



Spokane Area WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL

WIA Program Success Stories

Adult Program

Jesse was serving on jury duty with a WorkSource staff member when he commented that he was considering moving from the Spokane area. Jesse stated that he'd been unemployed for 15 months, having been laid off from a local manufacturer after 16 years of employment with them. Jesse quickly discovered that finding comparable employment would be difficult as he was lacking Lean Project Management certification. Although he found multiple job listings that he was interested in, he could only managed to get 3 interviews, and he was not offered any of the jobs.

After acceptance in the WIA program. Jessie was enrolled in a Lean Project Management course at Eastern Washington University. Before he even finished his training, Jesse was offered a position with a building products company as a shipping coordinator. The deciding factor for the company was his LPM training, which was nearing completion. His WIA counselor was able to set up an OJT opportunity with ASC, so Jesse started work at \$17.50 per hour. Jesse is continuing to excel and loves his job. The employer is pleased with the skills and knowledge Jessie brings to their workplace and regards him as a great asset to their organization. Jesse, his wife and 5 kids were able to stay in their Spokane home due to this opportunity.

Dislocated Work Program

RD's work history, for the last 10 years, included a job as a parking lot attendant, making \$9.87 an hour, and working in electronic assembly at \$11.09 per hour. He was laid off in April of 2008.

When RD came to WorkSource Spokane, his goal was to return to work earning \$11.00 an hour, with potential benefits.

RD qualified for the Dislocated Worker program the month following his layoff. His skills and needs assessment revealed that he was mechanically inclined and loved working with his hands. Following job development, he obtained employment on July 2, 2008 doing an OJT, learning how to repair electric motors. His starting wage was \$12.00, with the potential of \$14.00 within one year and employee benefits after 90 days.

RD has successfully completed his OJT, and loves his job. The best part of this story is that RD turned 55 in August. He had felt that his age would preclude him from returning to the job market with good pay.

Youth Program

When Brad entered the Next Generation Zone, he was on probation following a felony gun possession charge. His arms were covered in tattoos, and his clothes hung about four sizes too large. He could not appropriately respond to any questions; mostly he just mumbled. The staff could not believe that this young man was motivated enough to tackle the huge obstacle of changing his life.

After the first month, Brad began coming out of his shell. He attended GED classes regularly and was great about checking in to the Next Gen Zone on a regular basis. He was interested in working part time, but did not have any work experience. The Next Gen Zone set him up on a work experience at Goodwill. All work reports came back positive. He was responsible, showed up on time and worked hard, managed workplace conflict with maturity, and called whenever he was unable to make to work. A short while later, he began taking his GED tests and passed them with flying colors. He graduated with honors from the GED program and could not have been more excited about attending the graduation ceremony.

Brad also listened to what others were saying around him and learned from it. Imagine my surprise when, following a conversation on what to wear for an interview, I showed up to purchase the interview clothes he picked out and everything was the appropriate size; not one shirt that was a double extra large!

It was the little things like this that made me realize he really was paying attention and wanted to improve his life. Brad and I worked on creating a resume and discussed job search strategies. We also discussed community college and long term goals. He now works for the carpenter's union making \$12.50 an hour and is registered for classes at Spokane Community College, focusing on becoming an HVAC technician.

We've all heard you can't judge a book by its cover. Often inner strength is more powerful than physical prowess. Such is the case with Jenny who overcame seemingly insurmountable obstacles to firstly graduate from high school and secure a four year scholarship.

At age 17, Jenny had already spent years nursing her mother and encouraging her to kick her drug habit. Unfortunately, Jenny found herself three years behind in school and in severe danger of not graduating. Not giving up, Jenny enrolled in the WIA-funded high school re-entry program. While not possessing the skills of an incoming senior, Jenny stuck with the re-entry program that required every minute of her time to complete. From there she re-enrolled at Rogers High and became involved in the culinary arts program called Pro-Start. Jenny excelled in the program and graduated in June 2008.

Her hard work at school paid off and Jenny was accepted as scholarship student at the Culinary Institute of America in New York. She just returned from an all expense paid tour of the school and can't wait to begin her classes this winter.

While in high school for her senior year Jenny need a job to help at home. She completed a work experience provided by the Next Gen Zone, working with disabled adults at a local agency. The door was left open at the agency if she wishes to return. Presently she is hoping to work as a chef at Northern Quest Casino in Airway Heights.

Jenny has also been a role model to her mother and through Jenny's encouragement and example, she has kicked the drugs and gained her Associate Arts degree at Spokane Falls Community College.