employment. Through the intake process, it was discovered that Garnett suffered a back injury, in his younger years, through saddle bronc riding. For years, he was able to manage his back pain despite lifting patients in a medical setting. Over time, his back could no longer take this repetitive lifting and left him unemployed. When he reached out to DLR, he had been unemployed for a year and a half and was receiving food stamps. He worked short-term labor jobs during this time, but had no steady employment or income. By working with his employment specialist, it was determined truck driving would be an employment option Garnett would enjoy, be capable of doing and offered skills required for a high demand occupation in South Dakota. Garnett successfully completed this short-term training and earned his Commercial Driver’s License. Now possessing this specific skill set, Garnett worked with his employment specialist to improve his financial literacy, develop a resume and cover letter, and master his interview skills. With several applications, an interview and phone call from his employment specialist to Loiseau Construction, Garnett was offered a truck driving position making $19 an hour and a $25 per diem payment each day. He also has health, vision, dental and life insurance. He will be receiving training through his employer soon to be able to get his double and tanker endorsements, which will increase his hourly wage. To assist Garnett in his transition to employment, the DEI grant assisted with transportation support services so he could get to and from his new job that was 30 miles from where he lived and short-term housing assistance until he received his first paycheck.

**M. Clark’s Success Story**

M. Clark is an IT professional who was laid off from her job as a Senior Configuration Engineer. She had an extensive work history within her field but was unable to obtain employment for almost a year after being laid off. M. Clark was referred to the SkillSource Northern Virginia J4VETS program by the Virginia Employment Commission in hopes of updating her skills and gaining much-needed credentials to compete in the evolving IT job market. After being
provided with training services, she continued to take in-demand IT courses and soon obtained the credentials that enabled her to secure a job. She worked hard to find a job, collaborating with the training provider, job developers, and case management services to find the right match for her employment needs. After a nine-month search, M. Clark was offered a position with a prestigious company that provides information solutions for the U.S. Departments of Defense, Justice, and Homeland Security. In her new position as a Security Analyst, she makes $65,000 per year; she recently shared that her employer is sending her to training as a Certified Scrum Master, a certification which she will receive in September 2015.

Charles’s Success Story

Charles is disabled veteran (former Marine), who was referred by the Virginia Employment Commission to the SkillSource Group, Inc.’s Northern Virginia Jobs for Veterans (J4VETS) & Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) programs after being laid off in 2014. After being determined eligible, Charles was enrolled in both programs. Soon after enrolling, Charles expressed interest in obtaining the Certified Information Security Manager Credential, or the CISM, certification. Charles earned the CISM credential in September 2015 and was able to secure employment with a Northern Virginia company as an IT Security Analyst, with an annual salary of $130,000. Charles is very appreciative of the services that he received through the SkillSource J4VETS and WIOA programs, and expressed his gratitude to the entire team that helped him through the process. “I am extremely thankful for the J4VETS program, Yodit [Case Manager] and all those who helped me through the process and provide excellent support. I have nothing but extremely positive things to say about the program and how well you treat a disabled Marine Veteran. I earned my CISM certification because of the help and support I received from you all. I am grateful. If there is anything I can do to help the program, please let me know and I will do my best. Thank you.”

“I am extremely thankful for the J4VETS program, Yodit [Case Manager] and all those who helped me through the process and provide excellent support. I have nothing but extremely positive things to say about the program and how well you treat a disabled Marine Veteran.”
West Virginia

A Veteran’s Success Story

While attending a career fair, a Veteran was referred to his local WFWV Career Center. During an initial assessment, staff identified possible barriers and referred the Veteran to a DVOPS. The Veteran was determined to be in need of intensive services. DVOPS provided local labor market information and together they developed an employment plan that focused on a long term goal of gaining sustainable employment in the accounting field or seeking possibilities for opening his own business. He was referred to the Small Business Administration’s veteran’s representative to review options for opening a business. This career path was an option, but it remained secondary to gaining employment in the accounting field. The Veteran had been submitting resumes but had not received any interviews. DVOPS continued assisting the Veteran with constructing his resume, job interview practice, and he attended federal resume workshops. The Veteran was referred to the USA jobs website and the WV Division of Personnel’s website to review job postings. WFWV Career Center staff and DVOPS staff advised the Veteran on customizing his resume to suit each job. After the Veteran continued his job search for a few weeks, he contacted the DVOPS to inform them he had been referred to an interview with the Department of Public Debt. He was able to interview for the position using the information provided at the mock interview sessions, and he was successful in gaining a position that with a starting salary of $40,033.00.

Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI)

KC Lynn’s Success Story

KC Lynn was conferred a certificate of completion for the Hospitality Culinary Arts program at the Hawaii Job Corp Center, Waimanalo campus and certified under the American Heart Association for First Aid CPR AED along with Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) in General Industry Safety and Health. Moreover, she was recognized and awarded achievement awards for her leadership skills as a Dorm Leader, Reading, and Perfect Attendance. Job Corps is a self-paced program and KC Lynn was able to complete the Culinary Arts program in 14 months. As part of her training, she was involved in the preparation of meals for various events such as the Annual Fun Run for the Arthritis Foundation, Fire Fighter’s Foundation, Hawaii Food Expo, and the University of Hawaii football events. KC Lynn aspires to pursue her career in Culinary Arts while serving as a member of the US Navy.
John’s Success Story

A resident of Rota, John, was accepted into the Hawaii Job Corps-Waimanalo campus Culinary Arts Program on June 29, 2015. Prior to his departure, he provided the following statements:

“I am very happy that finally after a long wait for this opportunity, I am now going to be leaving to Hawaii to Waimanalo Job corps campus to finally get the education for my career as a professional chef. I come from an economically disadvantaged family and now through this Job Corps program I will be able to get the education I need to fulfill my dream. I want to give the Job Corps program big appreciation for giving me this opportunity. I am sure that upon completion of my education in Waimanalo I will be more able to make a difference and be a positive contributor to the workforce and society. I want to be a professional chef and hopefully I land a job in a major hotel or any top of the line (reputable) restaurant. I also want to thank the Department of Labor-WIA Division (Workforce Investment Agency) for their efforts in making me an eligible candidate for this program. Thank You and Si Yu’us Maase.”

The Department of Labor-WIA Division, under the Office of the Governor, is very proud of John and wishes him all the best in his educational pursuits.