



**Employment and Training Administration**  
United States Department of Labor



Workforce Innovation  
and Opportunity Act

# SUCCESS STORIES

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Program  
Year 2020

A young man with dark hair and glasses, wearing a light blue button-down shirt, is looking upwards and to the right. He is holding a tablet computer. The background is a blurred industrial or warehouse setting with metal structures and lights. The entire image is framed by a thin yellow border.

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# Foreword

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

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

These success stories highlight WIOA Title I programs, including WIOA Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth programs. They are excerpted directly from the Program Year (PY) 2020 States' WIOA Annual Report Narratives and may have been minimally edited for clarity and consistency. The full Annual Report Narratives may be found on the U.S. Department of Labor's (DOL) Employment and Training Administration (ETA) website at <https://www.dol.gov/agencies/eta/performance/results>. For more information on the WIOA Annual Statewide Performance Report Narrative, see [Training and Employment Guidance Letter \(TEGL\) 05-18](#).

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

# WIOA Adult Program

## ALABAMA

**JUSTIN** is a veteran that wanted to work for a company where he could learn a trade and obtain a Registered Apprentice credential. His apprenticeship journey started at Metrology South with an on-the-job training (OJT) in February 2020. Around the time that Justin completed his training, the company requested Incumbent Worker Training Program (IWTP) funds to train several employees, and Justin was ultimately put into the IWTP training the day after his OJT training was completed. He successfully completed the IWTP in late October and then started a Registered Apprenticeship program.

Justin is still in Metrology South's Registered Apprentice program and says he loves the program. The company is thrilled with his progress and said that Justin is a quick and astute learner. Justin began at \$19 an hour, and later began earning \$30 an hour by the time he finished both the OJT and the IWTP training.

**MARSHA**, is deaf and had previously had difficulty obtaining employment. She was referred to the WIOA OJT program by the Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services. Career Center staff worked to get her a job at Homtex using OJT. She was hired in August 2020 to operate a new machine, and the company helped with Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) production. Marsha was later trained for the PPE packing unit and was given a \$1 per hour increase to move to that position. She learned her job quickly and has excelled in the role.

When the company experienced a COVID-19-related issue, they were forced to lay off their employees in the PPE department. However, Marsha was asked if she would agree to be moved to another area of the plant to learn a new job. She agreed and was able to maintain employment. Marsha says that she loves her new role and is thankful for the opportunities offered to her. Currently, Marsha is making \$17 an hour, a pay rate that she is also very satisfied with. Marsha's employer noted that she is extremely detailed and that she takes great pride in her work.



## ALASKA

**DEVA** was living in a cabin without running water and working without benefits as a Nurse's Aide. Wanting to earn a more sustainable wage, Deva came to Career Support and Training Services (CSTS) looking for assistance in becoming a Radiologic Technologist. She was one of the two candidates accepted into the Radiologic Technologist program through the University of Alaska Anchorage. Deva was deemed eligible and received WIOA Adult program funds to help subsidize books, fees, and rent while she went to school. Deva successfully completed the two-year training program, earned great grades, and is now employed by South Peninsula Hospital. She earns \$33.80 an hour and receives full benefits.

**ULA** had been working two full-time jobs to support her family. She had a conditional job offer from Hecla Mining Company, which required a Mining and Petroleum Training Service certification in order to begin work. Ula visited the Juneau Job Center, where she was determined to obtain WIOA Adult funds that could help cover the costs of the four-week certification training program. Ula ultimately excelled in the training program and began her new job earning \$23.25 an hour shortly after completing the program on May 29, 2021.

## ARKANSAS

**KIERRA**, a single mother of three, worked as a phlebotomist prior to the onset of COVID-19. In February 2021, she opened her own business, Need-to-Know Testing, in Eastern Arkansas. When the business grew, Kierra realized she needed an Office Assistant. She visited her local Arkansas Workforce Center and was introduced to an Out-of-School Program designed to assist participants by placing them in Work Experience programs while they work toward their General Educational Development (GED®) test. One of these participants was placed at Need-to-Know Testing. This participant has received training in customer service, processing invoices, and conducting COVID-19 testing. Once the participant attains their GED®, Kierra plans to make them the first full-time staff member of Need-To-Know Testing. Kierra believes that the assistance she received from the WIOA program helped her acquire a great employee that leads to the ongoing success of her business.

**DEJA** is a married mother with four children. When her husband was laid off from his job, Deja—who had been out of work since 2019—

decided to visit her local Arkansas Workforce Center. Deja wanted to find a career that would allow her to provide for her family, and her career advisor helped her enroll in the WIOA Adult program in December 2020. Deja's previous work experience consisted of manufacturing and fast-food jobs, but she really wanted to work in an office environment. She was assigned to a work experience program in December 2020, where she gained experience as an Office Clerk. As a result of the work experience opportunity, Deja gained new skills and developed greater confidence in herself and her abilities. In May 2021, Deja accepted a full-time Administrative Assistant position with Arkansas Rehabilitation Services, where she receives benefits and earns \$14 an hour.

**BRANDI** visited her local Arkansas Workforce Center in hopes of improving the lives of her and her children. With the help of her career advisor, Brandi enrolled in training. The WIOA program assisted her with tuition, transportation, and childcare. Removing these barriers allowed Brandi to complete her training at a Western

Arkansas training provider. She acquired a job at a local hospital as a Surgical Technician before attaining her certification. She believes that none of this would have been possible without the assistance provided by the WIOA program.

**JOHN** had experience in mechanical services but had never completed any formal training. He decided to visit the local Arkansas Workforce Center to enhance his skills. After conducting an initial assessment, John was referred to Adult Education to improve his reading and math skills. Upon completion, John's career advisor began helping him enter a Commercial Driver's License (CDL) Academy in Western Arkansas. With the assistance of the WIOA Adult program, John was able to enter and complete his training, earning

his CDL certificate in June 2021. John accepted employment with a local trucking company shortly thereafter. He knows that this assistance changed the direction of his life and is grateful for the assistance provided by the WIOA partners.

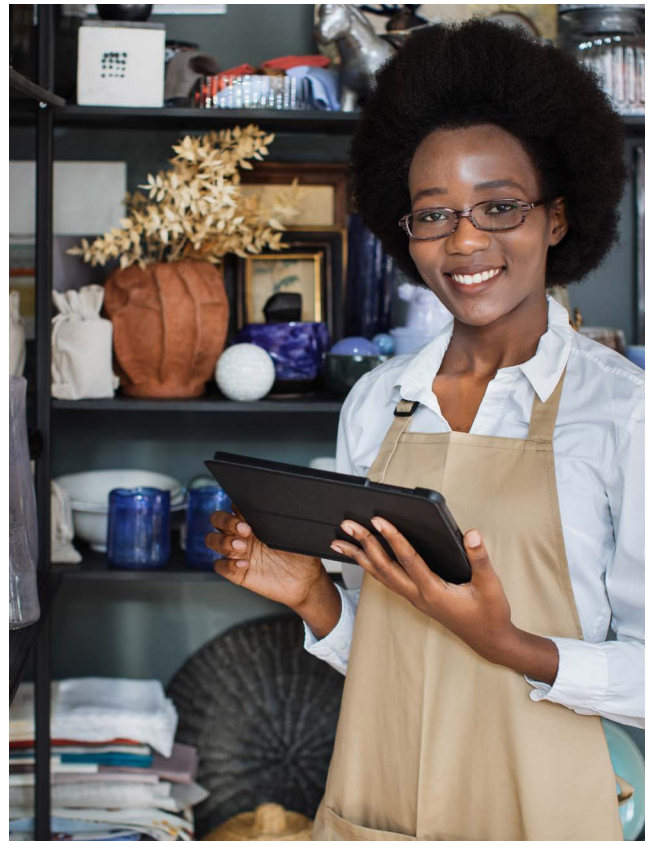
**MICHAEL** visited his local Arkansas Workforce Center to become a Commercial Truck Driver. Michael met with a career advisor and enrolled in WIOA. His career advisor assisted him in setting specific goals, which included enrollment in CDL Truck Driver training. Michael noted "My career advisor's calls and follow-up encouragement motivated me every step of the way. Even when unexpected obstacles came about, she was always accessible and ready to troubleshoot any problematic situation. She believed in me."

## ARIZONA

A **PARTICIPANT EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS** was enrolled in the WIOA Adult program. With coaching and guidance from his career advisor, he successfully completed Emergency Medical training. He has now accepted a position and earns \$17 an hour.

An **UNEMPLOYED TECHNOLOGY MANAGER** was enrolled in the WIOA Adult Program. After successfully completing Project Management training, he accepted a position as a Senior Technology Manager. He now earns a salary of \$105,000 a year.

An **UNEMPLOYED PROJECT MANAGER** was enrolled in the WIOA Adult Program. She had plenty of experience but did not have many credentials, making it difficult for her to remain competitive in the job market. After completing Amazon Web Service training, she accepted a position as a Project Manager. She now earns \$60 an hour.



## COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS

Latte Built 24 Hour Fitness officially opened its doors in January 2016. **DEREK**, the owner and fitness coach, first heard about WIOA through neighbors of his first location. A second location was built, and Derek needed staff. Derek noted that “WIOA is a great win-win-win program! We pre-interview a pre-qualified person who has requested to work for us. If we feel they would be a good fit, the business gets to ‘test the waters’ with a new potential employee by

training them to our standards ... Afterwards, the business can fully hire the trainee, and the employee already knows their responsibilities as well as the technical parts to the position.” Latte Built has supported five participants over the years and has even inspired a trainee to compete in a recent bodybuilding competition. Derek also shared that he “always recommends WIOA to friends who are starting businesses.”

## DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

**PARTICIPANT SIX** was working as a cab driver but knew he wanted to increase his income. He had heard that the WIOA program could pay for CDL training, so he took a day off from

work to acquire more information. He was soon enrolled in WIOA and was sent to CDL training. Since then, he has started his own transportation company.

## HAWAII

**RAINA** entered the Maui Disability Employment Initiative (DEI) program and co-enrolled in various assistance programs. Raina was placed at the Nisei Veterans Memorial Center, where she helped with events and wrote a food column for the monthly newsletter. Shortly after her Work Experience was completed, Raina entered college and will now be pursuing a degree in Asian History. Raina said “the DEI experience was helpful for me because it made me realize what subject I should major in and gave me experience of what it’s like to work at a job. I learned how to do Excel sheets, plan events for the community, and also the basics of being a good salesperson. I am grateful to have had the experience that I wanted.”

**JOANNE** came to her local AJC in December 2019. She asked for financial assistance to take Medical Assistance Training at Kauai

Community College. At the time, she was a cashier in a grocery store and earned minimum wage. After gathering all her documents, she was eligible to participate in the WIOA Adult Program. She completed her training in May 2021 and made the Dean’s list. In June 2021, she started work as a Medical Assistant in a medical clinic and now earns a higher wage. Joanne’s new goal is to advance her education and become a nurse.

**MORNING-GLORY** was referred to a WIOA Program Coordinator. Though Morning-Glory was frustrated with her current employment and living situation, she was determined to make a better life for herself. She enrolled in WIOA in April 2021. Morning-Glory was searching for stability, a career that would allow her to lead, and a flexible schedule that would allow her to enjoy life. After conducting several

career and personality-type assessments, she found that she possessed the basic skills needed for either office-type work or Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA) occupations. Morning-Glory ultimately pursued a career in Customer

Support, and she now earns \$14.50 an hour. In response to how she felt about her training, she stated, “I am so glad for this program ... I came in here dazed and confused, and now feel like I am achieving something good with my life!”

## INDIANA

**YEWANDE** was working in a warehouse and seeking better employment opportunities when she learned about the Workforce Ready Grant. This grant is administered by the Indiana Department of Workforce Development and pays the tuition and fees for eligible certificate programs. Yewande chose the Certified Clinical Medical Assistant program, which consisted of a six-month class and a one-month externship at the Eskenazi Health Center Pecar. She now

works at Eskenazi Hospital near downtown Indianapolis. “If the [Workforce Ready Grant] program didn’t exist, I might still be at the warehouse struggling to put money together to go to school,” Yewande said. “College is very costly, but thanks to this program, I’m able to move on to the next phase of my life. My instructors were amazing. I am happy, and I will keep on telling people about this program.”

## KANSAS

**LON** is a disabled veteran who came into the Leavenworth workforce center seeking assistance in September 2021. The Disabled Veterans’ Outreach Program (DVOP) received his Veteran Initial Intake Form on September 3, 2021, and staff reached out to him through a phone call shortly thereafter. Lon is a former Lieutenant Colonel in the Army and said he was having a hard time creating a civilian and federal résumé. The DVOP worked with him on creating both résumés and explained how to search for jobs online. He contacted the DVOP on Monday, September 13, 2021, to inform them that he had an interview with a job that they connected him with. He is now gainfully employed earning \$20 an hour.

**JUSTIN** learned about DVOP after his career with the army. He worked with computers and networks in the Army for over six years and had some Information Technology (IT) certifications. Justin holds bachelor’s degrees in math and accounting but had minimal experience using either in a work setting. He did not have any experience with interviewing and had difficulty reading social cues. He had a lot of questions about how to search for a job, answer questions on applications, and talk about himself effectively during a job interview. The DVOP assisted him in these areas and helped him develop a résumé and cover letter. The DVOP also conducted a survey of job openings and identified eight opportunities in the IT and help desk industries. Justin applied and prepared for the interviews. The DVOP



showed him how to use the Showcase Cluster to prepare, and Justin recently let the DVOP know that he accepted an offer as an IT help desk worker, where he makes \$18 an hour.

**ALISYN** stopped in the Paola Workforce Center looking for a new opportunity. During the discussion with workforce staff, it was determined that she was eligible for OJT. Alisyn was connected with State Farm Insurance, where she interviewed and was offered a receptionist position. Southeast KANSASWORKS wrote an OJT contract and reimbursed Alisyn while she learned her new role. Alisyn said the following about the program: “I felt as though the OJT has been beneficial to me because it has given me the opportunity to sit down with my employer to discuss how I am progressing. I have appreciated the support from KANSASWORKS for holding me accountable for reaching my full potential at work. I felt as though the On-the-Job Training has opened more avenues to discuss my work progress with my employer.”

**JAMES** contacted the Topeka Workforce Center, as suggested by his caseworker. He was 38 years old and had just been released from a 20-year prison sentence. James was so young when he went to prison that he had never had a job or a driver’s license. While in prison, he obtained his GED® and earned an AA degree in Theology.

James applied for WIOA Adult funding and hoped to attend Warehouseman Training in Kansas City. Ann, his WIOA Employment and Training Specialist, helped James research job opportunities for this level of training, assess his current employment barriers, and develop an employment plan. James had been assured by the training provider that they would connect him with employers who would consider him for employment. Throughout the process, James expressed a firm desire not to return to prison and even obtained written permission from his parole officer to cross state lines for the purpose of work or training.

James not only completed the short-term training program with high scores, but his instructors also praised his work ethic. Shortly after completing the program, James accepted full-time employment with an area cabinet company. He earns \$16 an hour.

When **ANDREA** arrived at the Workforce Center, she was focused on completing her GED® and showing her daughters that it was never too late to accomplish their goals. Andrea completed her GED® and wanted to complete training in healthcare so she could work in her dream field. Andrea worked full-time at a local convenience store but knew that helping people was her passion. She was enrolled in the WIOA Adult program and was eligible for services through DEI.

Andrea worked with her WIOA Employment Specialist and began training as a CNA. She quickly completed her training first in her class. During this time, Andrea met with her Employment Specialist and discussed her long-term goals in healthcare. One of the barriers that concerned Andrea was the condition of her teeth. She felt that if she worked in healthcare, employers, patients, or coworkers might judge her based on her crooked teeth. Andrea’s Employment Specialist assisted her in completing an application to Vocational Rehabilitation, and soon, Andrea was on her way to overcoming one of her most significant barriers. Andrea completed all the steps necessary to receive dentures and a new smile. Andrea continued to progress in her training and completed her Certified Medication Aide credential and all prerequisites for advanced healthcare training. Andrea continued to work at her job at the convenience store and soon was able to move herself and her daughters into their own apartment.

Andrea has remained focused on her goals and is now working a job she loves. She is employed full-time with excellent benefits as a Certified Medication Aide. She is earning \$23 an hour.

## MARYLAND

**DENISE** was recently divorced and faced unemployment after the closure of her family-owned property management business. As a result, she sought assistance from her local AJC. She arrived at the AJC with an employment goal already in mind, to return to the human resources career she had left behind 20 years earlier. Denise was concerned that her long absence from the human resources field and her lack of current industry certifications would not make her a competitive candidate for jobs. With guidance and support from her Career Consultant, Denise identified the Senior Professional in Human Resources (SPHR) certification as a valuable industry-recognized credential that would help her stand out with employers.

Denise's Career Consultant assisted her in securing WIOA funds to cover the cost of a training program for the SPHR certification exam. Denise worked hard to complete the training and pass the exam to obtain her SPHR credential. Denise's Career Consultant assisted her in developing an updated résumé that highlighted her new credential, as well as the computer and human resource skills that she built while working in the family business. Denise used AJC's online interviewing program to brush up on her interviewing skills and worked with a Job Developer to locate promising job opportunities. She received an offer to work as a Human Resources Onboarding Specialist with the Children's Guild Alliance, and she now earns \$40,000 a year. Today she is excited about her new role and the opportunity to re-establish her career.

**KEVIN** appeared to have it all—a Master's in Business Administration (MBA) and worked in an executive-level job as a Vice President in program management. When Kevin's employment ended, he joined the ranks of Unemployment Insurance (UI) claimants attending Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessment (RESEA) workshops at their local AJC. The guidance Kevin gained from his RESEA session and the customized services he received from AJC staff helped him develop a solid reemployment plan. He attended additional

workshops offered through the AJC focused on small business and interviewing skills. He also activated his professional network and tapped recruiters for career guidance. Through these efforts, Kevin learned that a Project Management Professional (PMP) certification would give him an edge with employers. Kevin maintained contact with the AJC staff, who helped him access WIOA-funded training to prepare for the PMP exam. After successfully completing PMP training, Kevin was hired as a Program Manager, earning \$125,000 a year. He still plans to take the PMP exam later this year, but because his new employer is willing to pay the costs involved, he no longer needs WIOA funding support. The horizon for Kevin's career is once again very bright.

**DONALD** visited the Career Center Hunt Valley. Donald, who had a background as an entrepreneur, was interested in exploring both personal business projects and traditional employment options. His background as a business owner made job placement challenging since those specialized technical skills did not align easily with conventional position descriptions. COVID-19 also complicated Donald's job search, as he was responsible for children learning remotely from home. Donald responded to a recruitment opportunity and was selected to be a Contact Tracer. Donald now earns \$22.26 an hour and works from home. This position is a perfect fit for Donald because it allows him to balance his kids' schooling needs with his work.

**ANDRES** recently moved to the U.S. from Colombia, South America, with education and work experience as an Environmental Health Engineer. He came to the Career Center Hunt Valley seeking employment assistance and worked closely with two Career Consultants. They assisted him in applying for and earning his Professional Environmental Health Specialist registration with the State of Maryland, a credential required to qualify for jobs in his field. Andres also worked with AJC staff on

his résumé, interviewing skills, and job search strategies. Andres responded to the Baltimore County Department of Health’s recruitment for a Contact Tracer position and began work in August 2020. Although the Contact Tracer position is temporary, it allows Andres to establish an employment record in the U.S. and help him bring his wife through the complex U.S. immigration process.

Recently, Andres interviewed for an Environmental Health Specialist position in Baltimore County. This position would further stabilize his situation and launch him on his career track in the U.S. No matter the outcome of the interview, Andres has worked very hard to prepare his résumé and strengthen his interviewing skills, which will continue to increase his opportunities for success.

**JASMINE** was a single parent and full-time student in the process of registering for classes at Prince George’s Community College when her

program director mentioned that there might be a program available to assist with her tuition costs. The program director referred Jasmine to the Employ Prince George’s (EPG) program. Excited by the prospect of receiving support, Jasmine entered an EPG AJC.

Jasmine noted: “My experience with the EPG was nothing short of amazing! After submitting the paperwork, I was promptly contacted by EPG staff. I thought that I was just going to receive payment for my class, and that was it, but I received so much more! EPG paid for my class, books, uniform, and license payment. And not only did I receive financial assistance, I received employment support! I received assistance with my résumé, which needed a total revamp, as I am changing my career field. I also received job leads! Last but not least, I received support from my Career Specialist. I always knew that I had someone in my corner when I needed assistance with anything! I am forever grateful to the EPG staff for all of the help and guidance they gave me. I feel that I am more than prepared to enter my new career field!”

## MICHIGAN

**OMAR** came to the Ludington Michigan Works! West Central service center seeking assistance with his schooling. He had heard great things about Michigan Works! and hoped one of the programs could assist him. He was employed at Spectrum Hospital Ludington Hospital, earning \$11.50 an hour as a part-time employee. Omar was already attending Muskegon Community College, where he studied to become a Respiratory Therapist. He had used the funds provided by a Pell Grant to fund his education but knew the daily mileage to Muskegon Community College would be an extra hardship for his family. Omar was committed to participating in the Adult WIOA program. His talent specialist noted that Omar was determined to reach his career goal.

Michigan Works! West Central assisted Omar with gas mileage and offered supportive services to help him complete his studies. They also assisted with his financial obligations each semester. Omar was in contact with Michigan Works! every month throughout the remainder of his college courses. Omar graduated in Applied Science in Respiratory Therapy. In April of 2020, he took his licensing exam and passed. Omar is now a Licensed Respiratory Therapist and found full-time employment at Butterworth Hospital in Grand Rapids despite the COVID-19 pandemic. Omar is very grateful to Michigan Works! West Central for all the support and encouragement throughout his journey. Omar now earns double of his previous wage.

## MISSISSIPPI

After high school, **KAYLIN** received an associate degree from Mississippi Delta Community College (MDCC) and a Bachelor of Science (BS) degree from Delta State University majoring in exercise science. While attending college, she volunteered as a coach for the MDCC softball team. Her initial plan was to teach softball at MDCC, but instead, she began a position in the grounds and maintenance department. While she worked, she would observe the students training to become linemen climb poles which influenced her decision to take steps towards a new career. Kaylin completed the MDCC Lineman Training Program application process and was accepted in January 2021. This 16-week training program is mentally, physically, and emotionally challenging, but Kaylin placed third overall in the lineman rodeo competition. Kaylin completed the training in May 2021 and had various job offers. She is currently working for Gray's Power Supply based in Oakland.

**STEFON** reached out to the Marshall County Job Center for assistance in finding a job that provided stability, better pay, and a 40-hour workweek. The WIN Job Center (WJC) staff enrolled him in WIOA, signed him up for various Northwest Community College programs, and registered him for the National Career Readiness Certificate (NCRC) assessment. Stefon was enrolled in the Forklift training class. When he

received a NCRC gold certification, his résumé and scores were sent to Roxul, who was hiring. Stefon applied for a General Laborer position but was offered a position as a Technical Operator. This offer resulted from his work experience and the gold score on the NCRC. Stefon is now making more money, has a permanent position, and works 40+ hours each week.

**TANQUORNE "TAN"** is a graduate of the Refill Jackson Initiative. Tan, 19, was born in Hattiesburg but now lives in Jackson. She was interested in completing the Refill Jackson Initiative training because she wanted to make progress on her GED®, learn how to be more independent, and acquire much-needed job skills. While at Refill, Tan said that she has learned so many things: "During financial literacy class, I've learned how to manage my accounts." She also enjoys her fellow cohort members: "I really liked that I was comfortable with my peers ... We share stuff with each other and relate to one another. We also learn from one another."

As part of her training experience, Tan completed a work experience at St. Dominic Hospital. After completing the work experience, she focused on earning her High School Equivalency (HSE) degree. After completing that goal, she plans to enroll in a local community college to continue her education and training.

## MONTANA

**ALISON**, a single parent with three children, worked part-time as a bartender. She contacted Job Service Montana (JSM) Thompson Falls to request tuition funding for a Certified Aesthetic Laser Specialist course at Rocky Mountain Laser College in Lakewood, CO. JSM enrolled her in the WIOA Adult and the state's HELP-Link program. With her Permanent Cosmetic Certification and the completed Aesthetic Laser Certification,

Alison obtained two jobs as an Aesthetic Laser Technician. Her starting wage is \$25 an hour.

Volunteers of America (VOA) referred **PETER** to determine his eligibility for the WIOA Adult program. At the time, he was employed part-time at Meineke Car Care Center as a lube tech, earning \$9 an hour. With VOA assistance, Peter

enrolled at Helena College. He requested \$1,400 of additional assistance for tool expenses, which neither his Veterans Affairs (VA) education benefits nor VOA covered. Helena's Career Technical Institute assisted with that cost. Peter received his Associate of Applied Science (AAS) Degree in Diesel Technology and ended his final semester with a 3.92 GPA. Peter is now employed at Helena's Kolar Tire & Auto.

A **PROGRAM PARTICIPANT** decided to pursue his lifelong dream of becoming a truck driver. Before he could start CDL training, several barriers were addressed, including his criminal history and probationary status, homelessness, and his lack of income or a social security card. At eighteen years old, the participant also lacked awareness of selective service registration. JSM's WIOA Adult program case managers addressed each barrier prior to the participant's first day of truck driving school. He completed CDL training and is currently seeking employment near his hometown of Culbertson, Montana.

## NEBRASKA

**TRAVIS** participated in the Greater Lincoln Adult program during Program Year 2020. He participated in the adult program because he was interested in career exploration, community networks, and job opportunities. Travis is now interning at Associates in Counseling and Treatment to learn more about being a trained counselor.

**HOSANNA** participated in the Greater Lincoln Adult program during Program Year 2020 and received supportive services, which allowed her to obtain her bachelor's degree in nursing. Hosanna is now a full-time nurse at Hill Elementary School who loves working with youth and providing services that support the health needs of the students.

**IAN** participated in the Greater Omaha Adult program during Program Year 2020. Ian was placed in a Registered Apprenticeship program sponsored by Techtonic, where he noted: "The Techtonic Apprenticeship enabled me to take steps towards making three of my biggest dreams come true: being a programmer, solving real-world problems for real people, and having a sustainable income to start my own family someday! I could not have done this alone, and I'm grateful for God, my friends and family, and Techtonic, who has helped me onto a path towards a stable career."

**DANIELLE** participated in the Greater Omaha Adult program during Program Year 2020. Danielle was placed in a Registered Apprenticeship program sponsored by Techtonic, where she noted: "The Techtonic Apprenticeship has been an amazing experience and an opportunity that I am extremely grateful to have had. My exposure to software development, quality assurance, and project management has solidified my love for the tech industry and my passion for project management. The support that I received from National Able and the WIOA team was amazing. In one short year, Techtonic and National Able were able to provide me with a new career path that has changed my life for the better. I will be eternally grateful."

**CONNOR** participated in the Greater Omaha Adult program during Program Year 2020. Connor was placed in a Registered Apprenticeship program sponsored by Techtonic and said the following about his experience in the program: "I found the Techtonic Apprenticeship to be better suited to my personal learning style than college; and unlike previous coding bootcamps that I had taken, the apprenticeship provided a direct line to a career for me to start my journey. The success of this program was in no small part thanks to the assistance of National Able, who helped provide us with great teachers and services like Pluralsight, which helped me understand my strengths and weaknesses and focus on more targeted growth that would more closely align with my specific goals and interests."

**VICTOR** is a veteran who was seeking new job opportunities. The Adult program has helped ease the typical financial burdens encountered while pursuing postsecondary education. Victor says that his participation in the Adult program

has allowed him to grow professionally and achieve the career goals that he set for himself. He is now participating in occupational skills training and working toward an associate degree in Geographic Information Systems.

## NEW HAMPSHIRE

**BANSHEE**, a 46-year-old single mother, was seeking a new career path when she came to WIOA. She had been on public assistance since the birth of her child and had been out of work for over a year. Her employment history was sporadic, and she had no college education, so she worried that her career options were limited.

Banshee was referred to WIOA by our partners in the New Hampshire Employment Program (NHEP) and hoped to become a computer support specialist. She worked with her WIOA Career Navigator to complete Career Assessments and discovered that this career path would indeed be a good fit for her. After some research, Banshee decided

that John Mason Institute would provide her with the best possible IT training. She began her training but experienced difficulties and required additional assistance. Still, Banshee persevered and completed her program. WIOA assisted by providing travel reimbursements during her training.

After completing this training, Banshee was able to participate in an NHEP-sponsored Work Experience Placement. This three-month place offered a learning opportunity and allowed Banshee to obtain some hands-on experience for her résumé. She is now employed at RTM Communications as a Help Desk Analyst and receives full benefits, earning \$19.25 an hour.

## NEW MEXICO

**JOSLYN** is an adult transitional jobs training participant, who has faced numerous barriers such as a criminal history and limited employment experience. Since the very first day of enrollment, Joslyn demonstrated the drive and determination to utilize all that WIOA has to offer, including coaching and referrals from HELP-NM's Community Support Advocate. As time went on, she began to show great strides in her training, and WIOA staff began to receive calls from her training site with direct praise from her supervisor. Joslyn was placed at the Santa Fe Recovery Outpatient Rehabilitation Center, located in Espanola, New Mexico, under the direct supervision of a behavioral health therapist. Joslyn completed her training on April 16, 2021 and began her full-time position with the Santa Fe Recovery Center on April 19, 2021. She works 30 hours a week for \$12.50 per hour. She

is also in the process of obtaining her Licensed Substance Abuse Associate and Certified Peer Support Worker certifications with the assistance of her new employer. Joslyn received full employer insurance benefits for the first time in her life and is now no longer dependent on public assistance.

In Joslyn's own words: "Every person on this earth is full of great possibilities that can be realized through imagination, effort, and perseverance. This experience has completely changed my life; I would probably still be without purpose. Now I have a career!"

**ESPERANZA** came into the Ruidoso office on June 24th, 2019 to inquire about WIOA funding assistance for the Radiology Technician program.

During her initial assessment, the career coach found that Esperanza was a 19-year-old high school graduate who resided with her parents and one other sibling. Esperanza's household was low-income; her parents did not have an education and worked low-paying jobs giving them a \$20,000 annual family income. Esperanza was determined to attend college. She decided to look for work and save money for tuition. After weeks of looking, Esperanza found a part-time job at a seasonal amusement park making \$13 an hour. Once she received her first check, she realized that making the amount she aimed for was going to be a difficult task. As time progressed, Esperanza felt like giving up. It would take the whole summer just to cover her first semester's tuition, books, and uniforms to become a Radiology Technician.

Esperanza decided to apply for financial aid to see if she could receive some assistance in her pursuit of a better future. She was awarded the Pell Grant and Leap scholarship which covered a percentage of her costs but not the whole amount. After learning about the WIOA program, she sat down with a career coach in July of 2019 to do her enrollment and see if she qualified for the program. After becoming eligible, she was finally able to start her degree plan.

Feeling she had an opportunity offered to her through WIOA assistance, Esperanza studied diligently every semester and gave it her all. She passed most of her classes with A's and was able to finish all her coursework with 3.90 overall GPA. On May 14th, 2021, she graduated from NMSU with an AAS. After completing her degree, Esperanza stated she was the first in her family to graduate from college making her parents proud of such an accomplishment. In June 2021, she passed her board exams, officially making her a licensed Radiology Technician. With a degree and license in hand, she was hired at Lincoln County Medical Center starting at \$19.36 an hour. Esperanza was grateful for the WIOA program and her career coaches because they helped her to make her dream of becoming a Radiologic Technician come true.

A Syrian **MEDICAL PROFESSIONAL** who had relocated to Deming, New Mexico, quickly realized that the United States did not recognize

his Syrian medical credentials. He learned English and attempted to enroll as a nursing student, but because he already had a degree from his home country, Federal Financial Aid was not available to him. WIOA was able to step in and provide assistance. He is now a full-time student and will graduate as a registered nurse this fall of 2021.

**FAITH** began her journey with the WIOA program through the Facebook Career Connections internship program. At that time, she was attending Central New Mexico Community College and working towards an associate degree in Liberal Arts. She was also working part-time at Bob's Burgers but did not enjoy working in the fast-food industry. Having recently graduated from high school, she had minimal work experience aside from some house sitting and helping a small Etsy business.

When Faith learned about the Facebook internship, she was hopeful, as this was exactly the type of opportunity she had been looking for. Faith enrolled in the program and was matched with Don Smith Designs. She thrived there right away, and within a few months of working as an intern, she was rolled over to an OJT with a full-time, permanent position.

Faith loves the experience she is gaining and enjoys the work at Don Smith Designs. Faith is nearing graduation, and she plans to continue embracing employment and education opportunities as she moves ahead in her new career path.

**VANESSA** is a mother of four children and a long-time military wife. She had some work experience, but because the military lifestyle required her family to move so often, Vanessa wanted assistance to expand her skills. After her husband graduated from Pima Medical Institute (PMI), Vanessa decided to enroll in the Radiography program at the same institution. Vanessa excelled and, with the help of WIOA, was able to graduate from the program. She gained immediate employment as a Radiography Technician at the same clinic where she completed her clinical rotations.

## NORTH CAROLINA

**LASHEA** was raising two daughters as a single mother amid the COVID-19 pandemic. LaShea persevered to complete the Nursing degree program at Tri-County Community College in the spring of 2021 with the help of the Tri-County NCWorks Career Center in Murphy, which gave her a scholarship that helped her complete her training. While enrolled as a full-time student, LaShea worked as a licensed phlebotomist at

Union General Hospital in Blairsville, Georgia. She demonstrated leadership by serving as a student ambassador, where she helped and tutored other nursing students. Since graduating from Tri-County Community College, LaShea has advanced in her healthcare career and earned a position as a Registered Nurse in the emergency room department at Angel Medical Center in Franklin.

## NORTH DAKOTA

**MICHAEL** had a criminal justice history and was working as a pizza delivery driver for \$8 an hour when he came to an AJC informational session in June 2021. Michael was subsequently deemed eligible for the WIOA program. As a result of his experience driving trucks with manual transmissions, Michael was most interested in training for a CDL A license.

The wages Michael received from training would steer him toward self-sufficiency. He was determined to qualify for a three-week commercial driver's training program remotely provided in Minot. He successfully completed CDL training in July 2021 and passed the test on his first try. Two days after receiving his license, Michael received a job offer. WIOA supplied funds for training, transportation costs, flame-retardant clothing, and steel-toed boots. Michael now has health insurance and earns \$27-\$37 an hour, depending on the haul.

**ERICA** is a 22-year-old single mother with a one-year-old son. She was working at the local grocery store as a cashier when her hours were reduced because of the COVID-19 pandemic. Erica inquired about WIOA assistance and training in October 2020. She was interested in the new fast track program for nursing assistants, a 75-hour intensive combination of online, workbook, and in-person training. She was deemed eligible in November 2020 and approved for training as a

nursing assistant. She started classes in January 2021 and successfully completed training and testing for her ND Certified Nursing Assistant license in February 2021. She started working as a CNA in April 2021, earning \$14 an hour.





## OREGON

**GUADALUPE** is a veteran of the United States Army. After completing his service, Guadalupe returned home to Ontario, where he experienced unexpected struggles with his shift back to civilian life. The transition included a period of homelessness, as well as medical and mental health issues. Guadalupe tried working several jobs, but he had difficulty securing and retaining employment for a substantial period.

Guadalupe is currently a community college student at Treasure Valley Community College, working toward an associate degree in cyber security and network administration. He has also secured part-time employment on campus as an IT Help Desk Technician. Guadalupe is now housed in a small, but affordable, apartment where he can focus on his schooling. He looks forward to finishing his school and training and becoming a more marketable applicant in the IT industry.

**ARIANA** came to WorkSource Klamath as a youth. She worked with Cara, the WIOA Title I partner from Klamath Community College. Ariana is currently enrolled in the Medical Assistant and

Phlebotomist certificate program through Klamath Community College. Her long-term goal is to work full-time in health care. By being a part of the Digital Inclusion Service program, Ariana has gained access to a laptop to help her obtain her education. Ariana is thrilled about the doors that will open for her once she completes school. She is looking forward to attending virtual job seeker workshops with WorkSource Oregon, which will help her learn valuable skills for obtaining a job in her desired field.

When asked how WorkSource Rogue Valley has changed his life, **KYLE** noted:

“It's changed so much. Beforehand, I felt stuck in retail, and I felt like I was going to get stuck in a life-long rut of hating when I was there but forced to stay because I didn't know what to even do. Now it's the complete opposite. I truly enjoy what I do. I am helping people and directly impacting their lives in a positive manner, and it's opened a whole list of opportunities for me. That is the most positive change for me right now since I'm still young and trying to figure my life out. It's changed my mental health so positively.”

## PUERTO RICO

**ABIMAE**L is a 22-year-old who had limited economic resources. He took an assessment to identify his skills, knowledge, experiences, and occupational goals. Eventually, Abimael received guidance and assistance in preparing for employment. He was referred for an interview with Encanto Restaurants. After completing his training hours, he was hired by the company. Due to personal reasons, he had to move to the city of Ponce, but because of his satisfactory performance, the company decided to let him transfer to a restaurant near his new home. Abimael currently works for Encanto Restaurants as a Crew Manager.

**JOSE** Costas Medina visited Ponce's Local Area in March 2020. He faced multiple barriers to employment, which included a 19-year prison sentence. However, his motivation for improving his situation allowed him to persevere and obtain work experience at a supermarket. Jose completed his hours and received excellent evaluations. Jose was later contracted through an OJT activity, which allowed him to continue working in a more complex occupation at the supermarket. This opportunity is helping Jose to develop skills and knowledge that will help him maintain employment. Jose is continuing his training and is happy with the assistance he has been offered.

## TEXAS

**JOSIAH**, a WIOA Adult customer, was approved for CDL training in June 2020. When his case manager called to tell him he was approved, he was moved to tears. Josiah faced many barriers to employment and deeply appreciated having an opportunity to better his future. He started

CDL training at C1 Trucking in Fort Worth on June 22, 2020 and was hired by the company he preferred in August of 2020. His case manager consistently provided words of encouragement and support throughout his training to help ensure his success.

## UTAH

**BRITTNIE** is an outstanding student who entered the Adult Education program. Brittnie received a higher score than she expected on the Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment Systems (CASAS) basic education assessment, which helped rebuild her confidence. She spent the next few months working with various GED® preparation materials, asking questions, and utilizing all available resources. She continued to build her skills and increase her test scores. Brittnie's increased CASAS test scores allowed her to enter a certification program in phlebotomy at the technical college, and she was recently hired at a local hospital as a phlebotomist. She set a powerful example for her children and has proven to herself that she can accomplish anything she sets her mind to.

**DARREL** currently resides in a sober-living program. He sought assistance from Workforce Services when he was released from prison for drug-related charges. Workforce Services offered Darrel a connection with a prospective employer, and he was hired at a local graphic design and manufacturing company. A workforce development specialist told Darrel about WIOA and encouraged him to apply. Darrel had always wanted to do heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC) work, so after being approved for WIOA funding, Darrel began an OJT opportunity with an HVAC company. The employer offered him in-house training,

and he was able to get multiple certifications throughout his 26 weeks of training. Darrel has now completed his OJT and is working full-time as an HVAC Technician.

**LAURA** is a single parent of three children and was living with her mother. She was going through a difficult divorce, was not receiving child support, and was in therapy with her children. Laura was already studying to be a Registered Nurse, but she needed additional help. In December 2020, she graduated with an AAS degree and began working as a technician at a local hospital. She earns \$25.60 an hour.

**SHAWN** is a veteran referred by Adult Probation and Parole to receive assistance in finding employment. He struggled to keep jobs in the past and stated he needed to work towards a certification. While Shawn was visiting an AJC, he talked with an employment counselor about WIOA and how it could help him obtain a construction job. Shawn was eager to find employment and received a job offer. First, he needed to complete OSHA safety training. He also required tools and safety equipment. Through collaboration with the Accelerated Credentialing to Employment Program, Workforce Services was able to help pay for the OSHA training and the tools and safety gear. Shawn is now working full-time and earns \$25 an hour.

## VERMONT

**WENDY** is a 31-year-old single parent. When she enrolled in the WIOA Program, she had no income and was receiving Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) and food stamp benefits. She resides in a small, rural town in Southern Vermont located 30 minutes from the closest economic hub. Wendy was long-term unemployed, and her previous work was in retail. She shared that she had previously struggled with substance abuse and had a misdemeanor charge from 2011.

Through the assessment, guidance, and support from various community agencies,

Wendy enrolled in WIOA-funded occupational skills training at Vermont Technical College in the Nursing Assistant Program. She successfully completed the program, while also providing support and encouragement to her peers. She enjoyed her experience, which reinforced her decision to enter the healthcare field. Wendy has secured employment at a local assisted living facility and earns \$16 an hour. Wendy noted: “I love my job. I love knowing that people like how I take care of them. Knowing that I made a few people smile or made their day makes me happy!”

## WYOMING

**KELLY** is a senior citizen, a veteran, and a former rancher. His work experience includes a position as head groundskeeper at the Wyoming Boys School, and he also worked as a kindergarten teacher in Montana.

When Kelly first came into the Sheridan Workforce Center, he was homeless and living in the Sheridan Veteran’s Affairs Medical Center (VAMC) Domiciliary. He had no vehicle and limited funds for transportation. At the time, DVOP worked with him to gain temporary housing with the VOA Freedom House. Justin also referred Kelly to WIOA Case Manager named Sally, who helped in upgrading Kelly’s skills.

Kelly’s interest assessment, physical capacity, current labor market information, and consumer choice led him to ask for assistance enrolling in CDL school. After a couple of COVID-related false starts, Kelly successfully completed the SAGE Truck Driving’s CDL course.

Kelly moved through several local driver positions but found them too physically demanding. During a Career Planning meeting, his case managers identified a bus driver position with Sheridan County School District. This position seemed like a perfect fit because it tied Kelly’s background working with children with his new driving credential. Kelly’s WIOA Case Manager and the DVOP worked together

to assist him with his application and cover letter. Kelly applied and was quickly hired. He is now happily employed.

**MICHAEL** applied for the Dads Making a Difference (DADS) program with the hope of finding a career to support himself and his family. Michael and his fiancée are the proud parents of a baby boy, and both had been struggling to make ends meet since the birth of their child. DADS is a TANF program that gives job training and other services to fathers who need help supporting their children.

Michael was accepted into the DADS program and co-enrolled in the WIOA and the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Employment and Training (SNAP E&T) programs in order to leverage resources and expertise. The SNAP E&T program covered the tuition cost at Sage Technical Services, where Michael completed the training necessary to obtain his Class A CDL license. The WIOA program assisted Michael with many career services, unforeseen support services, and parenting and financial literacy classes. Michael successfully graduated from the DADS program and was hired by Mead Lumber as a Class A truck driver. He earns \$18 an hour and enjoys full benefits.

# WIOA Dislocated Worker Program

## ALABAMA

**MATTHEW** was referred to the Alabama Career Center, where he was assisted in obtaining OJT for Performance Refrigeration. The owner interviewed him and offered him a job that day. He was hired and put on an OJT just a few days later. The employer has two divisions within his company: an installation and a service side. They hired Matthew on the installation side, where

he has learned how to operate a forklift, read blueprints, and construct refrigeration units. He has developed plumbing, electrical, and refrigeration skills. He started the job in late May of 2020 at \$12 an hour, and before he completed his OJT in early December, he was given a \$2 per hour raise.

## ALASKA

**CONNIE** worked as a bus driver for Holland America in Skagway and was earning \$10.25 per hour when she was laid off because of the COVID-19 pandemic. She was offered a seasonal truck driving position in Valdez with a starting pay of \$27.75 an hour, but first, she needed to obtain a Class A CDL with a HAZMAT endorsement. She contacted her local job center to apply for assistance with the costs of CDL training. Connie drove from Skagway to Kenai in her conversion van, which was her home during training. Funds from the Dislocated Worker Grant (DWG) program covered her training costs for the 24-hour Class A CDL training at Kenai Peninsula Driving Instruction in Kenai, as well as vehicle repairs, meals, work gear, and licensing fees. She excelled in the training program and began her new job shortly after completing the program in July 2020. She worked the season with Samson Tug and Barge and then obtained a full-time, year-round job with Delta Transport Services, earning \$24 an hour and benefits.

**MARY KATE** was referred to CSTS by her Division of Public Assistance (DPA) case manager. The initial assessment identified several barriers to

employment, including transportation problems and childcare needs. Mary Kate had identified Massage Therapy as her career goal and used the services provided by DPA, CSTS, and Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) to complete her occupational training. She graduated from Alaska Career College, obtained her professional license for massage therapy, and started her full-time position as a Massage Therapist with Altair Integrative Wellness Inc. Her starting wage is \$45 per massage and \$15 an hour for office duties.

**JOSIAH** was a veteran hoping to reenter the workforce when he came to CSTS. DVR and CSTS partnered to help Josiah obtain a CDL A. Josiah received National Health Emergency (NHE), Adult, and DWG funding for his Class A CDL training tuition, fees, licensing fee, housing, meals, and transportation. Josiah successfully completed his training and gained employment as a Fuel Truck Driver, earning \$32 an hour. Josiah now works a rotational schedule with two weeks on and two weeks off. He works 84 hours each workweek, which gives him a considerable amount of overtime.

## ARIZONA

An **UNEMPLOYED DEVELOPMENT CONSULTANT** was enrolled into the WIOA Program after being laid off because of the pandemic. After completing

Certified Associate Project Management training, she secured several contracts and now earns \$52,000 a year.

## ARKANSAS

**DEBRA** had been working as an independent contractor in the oil and gas field industry in North Central Arkansas before the economic effect of COVID-19 caused a stoppage on all leasing activity and production. Having worked in this industry for twelve years, Debra had difficulty obtaining new employment. Debra set out to earn her GED® in summer 2020 with the goal of eventually entering a Licensed Practical Nurse (LPN) program. She went to her local Arkansas Workforce Center and was enrolled in the WIOA Dislocated Worker Program, which provided her with the necessary assistance to enter and complete this training program. Debra has attained her CNA license and is working towards her LPN license. She is set to graduate in spring 2022.

**EDWARD** first visited the local Arkansas Workforce Center in February 2021, looking for assistance in obtaining a CDL. His previous employer had laid off Edward in October 2020 because of the COVID-19 pandemic. Although Edward was receiving UI benefits, he knew that he needed a more permanent solution to become self-sufficient. Initially, he was referred to the local Adult Education partner, which helped Edward start his CDL training. With encouragement and support from his career advisor, Edward persevered through personal obstacles and completed his training. On May 14, 2021, Edward passed and received his CDL certificate and license. He has since accepted a job offer and is gainfully employed.

**LORENZO** visited his local Arkansas Workforce Center and applied for the Adult Program in August 2020 after being laid off by the local casino. The casino had ceased operations following COVID-related economic complications, and there were few employment prospects for Lorenzo in West Central Arkansas. Lorenzo realized that he needed a new career and sought less physically demanding work. After discussing his options and completing the necessary assessments, Lorenzo decided to attend the truck driving program at Diesel Driving Academy. He did very well in his classes and attained his CDL in December 2020. With the help of his case manager, Lorenzo then began submitting applications and attending virtual job fairs. Eventually, the local Coca-Cola distributor hired him as a truck driver. He is now earning a wage that can comfortably support himself and his family.

**SEBRINA** was suddenly laid off after working twelve years for the same employer. She had a family of three, which made losing her only source of income more overwhelming. Sabrina visited her local Arkansas Workforce Center and was enrolled in the Dislocated Worker Program. Sebrina felt that she needed a career change and was interested in training for a career that would provide her and her family with financial security.

With the help of her career advisor, Sebrina enrolled in the local two-year college's nursing program. The WIOA program assisted her with tuition, books, a stethoscope, and nursing

apparel. While in the nursing program, Sebrina's GPA never dropped below a 3.0. As a result of her persistence and dedication, Sebrina graduated and found employment at the local hospital in North Central Arkansas. She now earns \$40 an hour.

Life in Northeast Arkansas was difficult for **KHALIA**, a single parent who lost her job in March 2020 because of the emerging pandemic. Khalia struggled to find new employment, so she visited her local Arkansas Workforce Center. After completing various assessments,

Khalia's career advisor determined that she needed help developing her skills. Prior to becoming unemployed, Khalia had completed one semester of a Respiratory Care program at a local institution. She was enrolled in the WIOA Dislocated Worker Program and received tuition and fee assistance to continue her training. In April 2021, Khalia graduated with an associate degree in Respiratory Care. Additionally, she attained her license in June 2021 and accepted a full-time position at a local hospital, earning \$23 an hour. Khalia is very happy with her job and appreciative of the assistance provided by the WIOA program.

## COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS

**JULIE'S** employment was adversely affected by the ripple effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. Her hours were reduced, and she eventually became dislocated. She was a single mom with a seven-month-old baby who lived with her mother. During assessment and

planning, it was discovered that Julie had numerous transferrable skills and would be a great temporary fit with the Commonwealth Healthcare Corporation as a screener for the COVID-19 Taskforce. She was eventually hired permanently.



## DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

**PARTICIPANT ONE** was one of the DWG high performers offered positions at the Department of Employee Services (DOES). His background included experience as a graduate assistant at a community college and managerial expertise at a national retail pharmacy chain. Participant One's attention to detail, accuracy, and organizational skills made him an asset to his DOES work team.

**PARTICIPANT TWO** graduated from college in May 2018 and worked for a defense contractor in cyber and physical security for the Department of Homeland Security. Due to COVID-19, the federal workforce shifted to remote work, and his duties became obsolete. Participant Two benefited from his ability to utilize database systems and process sensitive information quickly.

In addition to attending a local university, **PARTICIPANT THREE** worked with a residential

program for individuals with disabilities. Cutbacks in funding led to a loss in their employment, and Participant Three filed for unemployment and sought assistance from caseworkers at the AJC. She was referred to the DWG and placed on a User Interface team, where she strengthened her communication and computer skills.

**PARTICIPANT FOUR'S** qualifications included a business administration degree and ten years in the customer service and managerial field. From the beginning of her tenure in DWG, this participant received extensive training and was provided with the equipment and supplies needed to enable her to carry out her assignment. Participant Four shared with her caseworker that her placement in DWG went very well, and she loved it and had no issues or concerns. Moreover, she acknowledged that she expanded her skills, especially with research and data retrieval, and set a personal goal to secure permanent employment with the agency.

## HAWAII

When **PAUL** received his layoff notice, he quickly decided to meet Maui Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) staff at the local Workforce Development Division office. After discussing his vocational options as an adversely affected trade worker, Paul decided to join Hawaii's booming airline industry. An AAS degree in Aeronautical Maintenance Technology (AMT) would jumpstart his new career. Paul's training pathway came to a halt when the state college announced a delay

in the AMT program because of a shortage of instructors. Still, Paul persevered and secured appropriate training in the state of Washington.

Paul decided to remain in Washington after accepting an airline job. Paul said that the TAA training was a "tough road" with both school and work, but also that it was "an awesome experience." He also noted that he is "glad about where [he is] at and for the support given throughout the process."

## KANSAS

**MARIA** came to the Wichita Workforce Center in August 2020 seeking training in the aviation industry as a Computerized Numerical Control (CNC) Operator. She had recently been laid off from her job in aviation and was receiving unemployment compensation. Maria wanted to stay in the aviation industry, but she did not have the credentials needed. She had completed her GED® but had no postsecondary education or credentials. Maria was seeking a credential in aviation that could also transition to the advanced manufacturing industry. With the help of Workforce Center services, Maria explored occupational skills training opportunities. Maria decided to pursue a CNC Operator Technical Certificate at a local technical school. She hoped to complete the training as soon as possible to help support her family. Maria successfully completed her training and obtained her CNC Operator Certification in May 2021, and she began employment at a local aviation company that same month. She earns \$20.17 an hour with benefits.

**ASHLEY** was working as a Warehouse worker earning \$9 an hour. The business closed in April of 2020 and Ashley had been unemployed for the last year and a half. Ashley was selected to participate in a Workforce Assistance Program. She was intent on finding a job to improve her current financial situation and reached out to Workforce Professional Arlene at the Junction City Workforce Center. During her interview with Arlene, Ashley spoke in detail about her job interests, possible locations, and need for a self-sufficient pay. She expressed reservations about applying to certain jobs because she did not feel qualified.

Arlene encouraged Ashley to apply to a variety of jobs, attend the interviews, and believe she could succeed in any job she chose. Arlene helped Ashley by emailing job

recommendations and links to local job fairs. She spoke with Ashley nearly every day about the available jobs and their incentives. Just six days after their first phone call, Ashley was offered a position at Advanced Call Center Technologies, followed by a second offer to work at the Foot Locker Distribution Facility. She accepted the position at Foot Locker and now earns \$14.50 an hour.

**GREGORY** contacted the Junction City Workforce Center after receiving his My Reemployment Plan program notification. He had several questions about program requirements. Yvonne, a Workforce Services Specialist, assisted him with completing his Job Search Plan and Skills List. Once they finished the paperwork, Yvonne helped Gregory customize his résumé. Six weeks later, Yvonne followed up with Gregory and discovered that he had obtained employment at Auto Zone. Gregory now earns \$11.50 an hour.

**RENITA** was earning \$18 an hour, but she lost her job when her company chose to downsize because of the COVID-19 pandemic. She was notified of her selection in the My Reemployment Plan Program. Jessie reached out to Renita after noticing she did not have a résumé on file, and she made a contact that offered tailored Workforce Reemployment services. Renita attended an appointment with Jesse to receive assistance in her job search efforts. During their first meeting, Renita and Jesse focused on customizing a résumé. Together they created a résumé that Renita was proud to offer prospective employers. Jessie suggested Renita visit the upcoming Job Fair. Over the next two weeks, Jessie sent several job referrals to her. Renita reached out to tell Jessie she had accepted a full-time job at Kingston Parts as a Shipping clerk. She earns \$15 an hour.



## MARYLAND

**AMMARA** was an active-duty spouse with a Master of Science in Higher Education. She had worked primarily for non-profits and at community colleges. She came to an AJC operated by the Anne Arundel Workforce Development Corporation seeking assistance in finding a professional job that matched her background in policy and program management.

A Career Consultant at the AJC thought Ammara would be a great candidate for the Military Corps Career Connect (C3), an initiative funded by a DWG. After enrollment, she was referred to the Spouse Fellowship program with the Hiring our Heroes initiative, where program staff placed her in a fellowship with Solutions for Information Designs LLC. There, she worked virtually as an occupational analyst. She also had a goal of earning her PMP certification and enrolled in a PMP cohort. She successfully completed her fellowship, but she could not participate in the program because of family medical issues. She then obtained full-time employment as a program administrator with JRH Consultants at an annual salary of \$35,000. Unfortunately, that job was not a good fit, and Ammara was once again unemployed.

She returned to C3 for assistance and was placed in a fellowship with Kiernan Group Holdings. This six-week fellowship progressed into a 12-week OJT that started in April 2019. Unfortunately, the company experienced financial issues that resulted in drastically reduced staffing hours. Ammara was still interested in pursuing her PMP certification and completed a five-day course with Vets2Pm through C3. As she was preparing for her exam, she was offered a position as a program manager with the Washington Center. Then the COVID-19 pandemic began, and the job offer was rescinded. She used her free time to study and prepare for her PMP exam. Testing centers were temporarily closed, so her exam date was delayed, but she finally took, completed, and passed on August 29, 2020. She subsequently obtained employment with the University of Maryland's Smith School of Business, working as the evening MBA program manager. Ammara is happy to be earning \$34 an hour.

**RONDA** came to the Garrett County Office of the Western Maryland Consortium in late 2019, where she hoped to increase her skills. She was a dislocated worker who relied on public assistance to get by in life. After receiving career counseling and information on WIOA funding, Ronda decided to improve her job prospects by training for her Class A CDL with funding from the NHE and DWG programs. Her husband had been a truck driver before his health deteriorated, and she always enjoyed going on the road with him. Ronda's career counselor helped her enroll in CDL training with the Mountaintop Truck Driving Institute through Garrett College. Ronda subsequently earned her Class A CDL. It did not take long for her to find a steady, good-paying job as a truck driver, and for the first time in her life, she has a job with benefits and insurance. Ronda has signed on as a driver in training with U.S. Xpress and enjoys traveling the country while earning a great wage.

**MARIAN** was an experienced systems analyst and enjoyed a 25-year tenure with the same company before she was suddenly laid off. Her professional background included supporting various IT contracts as a systems analyst, a COBOL Programmer, and an Automation Engineer.

Despite Marian's diverse skill sets and strong employment record, she knew she lacked industry-recognized IT credentials. Marian worked with a Career Consultant at a nearby AJC, who helped her determine how to invest in her training and credentials to take the next step in her career. After considering a range of options, she decided to leverage WIOA training and supportive services funds to pay for project management training. Marian excelled in the project management training program and simultaneously completed several AJC workshops. These workshops helped her strengthen her interviewing skills, use LinkedIn effectively, sharpen her résumé, and become more small-business savvy.

The COVID-19 pandemic may have slowed Marian's job search, but it did not stop her. Since completing the training, she has been hired

for a systems analyst position at the Maryland Department of Health. She now earns \$55,000 a year and plans to take the PMP exam in the near future.

**BILLY** is a 74-year-old dislocated veteran who worked as a Disaster Recovery Consultant for over 21 years. He became unemployed when he lost his government contract, so he came to the Liberty Career Center seeking a training opportunity to re-enter the workforce. Billy recognized that his age and lack of a project management certification could be barriers to securing employment in his field. However, he felt confident that his experience, skills, and abilities, coupled with a PMP credential, would help him obtain employment in a high-demand market.

Liberty Center Career Consultant Elizabeth Frederick-Carter was assigned to assist Billy with navigating the WIOA training experience. Midway through the process, the COVID-19 pandemic caused a sudden delay. Both the agency and training provider were forced to suspend training activities and shift their operations to a remote platform. During this time, Elizabeth stayed in contact with Billy, keeping him updated on the agency's status, sharing job leads and community resources, and even offering guidance when he experienced unemployment issues. Billy maintained his job search and earned a handful of interviews. Just as he thought, Billy was told that he would have been hired immediately if he had a PMP certification.

Once the training resumed, Billy successfully completed the 12-week PMP course online with Towson University. Five weeks later, he gained full-time employment as a cyber resilience analyst through an IT Staffing Agency. He now earns \$65 an hour.

**ANDRE** visited the Howard County Office of Workforce Development shortly after his release from prison. Andre had previous experience as a Warehouse Assistant, but he struggled to find an employer willing to hire someone with a criminal justice history. While incarcerated, Andre attended a presentation on job seeker services provided by Howard County. He learned about

registered apprenticeship opportunities and decided this career path would be well suited for him. The Howard Community College accepted him into an HVAC apprenticeship program. WIOA funding paid Andre's school expenses. Two months into his classroom training, Andre received an employment offer with Environmental Systems Associates. Andre is now in his second year of the HVAC apprenticeship and is still employed.

**WALTER** was among the many AJC customers who faced barriers to employment including a criminal justice history and a substance use disorder. For treatment, he was referred to the Howard House Residential Recovery Program. To further help Walter and remain in good standing with the conditions of his release, Howard House staff referred him to the Howard County AJC for job seeker services.

The AJC helped Walter consider his challenges like his criminal justice history, losing all his personal identification, and attendance at meetings that were part of his treatment plan. Despite these obstacles, Walter was determined to get his life back on track. He worked with a team of workforce partners who provided him with one-on-one and group life and job search training. He was also able to access WIOA funding, which supported him while he pursued CDL driver training. Walter overcame the barriers to employment and is now employed in a position that pays the livable wage he needs to be self-sufficient.

**ROBINETTE** and her husband lost their jobs because of the emerging COVID-19 pandemic. Robinette was laid off by Food Lion, where she earned \$11 an hour. Robinette enrolled in WIOA and was approved to receive funding to train as a CNA. This news, however, came with a new challenge: all classes were now being offered virtually, and Robinette's family did not own a personal computer. The non-profit Bridges to Housing organization collaborated with Howard County's Office of Workforce Development and Howard Community College to help Robinette procure a PC and internet service. Robinette also received a cell phone and a new email address to help her as a distance-learning student. Robinette is now a licensed CNA, and she has

also earned a certificate in advanced patient care. Her newly acquired credentials will allow her to compete in the labor market. Her ultimate goal is to become an LPN.

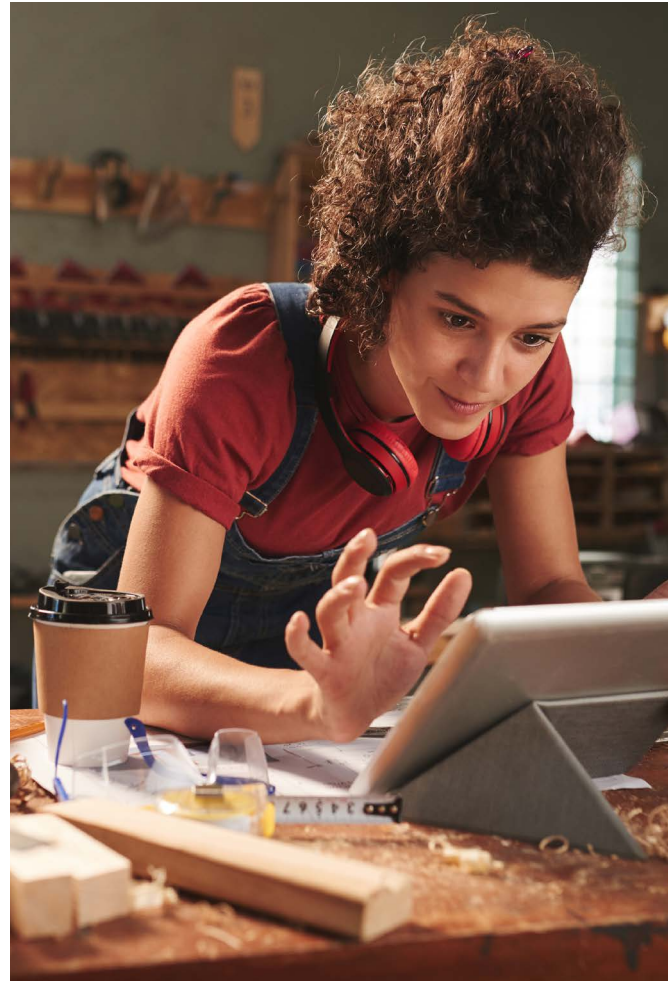
**PRECIOUS** lost her job because of organizational restructuring. She had worked in a series of low-paying contractual positions that did not pay enough to cover her rent. Precious found herself living in a transitional home, working part-time as a Human Resources Manager, and barely making enough to pay for food and transportation.

Precious was determined to improve her life, but she knew she needed help. She worked with EPG career consultant Camille Dixon to explore options and resources. Precious enrolled in training related to human resources management. She met regularly with Ms. Dixon, who offered her encouragement and guidance, and she helped her access the services and resources needed to stabilize her life. EPG Workforce Development Instructor Jasmine Owens also worked closely with Precious to develop a professional résumé.

Renewed confidence, valuable occupational training, and a new résumé paved the way for Precious to reenter the job market. She was offered a human resources position at one of the top hospitals in the Baltimore region. Her improved economic situation has allowed her to move into better housing, and she is now preparing for homeownership.

Precious noted: “My life was on complete edge, and Ms. Camille went quickly to help stabilize my situation. She connected me with many resources, and she also gave me positive feedback and many pep talks. Jasmine was so professional. She heard me out and provided me with positive feedback and resources, too. Both professionals helped to boost my confidence during this extremely stressful time in my life. They did not judge me, nor did they make me feel bad. They showed genuine support for my career and well-being. I’m so grateful for the role they both played in helping me save my confidence and my career.”

**CHRISTOPHER**, a United States Marine Corps veteran, relocated to Frederick from North Carolina in hopes of starting a new life. He knew that he needed employment above all else. He struggled to find work, though he had submitted over 152 résumés and applications. Christopher sought assistance from the Frederick AJC, where veterans could receive immediate assistance. He scheduled an appointment with a Disabled Veterans’ Outreach Program Specialist (DVOPS) named Kevin. Together, they worked on updating and reformatting his résumé. Christopher submitted the résumé online, and employers contacted him within the week. He interviewed with two potential employers and decided to accept employment with Dairy Farmers of America. He now works as a machine operator and earns a competitive salary.



## MICHIGAN

**TERESA** came to West Michigan Works! after her position as a Production Coordinator was eliminated. Teresa attended several workshops, eventually met with a career coach, and enrolled in the WIOA Dislocated Worker program. Through WIOA, Teresa revamped her résumé, practiced her interviewing skills, and was provided interview clothing and mileage support for her job search. After several months, Teresa saw her old job as an office manager appear on Pure Michigan Talent Connect. She was thrilled with the idea of returning and submitted her résumé. She received a call the next day for a phone

interview. The hiring manager was happy to see her résumé come across his desk and knew within minutes that he wanted her back with their company. He offered her the position, and she accepted. Teresa noted: "I learned so much from the workshops. The women in the Ionia office helped me with my job search and would let me know of job openings that were in my line of work. Do not give up on yourself. I was down and out when I lost my job. I was at West Michigan Works! about three days a week job searching. The staff there was so great and helped me get my self-esteem back."

## MISSISSIPPI

**JESSIE** became a dislocated worker towards the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic. He decided to seek an opportunity to learn a new skill and begin a career. Jessie had experience as a foreman overseeing a small crew specializing in landscaping. He enjoyed the outdoors and working with his hands. He set out to find an opportunity in an apprenticeship program. In time, Jessie discovered an OJT opportunity while browsing the Mississippi Department of Employment Security website. He began working with Superior as a Tile Setter through the OJT program and quickly learned all necessary skills. His dedication and work ethic led to a \$3 an hour increase in pay during the training.

**ROBIN** had always worked in the restaurant industry. She was employed by River Hut Restaurant for over seven years when the COVID-19 pandemic caused the restaurant to close. Robin reached out to the WJC for assistance in filing an unemployment claim. The WJC staff discussed other options of non-traditional employment with Robin, who noted

that she had always dreamed of opening her own business.

Robin had over ten years of experience working in restaurants and serving customers, but she did not know how to start a business. After the WJC staff explained the Self Employment Assistance Program, Robin decided to begin the process of opening her own restaurant. WJC staff assisted her in contacting the city of Carthage and obtaining permits and information regarding the Food Safety Manager Training Course and the American National Standards Institute Accreditation Exam. Robin went on to open Robin's Steak and Grill in Edinburg in October 2020. The restaurant has received excellent ratings for both its food and customer service. Robin hopes to expand her business when the economy allows and is grateful for the assistance she received from the staff of the Carthage WJC.

**TERESA** shared that "I am happy I am working at the WIN Job Center because of the DWG program. In my previous job, I mostly worked in

a room by myself, especially during COVID-19. I now get to greet customers with a smile and assist them in small ways in their search for employment. I also sanitize and clean areas our customers use to help keep them safe. It makes me glad to brighten their day and provide

service to the community. The pandemic was very hard for everyone to go through, but I am glad it led me to this position. I now have a good salary, great hours, and get to work with kind, dedicated people. Thank you for the opportunity and best wishes for future success.”

## MONTANA

**JOHN**, a WIOA Dislocated Worker participant, completed his OJT hours at a Bozeman investigation firm. He is now a full-time employee there. He continues to train as a legal analyst and investigative reporter while developing other skills in marketing and presentation.

**RON**, an unemployed worker, completed a RESEA to find new work. During the summer of 2020, Ron worked at a temporary job. He also interviewed for a position that he had previously applied for. By completing specific training, Ron hoped he could improve his employment outcome. His WIOA case manager reached out to the employer, and together they wrote an OJT contract for a crusher operator. Ron started the OJT earning a wage of \$17 per hour. At the time of completion, he had received two \$1 an hour raises.

After being laid off from his driving job, a **MARRIED FATHER OF FIVE** moved to Miles City to pursue his lifelong dream of becoming a nurse. Supported by DWG and WIOA Dislocated Worker program funding, the participant worked to further his education and was accepted into a nursing program. DWG provided \$2,665 to assist with books, tuition, supplies, and transportation expenses. The participant’s case manager described him as “very humble and organized.”

The participant is immensely grateful for all the assistance that he received.

**JAMES** was referred to JSM Thompson Falls for assistance with CDL training. He was enrolled in WIOA Adult and Dislocated Worker programs and the state’s HELP-Link program. He attained his Class A CDL endorsement. Program funds assisted with tuition, lodging, per diem, and work clothing. He obtained full-time employment and benefits through a company called Mountain Power. He now earns \$29 an hour. James hopes to eventually become a Journeyman Lineman, a position with very high earning potential.

**T.B.**, an unemployed veteran, was enrolled in WIOA Adult and Dislocated Worker programs. The state’s HELP-Link program helped her update her résumé and begin pursuing a job as a dental hygienist. First, T.B. completed the Dental Assistant Program and worked on prerequisite courses at Salish Kootenai College. Once accepted into the Dental Hygienist program in Great Falls, T.B. received assistance with training costs, supplies, housing, and other supportive services. T.B. has now graduated, obtained a state Dental Hygienist license, and found employment in Billings. She happily earns \$36 an hour.

## NORTH DAKOTA

**DAN** obtained his GED® and completed two years of college classes but never earned a degree. He worked as a rail engineer for many years but was laid off in March of 2020 because of the COVID-19 pandemic. Dan began looking for other career options, and after four months of struggling to find employment, applied to WIOA.

Dan's assessment and interests indicated that Class A CDL training would be a good fit for his future, and he soon received approval for training. WIOA helped with training costs for pre-training assessment requirements. He also obtained support for his travel to and from the training site in Fargo, as well as temporary housing for the four-week training program. Dan started his training in August and completed his training in September. He continued to seek CDL positions and was eventually hired by a Michigan company as an independent truck driver.

He negotiated his salary to \$109,000 per year. Dan reports that he is living in his truck and that the company has him driving all over the Midwestern states. He is happy, busy, and planning to buy a home soon.

**GABE**, a 31-year-old male, worked in the oil field until January of 2020. When that job ended, he worked as a taxicab driver for the next three months. He initially spoke with Job Service staff in June 2020, noting that he was interested in the possibility of CDL training. He followed up in November 2020, when he had been unemployed for 28 weeks.

Gabe was determined eligible for the DWG on November 18th and was approved for the 120-hour CDL program beginning in December

2020. He successfully completed his training in January of 2021 and obtained his Class A CDL license the very next month. As of March 1, 2021, he was successfully working for a new trucking company. Gabe is now earning a stable income and enjoying his work.

After being laid off from his job in an oil field in western North Dakota, **KYLE** became a dislocated worker. Kyle was determined to be eligible for the DWG and hoped to obtain his CDL license. Kyle received his CDL permit and was enrolled in CDL training at Commercial Education and Safety. He completed his training and passed the CDL A test in February 2021. Kyle is now employed with a trucking company and transports frozen food to the Chicago and Ohio areas. After his 90-day probation period is completed, Kyle will make \$0.45 per mile. After one year of employment, Kyle's pay will be increased to \$0.54 per mile.

**ERIC** is a retired Air Force Veteran who worked as an electrician for three years before being laid off because of the COVID-19 pandemic. He visited the Minot Workforce Center seeking assistance in obtaining his Class A CDL license. He was determined eligible for the DWG and was approved to attend CDL training. He began training in June 2021 and successfully completed the program the next month. The DWG paid for classroom training, pre-training testing, drug screening, a physical, and round-trip expenses to and from the testing site.

After obtaining his license, Eric was very proactive about job searching. On August 4, 2021, Eric called his case manager to report a job offer. He now earns \$18 an hour and enjoys a full benefits package.

## NEBRASKA

**ANTHONY** participated in the Greater Nebraska Trade and Economic Transition-Dislocated Worker Grant (TET-DWG) program during Program Year 2020. While participating in these programs, Anthony received assistance with tuition from the Trade program for the Central Community College associate degree welding program. TET-DWG assisted with supportive services, and the Dislocated Worker Program provided career planning services. Anthony is now employed as a welder at Stellar Industries.

**CHARLES** received DVOP services during Program Year 2020. Charles is a 78-year-old veteran with significant barriers to employment. Charles came to the Beatrice AJC seeking assistance with filing for unemployment benefits. The Beatrice AJC was hosting a Tailgate Job Fair at the time, and he was interested in attending this event to find employment. Charles conversed with the employers attending the job fair, and he ultimately applied for a position at a local grocery store. The grocery store happily hired Charles.

However, Charles continued exploring his options and told his DVOPS that he had received several offers from different employers. His DVOPS continued to provide career services, and Charles eventually found a job better suited to his skills. Charles is now employed with the Blue Rivers Area Agency as a van driver. This position allows him to shuttle clients to and from appointments in the Beatrice area. Charles is very happy with the services that he received from his DVOPS and through the Beatrice AJC.

**CRYSTAL** participated in the TET-DWG during Program Year 2020. Crystal had been employed as a replenishment and allocation analyst for over seven years, but she was laid off in March 2018. At the time of program enrollments, Crystal was experiencing a high-risk pregnancy. She had always been interested in pursuing a career in the health care industry but was intimidated by the extensive training requirements and training costs.

Crystal was co-enrolled in the local dislocated worker program and supportive-services assistance. These programs made it possible for her to afford the costs associated with training. In December 2018, Crystal became a single parent when her daughter was born. Crystal made the Dean's List in the fall of 2018, and in July 2019, she received a certificate of completion from Western Nebraska Community College (WNCC) for the Nurse Aide course. Crystal went on to pass her State of Nebraska licensure for Nurse Aide. By June 2020, she graduated from WNCC, where she earned a diploma in Practical Nursing and her LPN/multi-state licensure from the State of Nebraska. In July 2020, Crystal began her employment with Regional West Physicians Clinic in Scottsbluff, Nebraska. She later interviewed and was hired at Sidney Regional West, which offered higher pay and better hours. She is very grateful for the assistance that made her new career possible.

**PAMELA** participated in the Greater Omaha Dislocated Worker Program during Program Year 2020. Pamela was laid off in August 2020 after her position as Housing Services manager was eliminated. She was co-enrolled in TET-DWG and then referred to Mary Lanning Health Care (MLHC) for a position as a patient representative at Mary Lanning's Medical Clinic. Pamela was placed in an OJT with MLHC, which she successfully completed. Pamela is still employed at MLHC and is doing well in her new position. She noted that she appreciates the assistance and support that she received throughout her OJT.

**JAMES** participated in the Greater Omaha adult program during Program Year 2020 because he was laid off from his position as a laser operator in August 2019. James was concerned about obtaining employment because he had a previous offense on his record. After taking the NEworks assessments for work interest, James decided to obtain a CDL. James' career planner discussed options with James for training

providers, and James chose a local community college. James was accepted for the Approved Training Program through Nebraska Department of Labor's Unemployment Insurance Division, which waives work-search requirements while individuals are attending training. In December, he completed CDL training, and James' career planner arranged an OJT opportunity with a local employer. James started as a shag driver earning \$16.50 an hour. Four months later, he was promoted to a supervisory role, and he now earns \$21.50 an hour.

**REBECCA** participated in the Greater Nebraska dislocated worker and trade programs during Program Year 2020. Rebecca was laid off from her position as a graphic designer at the Beatrice Daily Sun. Though she held a degree in journalism, Rebecca was concerned that her skills were outdated. There were no similar positions available in the Beatrice area, and Rebecca could not commute for work.

Rebecca mentioned that she had once worked as a CNA. Twenty years later, however, her CNA skills were outdated. After taking her assessments, Rebecca decided she was interested in returning to the nursing industry sector. She signed up for classes at her local RN program, and TET-DWG and Trade assisted with mileage reimbursement and training costs. Rebecca earned \$15 an hour when she was laid off from her position at the Daily Sun. Rebecca now earns \$25 an hour as a Registered Nurse.

**SHAWNA** participated in TET-DWG and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Next Step programs during program year 2020. She was a divorced homemaker and was homeschooling her children. Following her divorce, she worked at a local gas station. Shawna wanted to go back to school and pursue an associate degree in business. Her career planner discussed training provider options, and together they decided that Central Community College (CCC) was the best place for Shawna to begin her journey in higher education.

Shawna enrolled in the CCC business administration program and did very well in her classes. While in training, Shawna was accepted for the Approved Training Program through unemployment, which waived work-search requirements while she was going to school. Shawna's career planner assisted her with many services such as career planning, financial literacy, individual counseling, and résumé preparation. Shawna faced some serious medical issues during program participation, including a major surgery, but this did not stop her from continuing her education. Shawna graduated in May 2021 and obtained a position at Columbian Village as a housing manager. She is currently earning \$16 an hour.

## NEW HAMPSHIRE

**PEGGY** was enrolled in the NH Works for Recovery program in August 2019. She had a limited work history and was currently employed as a taxi driver. Her barriers to employment included financial barriers, a lack of credentials, a lack of occupational skills, a lack of transportation, legal barriers, limited job search skills, limited work history, and substance abuse.

Peggy also did not have any clear career goals, so a career navigator began working with her to identify her interests. Peggy took over 20

assessment tests and ultimately decided that she was interested in becoming a truck driver. Peggy was attracted to the salary and lifestyle that this position would provide her. Through hard work and perseverance, Peggy was able to work through a truck driving school and obtain her CDL. Peggy is very excited and proud of herself for meeting all of her goals. She is gainfully employed and is extremely grateful for the services and funding that NH Works for Recovery provided her.



**SARAH** is a 27-year-old single mother. She was collecting unemployment after being laid off from her waitressing job. Sarah had heard about WIOA and hoped they would work with her to further her education and kickstart her new career path. When the career navigator met Sarah, she was collecting UI and food stamps. She had been a server in restaurants and bars but was tired of the instability, lack of benefits, and late-night hours. Now that her daughter was in preschool, Sarah decided that it was time to focus on her education.

Sarah had taken healthcare courses at Northern Essex Community College but could not finish them when she became pregnant. She always knew that she wanted to work in the healthcare field but was unsure how she would manage the financial burden of higher education. Together, Sarah and her career planner looked at the Medical Assistant Program offered at Great Bay Community College. The Career

Navigator suggested that Sarah call the program director and attend an informational session. Without hesitation, Sarah reached out to Kim, the program director. Before she knew it, Sarah was accepted into the program.

While in training, Sarah found that the necessary travel created financial hardship for her. WIOA provided mileage reimbursement, which helped Sarah afford the commute and focus on her education. Sarah was an excellent and committed student. She began training at Great Bay Community College in July 2019 and graduated three months later. Sarah then completed her externship at Core Physicians. Two weeks after graduation, she was offered a full-time position with Core Physicians as a Medical Assistant. She now earns \$14.75 an hour and enjoys a full benefits package. Sarah appreciates everything that WIOA was able to do for her and is excited about what the future holds.



## NEW MEXICO

**BRUCE** and his longtime partner were having difficulty caring for their children after being laid off. Bruce sought WIOA assistance and hoped to obtain a CDL. In February of 2021, Bruce successfully passed his exams and graduated from the CDL training program. He is now happily employed by Werner Enterprises.

**SHERI** was employed with Verizon for eight and half years, advancing up the career ladder within the company. In January 2019, Verizon announced a series of layoffs, and unfortunately, Sheri was laid off from her job. After more than eight years with the same company, Sheri was unsure of next step. She has always wanted to be a nurse, and she felt that this might be a good opportunity for her to change careers. Sheri's family fully supported her decision to return to school and pursue her goal of moving into the healthcare industry.

Sheri enrolled in the WIOA Adult & Dislocated Worker program in May of 2019, and the program helped her to afford the tuition cost for her registered nursing program. Sheri graduated from Carrington College on December 16, 2020 and obtained her RN license on February 17, 2021. Since she graduated, Sheri has received seven job offers. She ultimately decided to accept her offer from Presbyterian Hospital, where she is currently in the Nursing Resident Program, working 40 hours per week and making \$29.85 per hour. Sheri remains grateful for the support and opportunity that she received from the Adult & Dislocated Worker program and her Career Development Specialist.

**JOSEPH**, a 50-year-old from Las Vegas, New Mexico, is a lifelong resident of his community. After many years of diverse work experiences, including a handyman in automotive repair and a laborer in construction and masonry jobs, he could not secure a long-term position. With COVID-19 impacting his ability to find work after March 2020, he was unemployed with no income. He came to HELP-NM, the Northern Area Local Workforce Development Board service provider, to get assistance finding a job. Joseph was made

aware of the program through a flier. From that flier, Joseph called and made an appointment to complete an application to participate in the WIOA Adult program. Joseph was placed at Amistad Y Resolana in a facility maintenance position.

The opportunity to receive training through HELP-NM has given Joseph a new perspective on his capabilities and, in turn, bolstered his confidence. Asking for help from HELP-NM has provided him with various opportunities towards gaining a job, educational options, and support. The program's support emboldened his motivation to find stability in work and the confidence to pursue his continued education.

His placement has also been a significant factor in his success. Amistad Y Resolana provided him with the perfect atmosphere to transition into his new work environment. The variety of maintenance repairs and projects to be completed provides Joseph with a broad learning experience. Second, yet equally important, is the work environment. Amistad Y Resolana operates as a treatment center for adults in the Las Vegas community. Being in this environment has allowed Joseph to blossom in his confidence to continue his personal and professional growth.

"It's been hard for a while... without work I felt lost. Now I'm receiving training in a new field! WIOA is giving me courage to learn a new job and confidence to get my GED®."

**LAURA** came to the Roswell office in January 2020 to inquire about how WIOA could aid with her postsecondary financial needs. Laura is a 43-year-old single mother who lived with her mom rent free due to harsh economic struggles she recently experienced. She was a stay-at-home mom for several years which had made her skills and experience outdated. After going through a divorce, she started struggling for income as she lacked skills to be employable and her ex-husband stopped paying alimony. Due to the time she was away from the workforce, Laura became eligible as a Displaced Home Maker which allowed her to be considered for

WIOA Dislocated Worker funds. She made the decision to attend nursing school as she felt it was a high demand career and the pay would allow her to become financially independent to provide for her child. After enrolling at ENMU-Roswell, Laura had access to financial aid and a scholarship, but it was not enough to cover all her financial needs. Throughout her post-secondary training, she was a great student and received good grades. Laura was enrolled in the

Nursing Program, and with great determination, she completed the program on May 4, 2021, with honors. With the assistance of the DWG program, Laura can now provide for herself and her family. She is currently working at Lovelace Hospital in the intensive care unit and is making \$27 an hour. Laura expressed how grateful she was to her Career Coach and the WIOA program as she has become fully independent and no longer must rely on credit cards to survive.

## OREGON

**MAX** noted the following in response to being asked about how WorkSource Rogue Valley has changed his life: “In March of this year, I had completed the class, passed all of the tests, and had obtained my GED®! At the time that I had reached out to WorkSource, I was on unemployment due to my place of business being shut down.”

**DAVID** noted the following in response to being asked about how WorkSource Rogue Valley has changed his life: “I had been applying for so many jobs with just my experience as a heavy equipment operator with no results. But just two months after completing the training, I am now employed as a CDL Driver. I will keep this job because the training I received gave me the confidence, skills, and certifications I needed to be ready to step right in and drive a semi-truck with a trailer.”

**JOSE** was a West Linn Paper employee but was laid off in 2020. Rethinking his career options, Jose received WIOA funding assistance for tuition and support services. His workforce advisor helped with academic counseling, a term-by-term outline, and Free Application For Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) applications. Jose eventually enrolled in Clackamas Community College. Jose also enrolled in the DWG-Disaster Recovery in 2020 and received support services to assist him with tutoring fees and his job search. This tutoring enabled Jose to pass his most challenging classes and earn his degree.

Jose graduated in September 2020 and obtained multiple certifications: an AAS Degree in manufacturing technology, a one-year certificate in manufacturing, and a CNC Certificate. He also obtained his CPR/First Aid and Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) certifications.

Jose earned full-time employment with Effective Environmental Systems Inc. as a Systems Integration Technician, where he earned \$18 an hour. In March 2021, however, he was able to find an even better job opportunity. He started working at Package Containers as a machine operator. Jose now earns \$24 an hour and enjoys full benefits.

This **DWG PARTICIPANT** had previously obtained a degree in health informatics. However, she had no experience in the healthcare industry and could not find employment in her chosen field. Through assistance provided under the grant, the participant was hired as a COVID-19 patient screener at a prominent healthcare provider in Rogue Valley. During this internship, the employer found out that the intern was bilingual in English and Spanish. This skill was a major discovery because the employer works with a large population of Latinx individuals. The employer offered the intern a permanent position before her internship ended.

**M.W.**, a veteran and dislocated worker, enrolled in the Employment Recovery DWG and was

subsequently enrolled in the Certified Medical Assistant (CMA) program at Klamath Community College. She graduated in November 2020, earned her CMA certificate, and passed the National Health Association (NHA) exam. After a four-month job search, M.W. secured a position with the Oregon Department of Human Services as a limited duration Klamath County Shelter Coordinator. She earns \$19.35 an hour and hopes to turn this position into a permanent role.

**J.D.** had always worked as a bartender, but he became unemployed during the early phases of the COVID-19 pandemic. J.D. decided that it was time for a career change. Tillamook Bay Community College referred him to his local WorkSource Center, where he inquired about their commercial driver training program. After successfully completing his skills assessment test, J.D. decided upon a career in commercial

driving. Through the Employment Recovery DWG, he pursued a path that eventually led to a new career. He is now employed as a commercial truck driver and earns a great income.

**KATIE** originally contacted WorkSource in September 2020. She was previously employed as a Baggage Claim Attendant but was laid off because of the COVID-19 pandemic. Katie inquired about training assistance because she wanted to attend Truck Driving school to obtain her Class A CDL. Katie's WIOA scholarship application was approved, and she began attending classes in November. Once she completed training and received her CDL credential, she was hired by a company as a Truck Driver in Portland. Katie has since relocated and changed companies. She is happy to be earning a living wage and working a job that she enjoys.

## SOUTH DAKOTA

**FOREST** was laid off when the department store he worked for declared bankruptcy. He attended a Rapid Response meeting provided by the Department of Labor and Regulation (DLR). His goal was to become a police officer, and he wanted to take advantage of WIOA services. DLR assisted Forest with Re-Employment Services activities and WIOA eligibility. Forest was co-enrolled into Title I Adult, Youth, and Dislocated Worker program. He was also enrolled in Title III Wagner-Peyser. His Employment Plan was developed, and Forest noted that he was interested in the Law Enforcement program at a nearby technical college. Forest was assisted with his FAFSA application and enrolled in the Law Enforcement program in the fall of 2019. WIOA assisted Forest with the costs associated with tuition, books, and his required uniforms. Forest was very serious about his studies and continued his education online after COVID-19 restrictions halted in-person training. Three days after graduation, Forest began working for the local police department.

**CAROL** was laid off from her job after nearly eight years of employment. The company where she worked was certified for TAA. After completing

her assessments, Carol decided that she was interested in pursuing a career as a Medical Laboratory Technician. Labor market information confirmed this would be a good field for her. Carol enrolled in a technical college that was reasonably priced and located near her home. Carol was co-enrolled in Title III Wagner-Peyser, Title I Dislocated Worker, and TAA programs.

She received support services to help with the costs of uniforms and travel to and from training. While enrolled, Carol was able to take advantage of the array of services under the TAA program, which assisted with tuition, fees, and book expenses. TAA also helped with the background check, drug test, and immunization fees required to enter the program. Additionally, Carol was determined eligible to receive a Trade Readjustment Allowance (TRA) while attending training to help maintain the family's fiscal balance. Carol completed her training and successfully obtained her Associate of Science as a Medical Laboratory Technician. Carol's success has been attributed to her desire to move into a high-demand profession, her abilities as a student, and the blending and braiding of resources of both the TAA and Title I programs.

## TEXAS

**TOM**, a dislocated worker initially employed in the oil industry, was tired of the instability that came with his work. He decided that it was time to pursue a new career. Tom graduated from the local community college with a CDL

and tanker endorsement and was able to gain employment in the transportation industry. Thanks to the services provided by Workforce Solutions Permian Basin, he can earn wages sufficient to maintain a household of three.

## UTAH

**ROBERT** is a United States Army veteran. After finishing his service, he found a career in project management. The COVID-19 pandemic, however, ended Robert's 32-year career in this field. Robert began working with a veteran representative at Workforce Services who helped him format his résumé and find employment opportunities. A workforce development specialist connected him with

an appliance repair shop owner. Robert had experience repairing small appliances and was interested in this type of work. The veteran representative and workforce development specialist facilitated an OJT placement with the company. Robert is gainfully employed and is grateful to the Workforce Services team for helping him make such a smooth transition into a new career.

## VERMONT

**DANIELLE**, a single parent, was laid off during the beginning of the pandemic. The layoff forced her to apply for public assistance benefits like food stamps and subsidized housing. She learned about WIOA training opportunities through a partner agency and attended a WIOA Orientation session to see if they could assist her with her job search. Danielle met with a WIOA Case Manager and began an assessment process that determined her job interests, skills, and career plans. The career exploration process helped Danielle decide that she would like to pursue a career in truck driving. The WIOA Case Manager partnered with several community organizations to share resources. Danielle received assistance with tuition costs, and she also received support services and tutoring. Danielle enrolled in the CDL A training program through Northeast Driver Training Program and

successfully earned her Class A CDL. She is now employed by a trucking company and earns \$30 an hour.

**FRANK**, an unemployment compensation recipient, was referred to the Workforce Development (WFD) Team through the Jobseeker Inquiry tool. Frank and a WFD Job Center Specialist connected through Microsoft TEAMS and discussed Frank's skills, abilities, and interests. Frank had previously owned and operated a bread route in a neighboring state. Before that, he worked as a manager at a supermarket. Frank received assistance building a résumé and searching for employment. Eventually, Frank was referred to the apprenticeship staff at Vermont Technical College to explore steps, training, and sponsors who could help him pursue a career as

an Electrician. In January 2021, Frank obtained employment as a Production Team Member with a local forest product employer. He is happily employed but may pursue other apprenticeship opportunities in the future.

**BRANDON** lost his job as a chef because of complications caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. Brandon sought assistance from the Vermont Department of Labor (VDOL) in January 2021. He met with a WIOA Case Manager and began his career exploration and assessments. Brandon and his WIOA Case Manager worked very well together, and Brandon quickly identified many exciting career options. Brandon received a total of \$22,050 in tuition and support, and these funds allowed him to attend the Advanced Welding Institute (AWI). After six months of welding training, Brandon graduated from AWI. A week later, he received a job offer from a large manufacturer. Brandon is very happy in his new job.

**CONNIE** received basic career services through her local AJC. She noted the following about how those services impacted her life: “I wanted to take a moment to express my sincere gratitude and appreciation for the help that the VDOL/WFD Job Center Specialist gave me in securing employment. I am a 61-year-old female who lost a great job because of COVID-19. The Job Center Specialist listened to me and helped me with job leads, gave me great information on formatting résumés and cover letters, and even helped me to do a mock interview. I can honestly say that I could not have [gained new employment] without their help. Because of their help, I’m off unemployment for the first time in ten months, and I will have a career until I retire. I want to thank all of you for the good work you do. Vermonters are very fortunate to have the resources and support our state provides to help us up when we are down and give us paths to succeed.”

## WASHINGTON

After **JANE** received a UI list flyer sent out to school bus drivers, she decided to reach out because she was interested in additional training to increase her chances of gaining employment. Jane was laid off after schools closed due to COVID-19. Jane began working with a WorkSource Spokane Continuous Engagement Team coach. While receiving UI benefits, she was determined to gain employment in an occupation to provide for her family. Jane decided to pursue her CDL. She enrolled at a local training provider and was able to get support and guidance on challenges during training. WorkSource provided her with moral support as she worked with her training provider, and she

obtained her CDL with double/triple trailer and hazmat endorsements. Three days after Jane completed training, she was contacted by a local construction company about a driving position. Jane started her first day in the summer of 2020 as a commercial truck driver of a support vehicle to the construction site. Jane received a starting salary of \$28 per hour. Jane shared that she was so grateful for the support and encouragement from her WorkSource coach. She also mentioned that she and her husband could now live comfortably. Since completing training and gaining employment, she has been sharing her success story with former co-workers and others.

## WYOMING

**KEVIN** worked in the oil field as a welder and was laid off because of complications related to the emerging COVID-19 pandemic. Kevin came to the Casper Workforce Center to file his UI claim, and during this visit, he learned about WIOA and how the Workforce Center staff could assist him with finding other employment opportunities. Kevin began working with a case manager and using Wagner-Peyser services. He was unable to find work because of his lack of training outside

his welding profession, the COVID-19 pandemic, and the economic downturn.

With the financial assistance of the WIOA program, however, Kevin completed the Sage Truck Driving Training and obtained his Class A CDL license with endorsements. He has since gained employment as a full-time truck driver at Rock Hard Cementing. Kevin earns \$18 an hour and enjoys full benefits.



# WIOA Youth Program

## ALABAMA

**BRITTNEY** visited the Sheffield Career Center, where she was determined eligible for the WIOA Work-Based Learning (WBL) program. She expressed an interest in working in a medical office and was placed in the Medical Records Department at North Alabama Medical Center. She successfully completed 390 hours of Work-Based Learning and earned excellent performance evaluations. Eventually, she was hired as a full-time employee at the hospital.

Unfortunately, COVID-19 affected her employment, and she was laid off in May 2020. The Business Services Representative referred Brittney to Infants and Children's Clinic, P.C. It was here that she was considered for the WIOA OJT program. She was hired as a receptionist through the OJT Program in August 2020. Her experience working in the hospital's Medical Records Department helped her to gain

this employment, and Brittney successfully completed 840 hours of OJT in January 2021.

**KENYA** was determined eligible for the WIOA Youth program. She was a recent high school graduate with no prior work experience when she completed her WIOA eligibility forms. She began working under the WBL program at Core Linc in Roanoke, AL from August 2020 to November 2020. During her WBL training, Kenya received high praise from her worksite supervisors and co-workers. After Kenya completed her WBL hours, CoreLinc wished to retain her as an employee and offered Kenya a position with the company. Kenya was then placed in OJT, which she completed in February 2021. Kenya is succeeding in her role and earns high praise from her superiors.

## ARIZONA

A **FIRST-GENERATION COLLEGE STUDENT** completed a nursing degree with the help of the WIOA Program. The program's financial assistance and the career advisor's support allowed the participant to focus and complete their degree. The participant is now employed as a nurse at Mt. Graham Regional Medical Center.

A **STUDENT EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS** with no family in the area was afraid that they would not be able to finish nursing school because they lacked the financial means. With the help of ARIZONA@WORK, however, the participant was able to complete their program at Cochise College, where they earned an associate degree in nursing.



## ARKANSAS

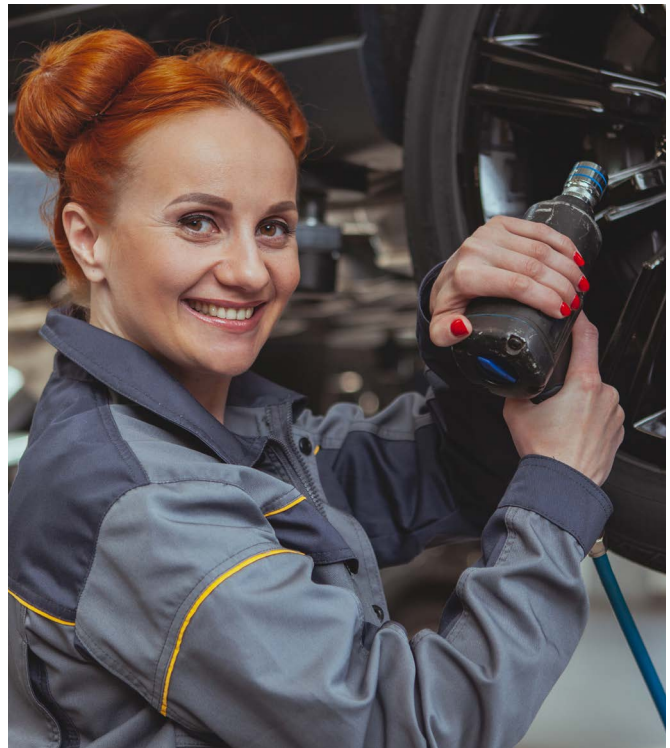
**LAVON** visited his local Arkansas Workforce Center and was enrolled in the WIOA Youth program in October 2020. Lavon needed work experience, training, guidance counseling, and public transportation. However, Lavon's most immediate need was an income that could support his child. After working on goal setting and career exploration with his WIOA case manager, he determined that the work experience program was a great fit for him.

In November 2020, Lavon began working as an office assistant. This allowed him to earn \$10 an hour during his 240 hours of work experience. His duties included employee and client COVID-19 screenings, assistance with printing, and compiling enrollment packets. Lavon received great work evaluations during his work experience. In December 2020, Lavon was offered a full-time permanent position as a family community enrichment specialist. Lavon began his new career in January 2021.

**MARQUEZ** always had a passion for children and wanted to pursue a degree in Early Childhood Education. He decided to visit his local Arkansas Workforce Center in Southwest Arkansas to explore training and career options. Marquez was enrolled in the WIOA Youth Program and immediately began addressing his basic skills deficiency with the assistance of his career advisor. After being referred to a WIOA program partner agency, Marquez was able to increase his basic skills in both reading and math. He then enrolled in a local four-year college. Marquez recently graduated with a degree in Early Childhood Education. He has obtained a full-time career at a local school and began fulfilling his lifelong dream of being an Early Childhood Educator.

**JOHNATHAN** decided to change his life by finding a job that would allow him to build a future. Though Johnathan had some desirable skills, he faced many challenges because of his disability. However, he was determined to reach his goals of finding better employment.

Johnathan visited his Local Arkansas Workforce Center to receive assistance that could result in employment. His career advisor enrolled him in Career Preparation Training Activity that offered assistance with résumé building, interviewing, and dressing for success. He was then placed in work experience at a Central Arkansas worksite, where he worked as a Stock Clerk. Unfortunately, the lack of reliable transportation became a challenge, and Johnathan could not get to work every day. The Arkansas Workforce Center Manager contacted multiple worksite partners, and an employer located closer to Johnathan's home welcomed him as a stock clerk. With the help of the WIOA Youth program, he was able to develop excellent work skills and recently acquired his first full-time job at Walmart.



## COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS

**LORENZA** initially heard about the Workforce Investment Agency (WIA) while attending Kagman High School. After graduating from high school, her parents advised Lorenza to utilize the training offered by DOL WIA. Lorenza provided all necessary documents and was determined eligible for assistance. Her caseworker had worked with her to determine her objectives and goals. She also helped Lorenza to build a strong Individual Employment plan.

Additionally, Lorenza's assessment revealed that she would need to develop some work experience. With careful planning and

support from WIA, Lorenza was able to obtain placement at the Department of Fish & Wildlife. Though she was nervous to begin the work, Lorenza eventually learned to love her position as an administrative assistant trainee. With six months of training, Lorenza became skilled with the fishing and hunting permit process, purchase and acquisitions, travel authorizations processing, and administrative support. Eventually, Lorenza accepted a full-time position as a clerk. She is extremely thankful for the opportunity that WIA has provided and was recently able to purchase her own car.

## HAWAII

A **17-YEAR-OLD MALE** came to the Ola I Ka Hana WIOA Youth Program in June 2018 to inquire about employment services. He was interested in working as a custodian at the high school he graduated from. After some thought, however, he decided he wanted to pursue a career in carpentry. In the fall of 2018, he qualified for financial aid and enrolled in carpentry courses. His financial aid assisted with the costs of books and tools. He was interested in working while attending school and participated in the Community Work Experience Program (CWEP). He gave his Youth Specialist contact information for the CWEP worksite and began work as a janitor at the high school he had attended. He was then moved to the local elementary school, where he continued working as a custodian. He had opened a bank account prior to entering the In-School Youth program and came in occasionally to complete Financial Literacy and Job Readiness programs with his Youth Specialist. Eventually, the young man obtained full-time employment in Oahu, earning \$17 an hour working at Mobile Audio Concepts as an audio installer.

**AUTUMN** is an 18-year-old woman who entered the Ola I Ka Hana WIOA Program

with the intention of passing the High School Equivalency Test (HiSET®). She also hoped to gain entry-level work experience. Upon entering Ola, Autumn informed staff that she had been having issues with her family and noted that she had been staying with a friend. Once she began regular classes with Ola, Autumn did a wonderful job of maintaining regular attendance and completing her assignments. She also communicated effectively with program staff. Within two months, Autumn accumulated 60 hours of Basic Skill instruction. She then met with Ola's Assistant Director of the WIOA Youth program to discuss possible job or apprenticeship opportunities. After passing the necessary placement tests, Autumn was successfully placed into the HiSET® Prep course. She scheduled her HiSET® test for July.

Autumn's assigned Youth Specialist was also able to create a new Program CWEP partnership with T-Pak Tattoos, which is now a CWEP worksite. Autumn has begun her CWEP program at T-Pak Tattoos, where she is learning the skills needed to become a certified tattoo artist. She is thrilled to be pursuing a career in her desired field.

**KSK**, a student at Hilo High School, worked in the greenhouse of her school's aquaponic garden, which had received collaborative assistance from the University of Hawaii. KSK and other DEI students tended to the garden as part of their Work Experience Program. Once harvested, the lettuce was cleaned, bagged, and sold to the school staff. Proceeds went to maintaining the greenhouse. This experience also provided

KSK with life skills and financial literacy. KSK was proud to earn his stipend, which he used to supplement his family's grocery budget. KSK also received DEI supportive services, which allowed him to buy boots, gloves, and other protective gear to help with his work in the greenhouse. KSK continues to attend Hilo High School and will soon work with Hilo AJC staff to find part-time employment.

## KANSAS

**NOAH** enrolled in the WIOA Youth program after struggling to find employment for over two months. Noah had performed seasonal work on a farm, but he needed to make more money to support his young family. He entered the WIOA Youth Program to obtain his CDL.

Southeast KANSASWORKS provided Noah with an assessment of his knowledge, abilities, and interests. Through these assessments, it was determined that Noah would need some tutoring in mathematics. Through a partnership with the Adult Education Center,

Noah completed 40 hours of tutoring and gained a positive increase in his educational functioning level. With funding from the WIOA Youth program Noah attended the 160 Driving Academy in Lenexa and completed their CDL program. After obtaining his CDL License, Noah entered the workforce. He started working full-time for Ottawa Cooperatives, making \$16.50 an hour. Noah has been very vocal about how much Southeast KANSASWORKS assisted him in reaching his goals and has referred his sister to the program.

## MARYLAND

**BRANDON** was a participant in the Howard County Summer Youth Employment Program (HCSYEP), and while participating in the program, Brandon's living situation became unstable. When the HCSYEP ended, Brandon transitioned into the year-round youth program, where he obtained work experience at Howard County's Office of Workforce Development. This program helped Brandon to continue developing his workforce skills. Unfortunately, Brandon found himself homeless. The Howard County Office of Workforce Development Youth staff and other community partners

stepped in to connect Brandon with shelter and temporary housing. Brandon used the money he had earned and saved during his work experience to sustain himself until he could secure new employment with a staffing company. Brandon leveraged his accumulated savings, the skills he acquired through his work experience, and the support of community partners to secure permanent housing and find gainful employment that paid a livable wage. He is very grateful for the assistance that he obtained through the program.

## MICHIGAN

**TANYA** enrolled in the WIOA Young Adult program at Great Lakes Bay Michigan Works! She was self-educated when she entered the program and had received no formal education. WIOA Young Adult coaches connected her with several alternative educational facilities until she found the place best suited to help her work toward her GED®.

English was Tanya's second language, and it became apparent that one-on-one tutoring with The Legacy Center was the best fit for Tanya's particular needs. Tanya also attended various workshops, colleges, and talent tours to expand her worldview and improve her skills in interviewing, financial literacy, and understanding career opportunities.

After much determination and hard work, Tanya obtained her GED®. Tanya is currently enrolled at Delta College, and she hopes to transfer to Michigan State University to pursue a major in Russian Translation. She has an apartment with a roommate and owns her own vehicle. She is currently working at Home Depot and is happy to be striving towards a better future.

**BRIANA** did not have a high school diploma, but she wanted to make a better life for herself and her son. She was studying to finish her high school diploma through the Escanaba Student Success Center when she heard about the programs and services she could receive through Upper Peninsula Michigan Works! (UPMW!) and Jobs for Michigan's Graduates (JMG).

Briana sought assistance and worked diligently to better her situation. Briana graduated at the top of her class and was even asked to give a graduation speech at the virtual graduation ceremony. After researching labor market information and doing an O\*Net Interest Profiler, Briana decided that she would love a career as a truck driver, and her goal was to obtain her Class A CDL. UPMW! enrolled Briana in Midwest Truck Driving School (MTDS). She

successfully completed training and earned her Class A CDL in July 2020. Briana is now a full-time employee at Keystone Automotive. She works as a Truck Driver and earns \$14.50 an hour.

Briana noted: "I am very thankful to UPMW! and the JMG program for all the support they have so kindly given me. The help I've received has allowed me to overcome obstacles in my life. UPMW! and JMG are great programs, and because of their help, I have earned my high school diploma and obtained my CDL A through MTDS. I will forever be grateful to these wonderful programs and all the people in them!"



## MISSISSIPPI

**AUTUMN** is a 17-year-old youth who enrolled in the WIOA Out-of-School Youth program in Harrison County on September 22, 2020. The COVID-19 pandemic meant that Autumn would have to fulfill her WIOA Youth coursework and Adult Education requirements online. This proved to be a challenge for Autumn, but she nevertheless completed her WIOA Youth coursework and earned her HSE.

After earning her HSE, Autumn enrolled in Mississippi Gulf Coast Community College, where she is currently working to obtain an Associate Degree. She plans to continue her education at a prominent college, where she will major in psychology.

When **LORENZO** enrolled in the Eagle Skills for Occupational Advancement & Readiness (S.O.A.R.) WIOA Out-of-School Youth program,

he was an unemployed parolee without a high school diploma. Lorenzo knew he was headed down the wrong path and wanted to change his life. He hoped to work toward becoming a commercial truck driver. Lorenzo was co-enrolled in adult education courses while also receiving work ethics training.

He participated in work experience in the city of Meridian. As a result of his excellent work ethic, Lorenzo was offered a permanent position. However, he declined to focus on fulfilling his career and education goals. Soon Lorenzo enrolled in Meridian Community College's commercial truck driving class. In May 2021, he completed the commercial truck driving class and earned his CDL. Next, Lorenzo earned his HSE degree. He is now working for Big M Transportation and living out his dream. "I am so thankful for the Eagles S.O.A.R. program," he stated. "It helped me turn my life around!"

## NEBRASKA

**DIANA** participated in the Greater Lincoln youth program during Program Year 2020. Diana is currently serving in the US Navy and planning to become an officer. She came to the United States as a refugee with little education, and one of her career goals was to receive secondary and postsecondary education. Her secondary-education goal was accomplished when she graduated from high school in 2015. Her postsecondary-education goal is to obtain the skills needed to become a police officer.

**HAI RAY** is a senior at Lincoln High school who participated in the Greater Lincoln Youth program during Program Year 2020. Simultaneously, Hai Ray also participated in the Mayor's Youth Employment Program. This opportunity allowed her to participate in a summer internship at Lincoln Aging Partners, where she assisted senior

citizens with chores. After her summer internship was completed, she continued as a volunteer with Lincoln Aging Partners because she had loved her experiences there. Her participation in the youth program and her internship allowed her to identify her career goals after graduating high school.

**HUNTER** participated in the Greater Lincoln Youth program during Program Year 2020. Hunter had no idea what direction he wanted his life to go in after high school, so he connected with the AJC. He received an associate degree and a CDL license because he always had an interest in and dreamed of becoming a truck driver one day. Hunter's participation in the Greater Lincoln youth program allowed him to enter a career path that he enjoys, and he is grateful for all the help he received.

**MARIA** participated in the Greater Nebraska Youth program during Program Year 2020. Maria wanted to become a nurse and eventually transferred to College of St. Mary (CSM) to pursue her bachelor's degree. The conditions of her scholarship required that she work a part-time job on campus, and Maria lived in a CSM dorm to make it easier for her to have access to work,

tutors, and study groups. Maria worked hard to earn good grades. The youth program supported her participation in occupational skills training by providing supportive services to cover the cost of tuition, books, fingerprinting, and background checks. Maria graduated in the spring of 2020 and is currently working at Bergan Mercy Hospital in Omaha. She earns \$28 an hour.

## NEW HAMPSHIRE

**TUCKER** is a young adult who found himself suddenly homeless. He was referred to New Hampshire Jobs for America's Graduates (NH JAG) by a family friend. Tucker has always enjoyed offering care to others. With the help of NH JAG, he was able to obtain a Personal Care Assistant (PCA) position at Havenwood-Heritage Heights in Concord. Not only that, but Tucker also began his Licensed Nursing Assistant (LNA) Training Program with LNA Health Careers in February 2020. He successfully completed his training in late March and was licensed as an NH Nursing Assistant by early April. He then was transitioned by Havenwood from a PCA to an LNA. Tucker has been working in healthcare for over ten months now and has maintained steady employment.

**DAVID** was in 11th grade when he joined the NH JAG program at Manchester Memorial High School. David was an active student who balanced his studies, a job, and involvement in the school baseball team. His anxiety, however, impacted his ability to handle and enjoy social situations. This led to low confidence. David's Specialist began working with him in building his confidence. During his first semester in the program, David expressed interest in pursuing a career path helping children. The NH JAG Youth specialist worked with David to find opportunities that fit his interests. Eventually, David secured a work experience with the NH Make-A-Wish Foundation. David excelled during his time working with Make-A-Wish. He gained experience organizing and planning events, learned office etiquette, and assisted in putting together care packages. David has thoroughly

enjoyed his time in the NH JAG program and feels that he has gained many valuable skills.

**ARIEL** joined the Concord Out-of-School program in July 2020. She had a child and made the difficult decision of turning guardianship over to other family members. Ariel was not in a great place mentally, and she also noted that she had only completed the 10th grade in high school. Ariel sought assistance from the Concord Healthcare Training program. Hoping for greater stability and control of her life, Ariel set out to become a Licensed Nursing Assistant. NH JAG assisted Ariel in enrolling in the LNA Health Careers LNA Training program.

Despite facing barriers, Ariel excelled and completed the LNA program. She was fully licensed only a few weeks after graduation. Ariel transitioned from a PCA at a local long-term care facility to a full-time LNA. With the assistance of NH JAG, Ariel then began working towards attaining her high school equivalency diploma. Ariel has recently taken some time off from work to focus on attending meetings, classes, and court hearings that will allow her to regain guardianship of her daughter. She expects to have guardianship once again very soon and feels far more confident in her abilities and future.

After overcoming a struggle with a substance use disorder, **CATHREANN** found out that she was pregnant. She knew that she had to work to build a better life for herself and her child.

After working in the healthcare field for a short time, Cathreann realized that she wanted to become an LNA. Cathreann arrived at MY TURN when she was 20 years old. She enrolled in the Manchester Out-of-School Youth (OSY) program in September 2020. With MY TURN's assistance, she quickly set out to earn her LNA license through LNA Health Careers. After completing her LNA training, Cathreann began applying for an LNA position with Elliot Hospital. She was offered an LNA position on their Fuller Unit and is currently making a livable wage. Cathreann is actively applying to colleges to complete her Registered Nursing Degree.

**JUANNY** moved to the United States from the Dominican Republic when she was six. Adjusting to life in the U.S. was difficult, and Juanny struggled to understand a new language. Juanny, who was diagnosed with a learning disability, had an extremely difficult time with her studies. Still, she never let those challenges stand in her way. Juanny works with her teachers and MY TURN staff when she needs assistance. Her determination and commitment have earned her an overall GPA of 3.6. After school, she attends the Boys & Girls Club of Nashua, where she enjoys golfing and is a valuable member of the Club's junior staff. She is also a school band member and enjoys practicing her trombone in her free time.

## NEW MEXICO

Sixteen-year-old **JOHN** was referred to the WIOA Youth program in October 2020 by the Youth Development Incorporated (YDI) Project Adelante, where he was enrolled in the HSE preparation program and was hoping to find employment opportunities.

During his time in the WIOA program, John has shared with his Youth Development Practitioner (YDP) the obstacles he continues to overcome. John's grandmother, who raised him, and he both battled COVID-19. They are happy to report they are now in good health. More recently, the family lost a loved one to age and illness and have been keeping John's great-aunt company. John also discussed his difficulties while attending public schools and a charter school, where he felt that his needs as a student were overlooked. John knew he needed to find an alternative for his education that worked for him, believing that he could succeed if provided the right opportunities.

On January 11, 2021, John completed his final HiSET® exam and graduated high school. John called his YDP immediately after his exam to share the news and proudly shared that in school, he would have been "lost among the crowd but instead graduated two years ahead of his class." John has also mentioned that he is grateful to the WIOA Youth program for all of their support.

John's positive attitude and perseverance have paid off for him and opened doors for employment opportunities. In November, he was placed for work experience at Creative Foods USA, also known as Creative Lending, as an administrative assistant. John received excellent reviews on each of his biweekly timesheets. Recently, John was offered and accepted employment with the City of Albuquerque Parks & Recreation and loves his new position.

**NATHANIEL (NATE)** came to the WIOA program through the Career Life Engagement and Readiness Program (CLEAR) in August 2019. Since then, WIOA funds have helped pay for his tuition and fees that came with the fall 2019–summer 2020 semester. In fall 2020, COVID-19 interfered with the start of Nate's work experience. Fast forward to March 2021, after some discussion with Nate about his interest, HELP-NM's Community Support Advocates and Nate agreed that Escapology, a set of escape rooms, would be a perfect fit for him. Nate was hesitant at first, and the first few days were a challenge for Nate. However, the WIOA program is happy to say that Nate has now entered his sixth week with Escapology and has adjusted well to the work environment. His supervisor

has given great feedback to help Nate overcome some obstacles and improve greatly since the first week. Nate will graduate from the CLEAR program on May 15, 2021.

**JIMMY** was 16 years old when he began the Startup Generation program. Months before starting, he would have never guessed he would be learning the skills needed to open a business. Jimmy had been struggling in his education since he began high school. Despite many efforts and failed attempts at staying in school, Jimmy and his parents decided to enroll him in the ENMU-Ruidoso Adult Education Program to attain his HSE diploma. The first time he had heard about the Startup Generation Program was during his orientation. He took the initiative to talk to the course instructors. Jimmy told them that he was interested in being a business owner in the future.

Jimmy developed strong leadership skills and became a great public speaker by speaking to

business owners in the community to research and gather information. He proved a wonderful team player and took the initiative to encourage other students to strive ahead. The team successfully pitched their business idea and earned third place against five other teams from across the state's Eastern region. Today, Jimmy is still working toward attaining his HSE. He was promoted to assistant manager at his job and assists in managing his family's businesses.

**RAINIE**, a 20-year-old single mother who had left high school during her senior year, without receiving her diploma became a participant in WIOA Youth and the New Mexico Junior College Adult Education programs during her time as a member of the initial Startup Generation cohort. Not only did Rainie succeed in the program and strengthen her leadership skills, but she also captured the attention of local investors. Rainie built her confidence and passed all five exams for her HSE.

## NORTH CAROLINA

**MAKAYLA** received supportive services through the Carteret County NCWorks Career Center, which helped her complete Carteret Community College's (CCC's) Adult High School program and the college's Human Services associate degree program. She excelled in both programs and graduated from CCC with her degree in May.

Makayla battled health issues, lost her home to Hurricane Florence, and served as a primary caregiver for a disabled parent, but none of this discouraged her from building a better life for herself. NCWorks placed her in a Work Experience opportunity with the local Boys & Girls Club, which led to a summer job with that organization. Makayla then gained more experience working on the community college campus and participating in the Student Government Association. Makayla hopes to become a therapist for children and families, and she is currently pursuing a bachelor's degree at Lees-McRae College.





## NORTH DAKOTA

**MICHAEL**, a youth living in foster care, enrolled in the WIOA Youth program in 2020. He attended the Combination II Welding Program with a local provider. The WIOA Youth program funded the welding training from August through December 2020. Michael earned several different welding certifications while he was in the program. In February 2021, he began a full-time job with a local manufacturing company in Fargo with a beginning wage of \$17.85 an hour. Michael is starting as an assembly worker but hopes to become a welder in the near future. "You have to start somewhere to get where you want to go," Michael told his caseworker. Michael is well on his way to living independently and is already earning a living wage.

**JACK** received a referral from his employer to the WIOA program for OJT and was interested in pursuing the drywall program. Jack was not attending school, was basic skills deficient, and was not a strong candidate for traditional schooling. He enrolled in an apprenticeship for drywall with the company, and the employer was able to support the related technical instruction (RTI). Jack successfully completed the OJT in May 2020 and the RTI in November 2020. He now earns \$22 an hour.

**TIM** was working for a local home building company as a general laborer. The company was looking for a drywall construction employee and referred Tim to the AJC to see if he would be eligible for OJT. Drywall work is higher skill with higher wage potential. Although Tim had done some construction labor work, he had no training in drywall installation and finishing. Fortunately, Tim was determined eligible for the WIOA Youth program. Tim entered the apprenticeship in November 2019 and finished the OJT in May 2020. He completed the employer-RTI in November of 2020. Tim is now happily earning \$23 an hour.

**JACOB** recently graduated from the ND State College of Science with an AAS degree in Welding. He enrolled in the WIOA Youth program and co-enrolled in the Vocational Rehabilitation College of Sciences' partner program. He attended the two-year Case Cooperative through North Dakota State with WIOA Youth and Vocational Rehabilitation assistance. He started the co-op portion of the program in order to gain work experience. After graduation, Jacob was hired full-time as a welder. He earns \$27.03 an hour and also received a \$2,000 hiring bonus.



## OHIO

A **YOUNG WOMAN** who grew up in an abusive family enrolled in the Comprehensive Case Management and Employment Program (CCMEP) after being referred by a drug court. Her substance issues were the result of childhood traumas. She was homeless and pregnant, and she had not completed high school. With the help of CCMEP services and support, she was able to secure housing, obtain her driver's license, and gain employment. She also received a laptop, helping her work toward her GED®. She is currently employed and working toward a credential to become a nursing assistant.

**ANGELA** was a 21-year-old single mother referred to the Ohio Works First program. Her son had been born prematurely and was in intensive care at a children's hospital. Angela had applied for cash assistance to help with expenses and travel back and forth from the hospital. Her son

remained in the hospital until January 2021 and continued to have medical issues after being released. She did not have a driver's license and was living with her father. With the help of CCMEP, Angela was able to find driving lessons and obtain her driver's license. She was then enrolled with Aspire, an educational program that serves adults with diverse needs. Early in the pandemic, she worked on her GED® at home. Once COVID-19 restrictions were lifted, Angela began attending GED® classes twice a week. This attendance helped her transition her son to daycare. Angela obtained her GED® in June 2021. With the assistance of her career coach, Angela applied for subsidized housing and was able to move into an apartment. The CCMEP program paid her first month's rent and deposit. She eventually was able to buy herself a car, and the program paid for her first three months of insurance. Angela is now working and would like to someday pursue a career in nursing.

## PUERTO RICO

**KENNETH** was referred by the Vocational Rehabilitation Administration to receive training services in the Guaynabo-Toa Baja Local Area. Kenneth was shy and had never been employed. With the assistance of the Guaynabo-Toa Baja Local Area, he enrolled in WIOA, which offered him training and job opportunities. His case manager helped him develop an employment plan, assisted with career assessments, provided résumé development tips, and prepared him for

interviews. The program provided Kenneth with his first Work Experience at Walgreens, where he was able to strengthen his abilities and improve his occupational skills. With the collaboration of the Vocational Rehabilitation Administration, Kenneth received the assistance necessary to facilitate the training and supervision process. This assistance resulted in outstanding work experience. Kenneth is now a hired employee at Walgreens.

## SOUTH DAKOTA

**MARGARET**, the Director of Workforce Development, Associated General Contractors (AGC) of South Dakota, noted the following:

"Having the opportunity to receive funding to create a Youth Apprenticeship through the Pathway Partnership program has been a wonderful experience for the AGC. What was unexpected was the collaboration and support that I personally have received from DLR. It has almost been like getting additional team members to help drive the success of this program, and their willingness to assist and responsiveness to me has been welcome and refreshing. In all honesty, COVID-19 threw us a serious curveball to the launch of this

program, but even with that, I feel it has been a success. First and foremost, it has pushed our association to embrace the concept of youth apprenticeships which was a hard sell for many of our members to embrace. We currently have 17 students either enrolled or preparing to enroll in the program. It has literally opened the door for high schools to immerse students into the construction industry, which I believe has previously been overlooked, underappreciated, and impossible to experience first-hand due to Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) regulations. Thank you for giving us the chance to run with this and change our ability to connect with youth in a meaningful way!"

## UTAH

**MATTHEW** was a senior in high school when he enrolled in the WIOA Youth program. He had been homeless for two years and lived in a car with his father and brother. A friend invited Matthew to live with him for his senior year, and Matthew was able to secure an Ambassador's Scholarship to a local college. He graduated from high school in the spring of 2020 and was preparing to start his postsecondary education. His career goal was to become a marine biologist. Workforce Services assisted Matthew in obtaining work experience that aligns with his goals. Matthew was connected with an internship opportunity at a local veterinary hospital. Matthew faced many barriers, such as a lack of transportation, lack of experience working with animals, mental health issues, and a lack of self-confidence. With the help and support of Workforce Services, Matthew successfully completed the work experience opportunity. He saved the money from his paid internship, which helped him pay for housing at the local college. Matthew is now working on his college campus. He is on track to graduate with his associate degree in the spring of 2022.

**BRIAN** was in an unstable family situation and had an extremely difficult time in high school. He attended three different schools during his sophomore year and had even dropped out for a brief period. Brian attended a presentation by Workforce Services. This presentation told him about an internship opportunity at a mechanic shop. Brian received help from the youth employment counselor and the workforce development specialist, and he enrolled in the WIOA Youth program. At the end of his junior year, Brian started a paid internship at a mechanic shop. He learned very quickly, and by the end of the summer, the employer had trusted Brian to run the shop on his own. Brian decided to finish high school and pursue postsecondary training in auto mechanics. While catching up on his school credits, Brian continued to work part-time at the shop. He earned his high school diploma in May of 2021. Following graduation, the mechanic shop hired him full-time through a WIOA-supported OJT opportunity. This fall, Brian will start working on his automotive service certification at the technical college.

**CAMERON** had many barriers to overcome, including parental duties, a criminal record, a history of domestic violence, and basic-skill deficiencies. These barriers made it difficult for him to find employment. However, his workforce

development specialist found him an internship opportunity repairing motor crafts. Cameron's background in mechanics made this a good option for him, and the internship eventually led to a full-time job.

## VERMONT

**ETHAN**, a recent high school graduate, connected with the VDOL to support his long-term career goals. A WIOA Case Manager connected with Ethan to provide job search assistance and labor market information. Ethan landed a summer job at a local food processing plant. This job allowed him to save \$3,000. In the fall of 2020, Ethan enrolled in a six-month Structural and Pipe Welding Program through

AWI. WIOA helped Ethan to secure funds for his tuition and materials. In March of 2021, Ethan successfully earned his certificate from AWI. After completing the program, he reconnected with VDOL for résumé and job-search support. Because of his training program, Ethan was able to secure full-time employment as a Welder. He now works for a local manufacturing company.

## WEST VIRGINIA

A **YOUTH PARTICIPANT** who resided at the Kenneth Honey Rubenstein Juvenile Center in Thomas, West Virginia enrolled in the WIOA Youth program. In hopes of building a better future. During his time in the Youth Ready program, the participant obtained a certification in Building Construction, as well as a Supervisor Certificate. He also worked for maintenance crews at Blackwater Falls State Park and the City of Thomas. This participant has now enlisted in the Army. He has completed his basic training in Savannah, Georgia and is now an 11 Bravo, which is an infantryman in the US Army. He is stationed at Fort Drum in Watertown, New York, where he will continue training for the next three years. He is happy with the assistance that he received and hopes to become a state trooper someday.



## WYOMING

**DIANA** was referred to the Torrington Workforce Center by the local AE program. Diana left school without a high school diploma and lacked basic employment skills. She was found eligible for WIOA. Within a few weeks of becoming a program participant, Diana discovered she was pregnant.

Diana began working on her HSE diploma and, in partnership with Eastern Wyoming Community College, started her work experience with the NexGen Project. Diana excelled in this project. She is shy by nature, but she became the most reliable and dedicated person on the team after overcoming her initial hesitation. While working on her HSE diploma and her work experience, Diana delivered her son and became a single mother. This life change required her case managers to adjust some of the program service delivery methods. After a brief maternity leave, Diana returned to her work experience and demonstrated real leadership qualities.

In May 2021, the WIOA Youth NexGen Project Team hosted a successful mixer for the Healthcare Alliance Next Generation Sector Partnership. Diana was one of three on-site youths who helped host the event. She did a great job interacting with the professional medical personnel and ensured that the event went well for all guests.

Diana started her HiSET® testing and quickly passed three of the five tests. However, in June, Diana faced a sudden tragedy when her house

burned down. Diana had scheduled her final HiSET® test on June 16, and although her home was lost the weekend before, she passed the test and earned her HSE diploma. Diana recently started a CNA program, and she hopes to establish a successful career in the medical field.

**WILLOW** visited the Rawlins Workforce Center as a dependent in the TANF Program. Through these visits with her family, she learned about Wagner-Peyser and WIOA services. Willow was found eligible for the WIOA out-of-school youth program. She had never worked before and needed assistance in developing her skills. Willow is a quieter person, but she connected immediately with her case manager. She performed her work experience with the Rawlins Workforce Center as an office support assistant. On Willow's first day of work experience, she could barely speak to clients, but as time progressed, she became very successful in this position.

Willow's WIOA case manager realized that a referral to Vocational Rehabilitation would be beneficial. Willow was diagnosed with severe social anxiety, but through the services offered in her programs, Willow learned how to cope and be successful. Willow was later offered and accepted a position at Dalin Motors as their accounting assistant. While Willow's WIOA case is now closed, she still receives follow-up services and remains happily employed.



## Non-Core WIOA Programs

### ALASKA

After 14 years of employment, **TODD** was laid off because of complications related to COVID-19. Upon entry to the Jobs for Veterans State Grants (JVSG) program, he worked one-on-one with a DVOPS. He received assistance with career planning, résumé writing, and interviewing. Todd was actively engaged in completing his career goals and accessing resources. He has now accepted a full-time position with Everts Air Cargo as an AP Mechanic. He earns \$30 an hour and enjoys a full benefits package.

**RICK** joined the DVOP program after being contacted by a DVOP and qualifying for the program through a service-connected disability. He previously worked in engineering for a telecommunications company but was laid off in September 2019. Rick is also a private pilot and decided to pursue a career change and obtain his commercial pilot and private pilot instructor licenses. He was in the middle of schooling when the pandemic shut down a large portion of the aviation industry. Given the uncertain future of the aviation industry, Rick decided to participate in the DVOP program and pursue work in telecommunications. Through hard work and diligence, Rick obtained a position as a System Engineer with GCI. He now earns \$62.50 an hour.

### CONNECTICUT

In 2018, **BERNARDO** arrived from Jamaica to live with his father and, as a recent high school graduate, was looking for an opportunity for growth and success in the United States. His aspiration to attend college was hindered by difficulties in navigating the system and affording the cost of furthering his education. His cousin recommended the Job Corps Program and, after meeting with an Admissions Counselor and expressing an interest in accounting, he decided to apply to the Hartford Job Corps Center's Insurance & Financial Services Program.

Bernardo always took his education seriously. He completed the Insurance & Financial Services Program in less than six months,

was accepted into the Job Corps' Advanced Career Training Program, and began attending Capital Community College. He maintained perfect grades and secured an internship with a prominent insurance company. Having graduated with an associate degree in business studies, Bernardo will attend Central Connecticut State University on a full-tuition scholarship in the fall, entering as a junior. Bernardo credits Job Corps with providing an early introduction to the structure of the work environment in America. He is grateful for his assistance with school, housing, meals, which allowed him to focus entirely on his studies. Bernardo's long-term career goal is to become a Certified Public Accountant.

## DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

**PARTICIPANT FIVE**, a disabled Air Force veteran, enrolled in JVSG in January 2021. His highest education was an Associate in Arts (AA) degree, and he had skills in Office Management, as a

Medical Records Technician, and as a Medical Assistant. This participant applied to six jobs weekly while still pursuing higher education. He was eventually hired at a charter school, where he earns \$55,000 a year.

## INDIANA

**MARY** is a U.S. Army veteran who sought out the JVSG program after being out of the workforce for several years. Mary spent three years in the military and, afterward, toured Europe as a singer to entertain troops. She also was a flight attendant for United Airlines. She had previously earned two college degrees.

She ultimately sought the assistance of a DVOPS to help her return to the workforce. The Indiana Department of Workforce Development administers the JVSG program. WorkOne sites throughout the state assist Hoosier veterans

with their transition from the service to civilian life, and Mary has worked at the WorkOne office in Indianapolis since December 2020 as a customer service representative. "I do believe that the JVSG program does work; I'm a testament that it does," Mary said. "Being of a certain age and being out of the workforce for so long, I was kind of nervous that no one would want to hire me. But Josh [program DVOPS] held my hand and pushed me and guided me and did everything he could possibly do to make sure I got this job."

## NEW HAMPSHIRE

**STEVEN** is a 60-year-old participant in the Mature Worker Program. Steven had been an auto mechanic since graduating from high school. He was laid off from a large auto dealership in 2019 after being told that his production was down. Steven has arthritis and could not work as quickly as he had been when he was younger. He knew it was time to change careers.

Steven took a temporary delivery job with Amazon but eventually found himself

unemployed yet again. Steven entered the Mature Worker Program in February 2021 in hopes of obtaining his CDL. After completing the CDL course and passing the necessary testing, he attained his New Hampshire Class B CDL license. Within a week of receiving his CDL, Steven was hired by Redi-Mix, where he now works as a driver. Steven is happy to have made a career change and is earning almost as much as he did as an auto mechanic.

## UTAH

**JOSH** transitioned out of foster care and started the plumbing apprenticeship program at Davis Technical College. Within four months of starting the program, he was hired by a local plumbing company. Over the past two years, Josh has increased his wages from \$12 per hour to \$15 per hour. He plans to continue his

plumbing apprenticeship with the employer until he has completed the program. The employer has indicated that Josh is a great worker and has a knack for plumbing. The apprenticeship has been a great opportunity for both the employer and Josh.

## WASHINGTON

**CHRISTOPHER**, who was experiencing employment and housing insecurity, had a history of involvement with the justice system, which limited his potential job opportunities. Beton Franklin Workforce Development Council and Economic Security for All helped Christopher develop a career plan that would allow him to obtain customized training and employment and ultimately reach his self-sufficiency goal. He received supportive services, including

individualized career guidance and self-sufficient matrix assessments. After accessing services, Christopher successfully set up an upholstery workshop in his home. With one-on-one mentorship and self-employment training, Christopher found full-time employment at a local upholstery shop and became an independent contractor. With a stable income, Christopher is now saving up to repair his Cadillac.

## WEST VIRGINIA

A **LOCAL VETERAN** was referred to DVOPS because he had significant barriers to employment (SBE), including being low-income and having a criminal justice history. The veteran needed immediate and stable employment, and the DVOPS worked to tailor their approach to meet the veteran's needs. The DVOPS helped the veteran set up an email address, and they also helped monitor the account for updates regarding potential work.

Under the direct supervision of the DVOPS, the veteran submitted various online applications. He was informed about the tools available to assist him during his job search, including the Federal Bonding Program and the Work Opportunity Tax Credit. Eventually, an opportunity with Goodwill presented itself. The veteran secured employment with Goodwill Industries of Kanawha Valley, Inc. He now works as a stocker at their Oak Hill retail location and earns over \$10 an hour.

The **VP OF A SECURITY COMPANY** was interested in developing a group of employees that would allow them to offer additional services to customers. She inquired about the possibility of Incumbent Worker Training from the Local Workforce Development Board for assistance in this effort. After providing the requested documentation, submitting her course outline form, and offering her list of potential trainees, her plans moved forward. On August 5, 2020, the course was presented to six trainees. Afterward, the participants were tested, and each passed with excellent scores. They obtained their National Fire Protection Association Standard #10 Certifications and were licensed by the State Fire Marshal's Office. The owner was pleased with the ease of the process and would recommend this program for the training needs of other businesses.



## WYOMING

**JUSTINE** is a TANF Personal Opportunities With Employment Responsibilities (POWER) participant who enrolled in CLIMB Wyoming, a free job-training program for single mothers. Justine completed Professional Office Careers Training and was looking for full-time, long-term employment. Wagner-Peyser services assisted with the job application process. Justine received assistance with her résumé writing, interview skills, and a job referral. She eventually earned a job with the Wyoming Women’s Business Council in Laramie, Wyoming. She was later assisted by POWER in upgrading her position, and she obtained a job as an office support specialist. She now earns over \$20 an hour.

**DAVID** is an SBE veteran enrolled in the Compensated Work Therapy program at the Sheridan VAMC. He met the local DVOP during an outreach presentation, and they began completing a comprehensive assessment and creating an employment plan.

The DVOP began meeting with David and provided basic career services. They created résumés to fit specific jobs and performed weekly searches for employment. The DVOP provided individual career counseling and referred David to many promising opportunities. After several months of job searching, David was offered employment at the Sheridan VAMC as a housekeeper. David has been working at the VA for approximately six months and is doing well in his new position.

An **EMPLOYER** called the Sheridan Workforce Center seeking assistance with finding employees. They indicated that they used to have a plethora of applicants seeking to fill their open positions, but they were now struggling to find any qualified workers.

After the Department of Workforce Services (DWS) verified the employer’s account, staff members began identifying services that could be useful to the employer. Previously, the employer had not provided detailed job descriptions. Staff members offered

recommendations for the job posting and job description. They encouraged the employer to think about how they are “selling” their company to potential employees. The employer and program staff discussed how to paint a picture that described why someone should be enthusiastic about joining their team. DWS staff helped the employer to strengthen their job descriptions and highlight the perks of their workplace culture and environment. They also enabled them to present their workplace as somewhere professional growth would be possible. The employer eventually told DWS that they were able to fill their positions.

