

Workforce Investment Act (WIA) Annual Report Narratives



PARTICIPANT STORIES

WIA Adults
WIA Dislocated Worker
WIA Youth
American Recovery and Reinvestment Act

State Annual Reports: <http://www.doleta.gov/performance/results/AnnualReports/annual-report-09.cfm>



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Workforce Investment Act Annual Report Narratives States' Success Stories

States prepare annual reports on accomplishments under the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) training and employment programs, similar to that of an annual report to stockholders. In the reports, many states highlight “success stories” that focus attention on achievements of program participants. The personal stories illustrate how states have responded to unemployed participants; providing tax dollar-funded services that have made a difference in the lives of many individuals.

The following success stories are a compilation taken from the 2009 States' WIA Annual Report Narratives located on the Department of Labor's (DOL) website at: <http://www.doleta.gov/performance/results/AnnualReports/annual-report-09.cfm>. In general, not every state includes individual participant success stories in their annual reports. This explains why some states are not included in this compilation and is in no way an indication that these states did not have noteworthy individual participant successes throughout 2009.

These stories focus on Adults, Dislocated Workers, and Youth who have benefited from program services such as assessment, the development of their individual employment plan, classroom training, on-the-job training, job search assistance, and emergency support because of natural disasters. Additionally, the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) provided additional funds to support these employment and training services during the nation's recent economic downturn. Participants who received services through these additional funds are included in this compilation as well.

In the future, DOL plans to continue to compile and disseminate WIA participant success stories from States' Annual Report Narratives as an added way to showcase to the public the significant impact of WIA training and employment programs.

Workforce Investment Act Adult Program *Participant Stories*¹

Alaska

Lena

Lena was a 19-year-old single parent of one child when she contacted Career Support and Training Services for assistance. Lena has a high school diploma with no further training and did not have any work experience. She had an interest in working in the office/administrative field in the northwestern region of the state. Lena felt that she was not able to obtain employment because of a lack of skills and abilities and being able to find good childcare. The Workforce Investment Act Adult Program supported her goal to attend a clerk/receptionist training program offered in rural Alaska and assisted Lena with the cost of meals and referred her to a childcare program. The tuition and other support services were paid by Alaska Native partner programs and other funding sources. Lena successfully completed and received a clerk/receptionist certificate in May 2009. She now works for the North West Arctic School District as a human resource technician making over \$20 an hour.



Alabama

Kanieshia Mitchell

“Taking care of others is something I love to do,” sates Kanieshia Mitchell. “I have a passion for helping people and bring out their best with a little TLC.” Mitchell is a registered nurse at Select Specialty Hospital in Jackson Mississippi. “Never in a million years would I have thought that I would be a nurse,” Mitchell said. “I am so thankful for the WIA program and I am living my dreams.”

Mitchell was in her final year as a nursing student and the University of South Alabama when she was informed by the financial aid office that her funds were depleted. Mitchell didn’t know where to turn for funding and thought she would have to drop out of school. She’d heard about the WIA program through her advisor and qualified for the training. “The WIA process wasn’t hard. I provided the necessary documentation and was approved for the program,” Mitchell stated. In fact, she states that everyone was very helpful; and my overall experience was great.

Furthermore, Mitchell believes that anyone facing obstacles should explore any available avenues to continue on the road to success. “Don’t let money be a hindrance when it comes to fulfilling your dreams. You’ve got to put in the work and time to find any available resources. It won’t be easy, but it’s worth it in the long run.”

Cornelius Henderson

Cornelius Henderson was a Veteran who was taking Nursing training at Lawson State Community College. He needed assistance during his last semester at Lawson and accessed the WIA system.

¹ These stories were compiled from state Program Year 2009 WIA Annual Report Narratives. Each state’s report is available at: <http://www.doleta.gov/performance/results/AnnualReports/annual-report-09.cfm>.

Upon completing his training in Nursing in December of 2009, he found employment in March of 2010 with Naphcare making a salary in the \$65,000 range. He encourages others to find an occupation they are interested in, to set a goal, and to seek training to become proficient.

Arkansas

Steven Williams

Steven Williams is a resident of Marianna, Arkansas. He came into the Arkansas Workforce Center in October 2009 to register for job search and inquired about the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) Programs. He was determined eligible and enrolled as an Adult. With WIA assistance, Steven was able to attend Pine Bluff Trucking where he obtained his commercial driver's license, after which Steven conducted job search and was not successful. Steven was then placed at the Marianna Police Department in work experience. The city employees of Marianna noticed all of Steven's hard work and as of June 21, 2010, he was hired on full-time as an Animal Control Officer. Below is a letter that was written to the Editor of the Courier Index in regards to Steven's hard work as an Animal Control Officer.



Dear Editor,

I would like to express my deepest gratitude to Animal Control Officer Steve Williams who responded to my frantic 911 call about a snake in my kitchen. To me, it looked like a 12-foot Black Mambo from Africa but in reality, it was a 4-foot chicken snake. That's really not the point...it was a snake. Officer Williams tried diligently to locate the snake, but it had managed to disappear and hide. My cats later spotted the snake in my stove, and Officer Williams returned and was able to remove the snake from my house. You can't imagine what a help this was for me. The Marianna Police Department is extremely fortunate to have such dedicated employees as Officer Williams.

Many Thanks, [Marianna Resident]

Kristen Medcalf

Kristin Medcalf is married and a mother of one. She was working at Subteach USA as a customer service representative. She worked there for over a year and decided that she wanted to make a career change. Kristin always wanted to work as a nurse; however, due to circumstances she was unable to fulfill her dream. In January of 2009, her circumstances changed and she believed the opportunity was now available to pursue a career in nursing. She began working on the preliminary requirements for the Practical Nursing Program at Arkansas Northeastern College. Kristin heard about the WIA program and visited the Arkansas Workforce Center in Paragould. She met with the case manager and was determined eligible for the WIA Adult program. Kristin began classes in June 2009. She earned a technical certificate in Practical Nursing. She has entered employment with a local clinic and is very happy to be working in the nursing field. Kristin is very appreciative of the assistance provided by WIA and would not have been able to attend school otherwise.



Sarah Harrison

"I have always loved helping people, whether it was something like helping my mother in the kitchen or my father in the yard. I wanted to become a nurse because I wanted to make a difference in others' lives. I wanted a career that I loved, not just a job to pay the bills. Nursing gives me the opportunity to comfort, assess, educate, and encourage patients of all ages. I feel like I am truly making a difference in my patients' lives. Nursing school was one of the hardest, yet rewarding obstacles I have ever been through. I became a newlywed and a stepmother during my first semester of training. My husband was also diagnosed with a medical condition involving major surgery in which he could not return to work. Both my grandfathers, which I was very close to, became ill and passed away during my training which was exceptionally difficult as well. I could not have succeeded without my family and friends who were always there willing to help when I needed someone to practice my assessments and the emotional rollercoaster that nursing school in general can create. I currently have employment as a RN in a step down intensive care unit at the local hospital. WIA is an amazing program and I cannot say thank you enough for the help they have given me to get to where I am today."



Tiffany Pizzamenti



"Having excelled in math during high school, I chose to start my employment in an area with which I felt comfortable, accounting. I continued to work in the accounting field for a little over 10 years before I realized that just because you are good at something, there is no guarantee that you will enjoy it. Feeling dissatisfied with my career choice, I was intrigued when I began to help a friend with his nursing studies. I discovered that I had a deep interest in nursing. My friend encouraged me to enter the program myself, but I did not feel it would be possible. Even though I qualified for grants and loans, that money alone was not enough. Thankfully I heard about WIA. Without this assistance, I would not have been able to complete the nursing program. Attending school and caring for my son was a challenge. The nursing program was very demanding, and I felt horrible for not being able to devote enough of my time to my son. But, with the support of my family and by keeping the end result in sight, I finished the nursing program, and I am now working as a registered nurse in the emergency room. Although it can be very stressful at times, my job is very rewarding, and I know I am on the right career path now. Thanks to the WIA program!"

Jennifer Spencer

Jennifer Spencer sought assistance from WIA in the summer of 2009 because she had been accepted into the Occupational Therapy program at SouthArk Community College, but did not have the funds to attend. She quit work as a church secretary to attend school full time, and her husband had been laid off from his job. They and their two children were living on his unemployment benefits. Jennifer came to WIA to request funds for education and related expenses. She was also approved for needs related payments while they were available. Jennifer performed well in school, and is currently working on her clinical rotations at Homer Rehab in Homer, Louisiana. Jennifer is scheduled to graduate with her Associates of Arts Degree in Occupational Therapy in August 2010. She has had several job offers in the range of \$35 to \$45 per hour after she completes the Certified Occupational Therapy Assistant exam and receives her license.

District of Columbia

Ronald N.

Ronald N. entered the Goodwill program to follow his lifelong dream of becoming an electrician. While enrolled in the course, he took a job placement test at M.C. Dean, Inc., one of the nation's premier engineering integration providers. Ronald achieved an almost perfect score of 97% on the exam. He started his career at M.C. Dean making \$15 an hour and was soon invited to join the electrician apprenticeship program. He was recently transferred to work at the Walter Reed Army Medical Center, where he now earns \$27 an hour.

Iowa

Erin

Erin is a single mom raising two young boys on her own. When she first came for WIA services (Region 3 and 4, Spencer) her only income was SSI for her youngest son who is disabled. She wanted to start pre nursing and complete the RN program at the local community college. She was enrolled into the WIA adult program and showed the ability to do well in school. Over the next year she struggled with caring for her children and finding childcare that would take her youngest son and getting school work done. The WIA program helped Erin with tuition costs and support services to help her complete her LPN and then with good grades and determination she was able to continue with scholarships and support services from WIA to complete her RN degree. Erin is currently licensed as an RN to work in Iowa, Nebraska and North Carolina. She is currently working as an RN at a hospital in North Carolina making \$21.00 an hour and enjoying her employment. She shares that she is very grateful for the WIA financial assistance and encouragement from her case manager to complete her degree.

Male Veteran

A 60-year-old male veteran was referred to Region 6 WIA Adult program by his case manager at Iowa Veterans Home. This veteran had faced many obstacles in his past and had fallen into the blackest of tunnels. He was unable to maintain a job, had serious health problems and when arrested for his 3rd OWI, he was given a choice of going to jail or to Iowa Veteran's Home for treatment. Although in denial of his illness, he chose IVH. He made tremendous growth and recovery while at IVH, but he still faced the obstacle of no employment. His skills were obsolete and he knew in order to get hired he needed skills in a high growth/high demand area. Through his own initiation he signed up for school at MCC, where he was enrolled in the Computer Applications Program. He did extremely well his first semester, but he was worried about the school costs that were beginning to add up. He came to the WIA program for assistance. The light he needed for his tunnel was tuition assistance. Because he was a veteran he was given priority service and was enrolled into OBA immediately. Once Objective Assessment was completed he was enrolled into an IST activity to complete the Computer Program. In the spring of 2010 he graduated with a certificate in Computer Applications and an AA degree. Due to a very tight job market, he is returning to school to add a computer networking certificate to his portfolio. He and his WIA case manager feel this additional certification will open many doors to employment in the future. The WIA "light" is shining very brightly in this veteran's tunnel, and the completion of the computer networking certification should bring him out of the tunnel and into employment and onto the highway of success.

Louise

Louise came to WIA (Region 15, Ottumwa) to seek assistance in finding employment. Louise was eligible for WIA based on laid off/no countable income in the 6 month period prior to her applying for our help. Louise had moved to SE Iowa from South Carolina to take employment at the college in town. Almost 10 months after landing in Fairfield, Iowa....Louise found herself not only unemployed, but somewhat alone in a new-to-her community. Louise was placed in GNC and OBA with the intent of helping her seek employment. We discussed the local job market and set a radius of 60 miles for the job search. Louise set her sights on Iowa City as she felt the market was stronger there. We discussed the logistics of commuting so far, and Louise had made some contacts through her church (someone who lived in Iowa City). Today Louise is employed in a management role at The Salvation Army in Iowa City. She enjoys her job, and she really appreciates the time and energy WIA put forth to help with her employment search.

Kentucky

Kelly Thomas

For Kelly Thomas, a flashback to her childhood reveals a longing for a career in barbering. After taking some wrong turns in life, she was sentenced to a year in prison. This is where she learned about opportunities for careers through the WIA program. After meeting with a representative from the Bowling Green One Stop Career Center Kelly was approved for WIA services One Stop Career Center, Kelly was approved for WIA services. Her childhood dream became a reality, and she got her barber license.

Yulanda Bradshaw



Through the Cumberland Workforce Investment Act (WIA) adult program, Yulanda Bradshaw enrolled in the physical therapy assistance (PTA) program at Somerset Community College (SCC) using ARRA funds. While a student, she was presented the American Physical Therapy Association (APTA) 2010 Minority Scholarship Award at the APTA National Conference and Exposition in Boston. This award is presented annually to physical therapy students who have demonstrated academic excellence, community service, service to the physical therapy profession and made significant contributions to multiculturalism efforts in their communities and college campuses. In addition, Yulanda received the John T. Smith Scholarship and was elected as a SCC student

ambassador and president of her class while in college. Yulanda was able to get the education she needed to pursue her dream career and excel in the classroom and community because of the Cumberland WIA and federal funds. She graduated with an associate of applied science degree and is now preparing for the certification test.

Susan Bruns

Susan Bruns helped ease suffering in earthquake ravaged Haiti using nursing skills she learned with the help of Eastern Kentucky Concentrated Employment Program Inc (EKCEP) and WIA. Susan earned her nursing degree from SKCTC in 2008 with financial help from WIA. Her family moved to Haiti to become missionaries, and in January 2010 she got a chance to put her nursing skills to use helping the injured during the devastating earthquake there. The scope of human suffering caused by the earthquake was overwhelming, Susan said. The small clinic where she worked was overrun by people with serious injuries, and she was grateful for all she had learned through WIA. Helping employers fill

job openings with qualified workers is the other side of the workforce equation for EKCEP. An innovative year-long research project was launched in PY 2009 to help EKCEP make decisions about training and services that will align with area employer needs. During research for the Workforce Opportunity Project, EKCEP conducted face-to-face interviews with business-decision makers in the region who are responsible for hiring future employees. The valuable research will give EKCEP better insight as it tries to align eastern Kentucky's workforce with employer and economic development needs.

Elizabeth

Every program has inspiring stories of how Northern Kentucky Workforce Investment Board (NKWIA) made a difference in an individual's life. Elizabeth is one example of a participant who found the opportunity to make her dream come true through a WIA grant. She had been interested in the medical field, especially surgery, since she was a child but her plans were put on hold when she got married and stayed home to raise her three children. With a lack of employment history or training, Elizabeth knew that she needed to further her education in order to obtain employment in the medical field. After two years of training, Elizabeth earned an associate's degree in surgical technology at National College in Florence in August 2010. Before graduation she was offered a surgical technician position at Cincinnati Children's Hospital and Medical Center.

"I would definitely recommend WIA to everyone," Elizabeth said. "WIA helped me minimize the amount of student loan debt incurred while attending school. WIA made the decision to invest in my education; this allowed me to make the decision to return to school without hesitation."

Louisiana

Angelle Wyman

Rising from Devastation to Become an Elementary School Teacher Single-mom Angelle Wyman is a testament to the fact that it's possible to come back even stronger than before after dealing with devastation. Wyman moved to the Acadiana area after her home was destroyed by Hurricane Katrina. Determined to rebuild her life, Wyman visited the LWC's Opelousas Business & Career Solutions Center, where she was given temporary employment through a work experience program. With help from LWIA 40, Wyman was able to attend Louisiana State University at Eunice where she earned an associate degree in early childhood education. She followed that with a bachelor's degree in education from the University of Louisiana at Lafayette. Most remarkable is that Wyman was able to maintain a 4.0 grade-point average throughout her college career. She is now working as a second-grade teacher at Southwest Elementary in Opelousas and was honored as a WIA Participant of the Year.

Maryland

Caleche Arrington, Baltimore City

Caleche Arrington, a young, unemployed mother of four, was seeking a new career that would allow her to explore her love of science. Having worked in environmental services, hospitality, and mail distribution, Caleche decided to make a change. In November 2009, she was selected to participate in the ARRA-funded BioStart program – pre-training for a laboratory associate that would offer her industry exposure and academic skills remediation. Caleche passed the course and was subsequently enrolled in the intensive lab associate training. She was a diligent student who studied hard, displayed professional conduct, and consistently focused on her work. After successfully completing

the classroom curriculum and her internship at BD Diagnostics, she was hired through their staffing agency. She is currently working full-time earning \$11.13 per hour. She continues to do well on the job and is working with Vehicles for Change to purchase her own car.

Lisa McDowell, Baltimore City



“It all started at One-Stop,” according to Lisa McDowell. With no typing or computer skills, Ms. McDowell couldn’t get the office job she wanted. “When I had last worked in an office, people were still using switchboards. When I interviewed for a medical receptionist job, they asked what types of computer programs I knew. I said I knew Lotus, and WordPerfect. They said they didn’t use them anymore.”

At 42 years old, Mrs. McDowell had recent work experience in fast food restaurants and a convenience store, but she wanted more. After more unsuccessful interviews, she tried to register for Unemployment Insurance. She learned she wasn’t eligible, but was referred from there to the Baltimore Works One-Stop Career Center in early 2007. That’s where her job prospects began to turn around. “When I went in, they asked me what I wanted to do. I had good people skills, good telephone skills, office etiquette, light typing ... things like that. But a lot of the office jobs required computer skills.” Baltimore Works staff pointed her to the center’s Digital Learning Lab, where technology trainer Melvina Johnson taught her essential computer skills – from using a mouse and accessing files and folders, to understanding email and the Internet. As she mastered word processing, she also used the *Mavis Beacon Teaches Typing* program to increase her typing speed, from one-finger tapping to 56 words per minute.

As Ms. McDowell earned certificates of mastery in computer trainings, her confidence grew, leading the Job Service to contact the State Department of Budget and Management on her behalf. Job Service staff helped her complete a state employment application that led to an unpaid internship while she continued her computer training. In June 2008, after more than a year at Baltimore Works, Ms. McDowell landed an \$8.25/hour temporary position as a clerical aide at the State Department of General Services. Eager to continue improving her skills, she returned to the Digital Learning Lab, with her employer’s support. “They set up my schedule so I come in Monday through Thursday, with Fridays off to go to the Learning Lab.” There she is pursuing the Internet and Computing Core Certification (IC3) – a global, validated, standards-based training and certification program for basic use of computer hardware, software, networks, and the Internet. Ms. McDowell enthusiastically refers other jobseekers to the Career Center, and helps new people get started. “I explain it to them without using a lot of terminology, so they can understand it. I love hearing them say, ‘Girl, I appreciate that! I didn’t know how to do that until you showed me.’ And I was the same way. It feels good to be able to help others get their understanding. You can teach it to someone else and they light up.”

“Now,” says Ms. McDowell, “a lot of doors are open to me in the state office buildings. The computer training I can take anywhere and everywhere.” Although the \$8.25 job was “a great starting point,” she’s now on her third job with the State, as an administrative assistant at the Board of Public Works, where her keyboarding speed is up to 65 WPM. “I’m earning \$45,000 a year, with benefits. If I hadn’t had that training, I’d still be at McDonald’s.”

Kevin Kolassa

After working for 25 years in the automotive industry, Kevin Kolassa decided to make a career change. He visited a local Michigan Works! Service Center (Calhoun Intermediate School District) to pursue retraining that he hoped would allow him to break out of the automotive manufacturing field and ultimately find work. With an interest in pursuing a degree as a phlebotomy technician, Kolassa took the initiative, with support from Michigan Works!, to begin his education. After successfully participating in an externship and completing a degree, Kolassa was hired by the Community Health Center of Branch County as a full time laboratory assistant. Kolassa recently participated in a local health fair and was featured drawing blood in an article on the front page of a local newspaper. “I am very thankful that Michigan Works! helped me with my degree. The transition went much smoother than I ever expected. I’ve found my new career to be very rewarding. I feel appreciated and good because I am doing something to help people,” said Kolassa.

“I am very thankful that Michigan Works! helped me with my degree. ...I’ve found my new career to be very rewarding.”

Messina Gorm

Messina Gorm, a single parent with young children, came to Michigan Works! following relocation from Texas after serving in the Air Force. With support from Great Lakes Bay Michigan Works!, Gorm enrolled in Delta College’s Fast Start program, a 16 week course that trains students to be chemical process operators. Michigan Works! supported Gorm with training, tuition, college admission fees, interview clothing, and mileage. Despite the rigorous demands of the Fast Start program, Gorm successfully balanced school and a part time job with a local retailer. Following successful completion of the Fast Start program, Gorm accepted a position as a Chemical Process Operator with The Dow Chemical Company. “I’m learning every day about another benefit of working for Dow Chemical. I am very happy with my job,” said Gorm. Gorm is currently training as a chemical operator at a herbicide plant which produces specialty chemicals for Dow AgroScience. She is quickly moving through intensive training in the facility because of the outstanding training that she received as a Fast Start graduate. “She will become a crucial resource for the success of the company long term,” said Bill Dubensky, Operations Leader, Dow Chemical.

Patrick Madonna

Patrick Madonna had a good paying job at Ford Motor Company when he was offered a buyout and accepted. Due to the economic downturn, finding employment turned out to be tougher than expected and Madonna visited a local Michigan Works! Service Center (Region 7B) to seek training and education resources.

In addition to seeking employment, Madonna was also battling Type 2 diabetes, taking four shots of insulin daily. Michigan Works! supported Madonna with transportation and job search assistance and helped give him the confidence he needed to get back on his feet. “No matter what job I found, I wanted my children to have a strong work ethic and be proud of any job they might have, no matter how much they earn,” said Madonna.

Madonna enrolled in the No Worker Left Behind program with a goal of furthering his education and obtaining a new career. Michigan Works! matched Madonna with West Branch Furniture Outlet where he found success as a Customer Service Representative. Shortly after accepting this position with the company, Madonna was promoted to Sales Manager, in charge of all deliveries and employees, earning a good wage and commission.

Minnesota

Sherrice

When Sherrice first visited the Minneapolis WorkForce Center (WFC) in November of 2009, she had previously worked in personal care and wanted to upgrade her skills in order to obtain her Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA) license. Coincidentally, the Minneapolis WFC WIA Adult program received an ARRA grant for healthcare training – specifically to complete training for the CNA license.



Sherrice completed her paid work experience on June 30, 2010 and was offered full-time employment in the same long-term care facility with a starting hourly wage of \$11.44. Meeting with Sherrice and discussing her future, she said, “None of this would have been possible without the WorkForce Center. I owe this all to you.” Our response: “We congratulate you and wish you great success in your new position!” Sherrice may pursue a licensed practicing nurse program in the future.

Sonya



When she came to SW MN PIC, Sonya had limited skills and educational background. As a result, she felt cornered into a job that paid slightly more than minimum wage and had no future for advancement. She sought a career that would be fulfilling, pay self-sufficient wages, and offer a solid future. Researching her options and reflecting on her personal interests, she decided to return to school to become a massage therapist. Massage therapy programs are relatively short but are often intense, requiring full-time schooling, studying, and required practicum hours. As a single mother of two, Sonya did not know how she was going to complete the program, so her school referred her to SW MN PIC.

Sonya met with Sara Karbo, a Job Training Specialist, who reviewed some options with her and assisted her in completing an assessment and labor market research. She then completed her program like a runaway train, graduating with high honors and the chosen graduation commencement speaker for her class. During the middle of her spring semester, Sonya put together her resume and portfolio of her work. She called potential employers to learn about massage therapist opportunities. Before she graduated, Sonya accepted a job with a chiropractic office starting at \$26.00 per hour, including benefits for her and her two sons. Sonya stated that she would never have been able to accomplish this without the WIA Adult program. She now has a bright future ahead of her that allows her to support her family and take pride in her career.

Katina Bell

Katina Bell always knew that she wanted to be a nurse; however, as a high school dropout, she also knew that she would never achieve this dream unless she obtained further education. She was eventually guided by a friend through the General Equivalency Diploma process and received her GED in April 2006.

She was accepted to the Associate Degree Nursing program at Mississippi Delta Community College in August 2007 and visited interviewer Kimberley Gatewood at the Greenwood WIN Job Center to inquire about WIA assistance. She was eligible for and received funding during her final three semesters. Kimberley maintained monthly contact with Ms Bell to ensure that she continued her studies in the Associate Degree Nursing program and reminded her each month that she was closer to reaching her goal than she was the month before.

In May 2009, Katina completed her degree with an overall GPA of 3.012, passed state boards and began work as a registered nurse in 2009. In March 2010, she received the distinguished honor of being named the “Nurse Rookie of the Year” by the Mississippi Nurses Association. Presently, she is planning to further her studies by obtaining a Bachelor’s Degree in Nursing and is applying again for WIA assistance in hopes of making yet another one of her dreams come true. Katina is another example that WITHOUT a high school diploma initially, but WITH a little help and much perseverance, dreams really do come true.

Sammie Tate

Mr. Sammie Tate is a gentleman who worked for many years in the construction industry. Mr. Tate always dreamed of a career in which he could directly impact the lives of others in a positive way. However, he put those dreams on hold years ago in order to provide for his family. When the construction industry was impacted by the economy and all seemed dark with no hope, Sammie remembered his lifelong dream and decided to take a chance. He inquired at the Jackson WIN Job Center about receiving assistance to attend CNA training. After completing the process, he was awarded a WIA scholarship to attend the CNA Training Center where he successfully completed his training. During the graduation ceremony at the CNA Training Center, Mr. Tate was asked to speak to encourage his fellow classmates. He encouraged them to dream big, work hard, and never give up. He thanked the staff for their diligence and hard work in making all the graduating class’s dreams come true. Mr. Tate now works for a local hospital where he cares for 10 extended-care patients each day. He is a respected member of the hospital team, loved by his patients, and proud of himself. When asked about his journey from construction to CNA, Mr. Tate quickly responded, “The great team of Cory Hanna, Donna Hollis, and Mrs. Whatley really go to work for you. They even came to my graduation! I will tell everyone that asks me about the WIA process, IT WORKS!”

“I will tell everyone that asks me about the WIA process, IT WORKS!”

Nebraska

John

Prior to his enrollment into the *Adult WIA Program* in Greater Omaha (Tri County), John had been laid off from his drywall finisher job. He had not been successful in securing employment as work in

the construction industry has slowed dramatically in the current economy. He was interested in truck driving although he had no previous experience or training in this area. With WIA's assistance he attended a truck driving course in May. In less than three weeks after finishing his training, he was on the job. John was quick to let his case manager know of his success and to thank her for the new start. "I have taken a job. They have offered me a regional driving position. The rate of pay will be \$600 to \$800 a week. I actually had four pre-hire offers through the driving school and really had to do my homework to make a choice. That's more offers than I've had in the past five months. Thanks for the new start!"

Jane

Jane moved to Lincoln from out of state with the expectation of employment at a healthcare facility. She found out after moving here with her three children that she was not being offered employment. Although she had a Nursing Assistant degree from a different state, it was not transferable. In fact, she would need courses to be taken in Nebraska, and pass the State exam before she could get on the State Registry to receive her CNA. She was quite 'down', seeing little opportunities and not familiar with access to support services in a new community. When Jane applied for WIA in Greater Lincoln, she was working part-time trying to make ends meet as a single parent. She was receiving ADC and Food Stamps, but was struggling. WIA funds were used to provide training for Jane to get her CNA and take her State exams. Upon completion of training, Jane found employment as a Home Health Aide and Med Aide (her employer assisted her with attaining Med Aide). While her income is not great, she has surpassed the income threshold for food stamps and Title XX, so she is managing without public assistance. She is happy to be working, supporting her family, and maintains a positive outlook.

Nevada

Bobby

Bobby, a 37-year-old homeless male applied for Catholic Charities WIA Program in Southern Nevada the summer of 2009 hoping for a new direction and more employment opportunities. Shortly after enrolling in our program he was placed in an OJT with Evergreen Recycling. Without the supportive services of Catholic Charities in the form of clothing and transportation assistance, this client would not have been able to maintain his employment. Through hard work, commitment, and dedication he has advanced in his career and has gone from living in a shelter to an apartment that he now calls home.

New Hampshire

Karen

Karen is 56-years-old, single, and self-supporting with only one year of college. She had been out of work for two years. Her previous job was Director of Marketing earning \$65,000 a year. When she walked into the NH Works office in July 2009, Karen had used up all available unemployment, her 401K, and most of her savings. She did not have medical insurance, felt like the world no longer needed her, and that she was no longer of value. She could not stop crying, let alone get out of bed and perform basic activities of daily living. Somehow she had the strength to reach out one more time. When she came to the office, it was clear she needed attention beyond WIA. The WIA Counselor called the local health clinic and got her in to see a health professional immediately. The WIA Counselor worked with Karen providing career counseling, including the development of a new employment plan. Karen followed the plan, continued with her medical counseling, and in two

months was ready to tackle an intense training program to upgrade her skills and make her marketable again. Karen attended and completed the ARRA funded Web Design track at Blended Solutions in Manchester. She is now employed at Prospect Hill Leads for Technology, in Nashua, NH, as their Marketing Director. This company is a start-up company, and Karen is earning \$20 per hour.

Adam

Adam is a 25-year-old supporting a family of three. He worked as a water pump technician and in landscaping. With the severe turn in the economy Adam was unable to find employment. He needed to find full time year-round employment to support his family. Adam went to the Adult Learning Center to finish his GED. He then worked with an employment counselor at the local NH Works Office. Adam's father is a truck driver and Adam wanted to do the same. He enrolled in a CDL training course funded by WIA. He successfully completed the course in March 2009 and is now working full-time, year round as a driver for a local company, earning \$15.00 per hour, plus benefits.

New Mexico

Ms. T

An unemployed woman, referred to as Ms. T sharpened her interviewing, resume writing, and networking skills at Workforce Connection of Central New Mexico (WCCNM), and they referred her to Blue Star Insurance for a position in customer service. Although Ms. T had previous experience it was rather limited as she had been out of the workforce for several years. Blue Star Insurance, liked Ms. T's positive demeanor and the initiative it took to upgrade her skills, they agreed to hire her through an On-The-Job Training contract. Ms. T is now working full-time as a Customer Service Representative for Blue Star Insurance, with a full benefits package, including bonuses if the company meets sales objectives. Ms. T now has the opportunity to be trained in the insurance business as an Insurance Agent Assistant. This is a career opportunity; she takes pride in her job and is excited about learning new skills that will allow her to provide financially for her family.

North Carolina

Amanda Bentley



Amanda Bentley, 28-years-old, moved to Burnsville, NC to live with her parents after her second marriage ended. She was a single parent with no home of her own, no work experience and no income to support herself and her daughter. Bentley knew she wanted to become a nurse but faced many barriers. Having no education beyond high school, she knew that more education was required to support her family.

In October 2006 Bentley enrolled in Mayland Community College's WIA Adult Program. Taking advantage of every available resource, she put her education first, even holding a full-time night shift Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA) job to get through the nursing program.

In August 2009 Bentley completed her nursing degree and earned her state license. She works as a full-time Registered Nurse at High Point Regional Hospital in the post-surgical unit, earning \$21.00 an hour. She hopes to begin studies for a bachelor's degree in the Fall 2010 semester.

Jessica Fitzgerald

Jessica Fitzgerald completed her Nurse Aide I class from Blue Ridge Community College with the assistance of the Henderson County JobLink Career Center. Prior to enrolling into the WIA Adult Program, Fitzgerald had previously worked in the healthcare field as an Activity Assistant. However, the last two years she was a stay-at-home mom with her son. After unsuccessful attempts to get back into the healthcare field without a credential, she decided to return to school and enrolled in the Nurse Aide I program.



She was so determined to get into the nurse aide class that she paid for tuition herself. A month later her husband lost his job, so she was unable to pay for her books and uniforms. She came back into the Henderson County JobLink Career Center to request funding for the books, uniforms and state testing fee. With her determination to get back into the healthcare field, she quickly completed the steps to be enrolled in the WIA Adult Program to make sure that she could continue her quest for success.

During her class she also took the North Carolina Career Readiness Assessments earning a Gold Certificate. Because of her hard work during clinical at the Laurels of Hendersonville, she was offered and accepted a Nurse Aide job before even taking the state test to become certified.

Bernette Robinson



Bernette Robinson, a 39-year-old works as a dental assistant. In January 2009 she completed dental assistant classes at Sunshine Dental School in Fayetteville. In March she was then hired by Village Family Dental.

Robinson's background was in manufacturing, where she worked as a machine operator for 13 years. Her health was suffering. She was hospitalized with high blood pressure as a result of the stress she was under. Robinson, who is one of 12 children, graduated from Douglas Byrd High School in 1990. She worked at Black & Decker as a machine operator for seven years before that plant closed. She then moved to Union Corrugating as a machine operator and inspector where she worked from 2004 until she accepted the position at Village Dental. Robinson brought her teen-age daughter into the Workforce Development Center to sign up for the Summer Youth Employment Program in 2009. She is a single mother with two children.

A year ago, Bernette Robinson was in a job she described as stressful. Her blood pressure was off the charts and she was not happy. What a difference a year makes. Last fall she enrolled in a 16-week course at Sunshine Dental School and now she is employed as a dental assistant. "I felt like I was being held back because I had to work and couldn't go to school," she said. She was released from the hospital where she was treated for high blood pressure the day she started school. Today her health has improved "because I'm doing what I want to do," she says.

Sandra Spangle

Sandra Spangle, an unemployed, single mother of two, had a GED and work experience as a cashier and sales clerk. She had been searching for a job without success when she heard about the JobsNOW "12 in 6" program through DavidsonWorks during the



summer of 2009. She quickly identified the Medical Billing and Coding training as a good fit for her career goals and interests.

At Davidson County Community College, Spangle earned a JobsNOW “12 in 6” Certificate of Completion in Healthcare Billing and Coding and received a Gold Career Readiness Certificate. As a result of her training, she became a Certified Medical Reimbursement Specialist acknowledged by the American Medical Billing Association.

After successfully completing her JobsNOW “12 in 6” training, Spangle was offered a Work Experience Internship developed by DavidsonWorks at Daymark Recovery Services, a behavioral healthcare provider. At her worksite, Spangle quickly impressed her colleagues with her commitment and skills.

Spangle’s abilities were so impressive that Daymark hired her as a permanent employee at the end of her internship. She now works as a Medical Office Assistant at the Daymark Center in Winston-Salem.

Thomas Steele



In 2006 Thomas Steele, a 68-year-old retired factory worker, made the decision to go to college. He enrolled at Montgomery Community College (MCC) and chose Human Services Technology as his major. College proved to be a struggle for him and he experienced a few bumps. However, when he would stumble and take a spill, Steele would get right up, brush himself off and try again. He was determined to finish what he started.

Just before the 2008 summer session started, Steele became a WIA Adult participant at Pee Dee Region Workforce Consortium, he participated in activities on and off campus. At the college, he was a member of the Student Government Association, the Minority Male Mentoring Program and the Human Services Club. He also assisted with a number of other campus activities and programs. In the community, he assists with the “Back Pack” Project that serves elementary and middle school children and he volunteers at the Partnership for Children, where he enjoys working with the staff, the children and their parents.

On May 12, 2010, Steele graduated with a diploma in Human Services Technology. He was 72 years old, though he neither looks nor acts his age. He wants to find a job that will allow him to work with the elderly.

Ohio

Gary Elser

Gary Elser applied for WIA assistance at the Trumbull County One-Stop (Area 18) in August 2009. His test scores were not quite up to recognized standards leaving Elser discouraged and ready to walk away. With encouragement from the One-Stop staff and his family, Gary attended Adult Basic and Literacy Education (ABLE) remediation classes. He worked hard, retested and brought up his scores. Elser, was interested in small engine repair, had many years



experience in the field, but no formal training or certification. With WIA funding provided through the Trumbull County One-Stop, Elser was trained and obtained his basic and advanced small-engine repair certifications. Soon after, he was hired by the second largest small engine repair company in the United States.

Oklahoma

Emily Gavin

Emily Gavin was unemployed. She had worked only as a cashier and nurse's aide prior to enrollment. She had started her Associate Degree at Seminole State College but was unable to complete. After a re-evaluation of her goals and interests, she enrolled in the LPN program at Wes Watkins Technology Center in Wetumka and completed her Practical Nursing Certification in May 2010. She is currently working full-time at Holdenville General Hospital.

Kassie Meizere

Kassie Meizere was a 25-year-old single mother of two who came to WIA after being laid off from a low-paying job she'd held for six years. With WIA assistance she was able to pursue her goal to become an Aircraft Mechanic. She entered the Aviation Maintenance program at the Gordon Cooper Tech Center and emerged as a certified FAA Aircraft Mechanic. In March 2010, Kassie began working as a Sheet Metal Mechanic at Tinker Air Force Base with a starting wage of \$22 per hour and a raise due after six months. She is now able to afford health insurance for her family, is able to live in a nice neighborhood and has been able to buy the car of her choice. During her assessment at intake she listed financial independence as a personal goal; according to her update she has attained this goal.

Tennessee

Emily Peaster

Personal determination and dedication have enhanced recent accomplishments for Macon County resident, Emily Peaster. Cindy Holland, LWIA 7 Case Manager, quickly realized Emily's career potential in health occupations. Past employment within an assisted-living facility proved to be gratifying for her; however, Emily faced the need for skill development and licensure. Emily received her GED and then trained to become a Certified Nurses Assistant (CNA). Both of these goals were reached simultaneously, and she began working at Knollwood Manor in September 2005.

“The WIA program was a ‘Godsend.’”

Eager to learn more and to advance her knowledge of the nursing profession, she enrolled in a Career Mobility Program at Bowling Green Technical College in the summer of 2006.

Completing all of her requirements, she became a Licensed Practical Nurse in December 2008 and received her Associates of Applied Science in December 2009. She graduated with a 3.562 GPA and received the Excellent Clinical and Patient Care Skills Award, voted on by her clinical instructors. She passed the RN state licensure exam in January 2010. Through this process, Emily never missed a day of school and still managed to work full time. She is the first person in her family to receive a college degree.

“The WIA program was a ‘Godsend,’” Emily stated, and it helped her in a time of need by paying for things such as books, supplies and licensure fees.

Julie Kimball

Julie Kimball, a mother of four children, struggled to support herself and her children. According to Jan Eatmon, Cheyenne Workforce Center Specialist, Julie had the courage to leave a negative marital relationship, which placed her and her children in the position of having to rely on child support payments and multiple types of welfare assistance, to meet their monthly expenses. Julie felt a strong desire to enter a fulfilling career that would enable her to provide her and her family's needs.

When Julie came to the office, in July 2008, she had surprisingly completed all the pre-requisites to attend the Nursing Program at Laramie County Community College, and had been accepted into the two-year competitive program. The director of the Nursing Program, who knew that Julie was struggling financially, referred Julie to the Workforce Center for help. When Julie came to the office seeking assistance she was carrying a 3.85 grade point average. With great enthusiasm, she willingly brought in all the verification documents needed to apply for the WIA program. Julie did everything asked of her and was eager to get on with the next two years. Julie stayed in contact with Jan and reported on her progress in a timely manner.

During the course of the next two years, Julie had several situations arise that would have deterred the average person. But Julie is not an average person. She faced situations with her children, her fight to have child support, having to have a restraining order on her ex-husband, and continual battles with the court system. She had to have back surgery during this period as well. Somehow, Julie was still able to keep up with her schoolwork and to finish the Nursing Program with a 3.71 grade point average. She was given a predictor test by the college prior to taking the board exams and she was told her score was the highest score ever achieved by any of the Nursing Program students. Julie graduated May, 2010 with an associate's degree in Nursing and she received her Wyoming license as a Registered Nurse August, 2010. She found employment at Life Care Nursing Home in Cheyenne, Wyoming. She is working full time as a Registered Nurse and earning \$22.50 an hour with an additional \$1.25 for shift differential. Julie is so proud of herself and she should be. This was a huge accomplishment, given her circumstances. She will now be able to get off all her assistance programs and support herself and her children on her own. With this employment she now has insurance coverage for herself and her children. She is earning a living wage so she can pay her housing, food, and utilities. She has a retirement plan so she can look forward to money coming in when she retires. These factors are important to anyone, but especially to Julie, who has had to struggle every step of the way to get where she is. Her schedule is also a plus because it is allowing her more time with her children. In fact, she has decided to home school them. This is huge endeavor for Julie to undertake but she has shown she is always up to the challenges that confront her. She has determined that this is in the best interest for her children so she is willing to make whatever personal sacrifices are necessary, to make this happen. Julie mastered all the goals that were set for her and the ones she set for herself. She completed her training and obtained employment in the State of Wyoming! Congratulations to Julie. She said she could not have done it without the help from the Department of Workforce Services and she will be forever grateful.

Gary Schmidt

Gary Schmidt, a single 55-year-old male, came in for assistance, after he was laid off from his seasonal job and wasn't sure when, or if, he could return to work for his previous employer. Gary had been working for a local construction company and stated that the company was struggling, as another company had been under bidding a lot of



upcoming jobs, and he felt the company may not be able to hire him back due to this. He stated that he believed if he could obtain his class A CDL through Sage Truck Driving School, he would become more valuable to his last employer and or be more marketable to another company. It was determined that Gary was a good candidate for the training and he was approved for the truck driver training through WIA. Gary was eager from the beginning, and he completed all assessments and provided all required documentations immediately. He was very proactive. He stated he would do whatever it took to make this be successful for him. Gary started his training right away and was called back to work part time. Gary and Sage Trucking had a great working relationship; He attended all classes and did his drive time when he could work it out. Gary failed the first port test and was so disappointed that he immediately paid the re-test fee and asked to be rescheduled as soon as possible. At this juncture Gary was now working full time for an out-of-state windmill energy company. Gary made arrangements with his employer and passed his port test with honors. Gary called and said that Sage Trucking told him that they had not seen such a “low” score on this particular test. Gary said his heart went to this throat and he felt embarrassed, as he didn’t want to have the lowest score on record. When Sage explained that the “low” score actually meant the “best” score he was elated. He phoned Janet Ryser at the Cheyenne Workforce Center, and stated, “This is best that I have ever done at anything, and thanks so much for the help and encouragement”. He stated that he wanted one of those graduation hats that you can throw up in the air when you graduate. Sage Trucking provided documents verifying that Gary’s general written and lab exam GPA was 93% and his truck operator exams of 90, 95 and 96 gave him an overall GPA of 96.90%. He received a certificate for completing his TTD-150 (driver training), Certificate of Academic Excellence and Certificate of Perfect Attendance; all of this leading to his receiving his Class A CDL on 8/5/10. Janet conducted an employer work site visit and took a graduation card (with a graduation hat on it) and a cake that stated “Congratulations Gary on getting the best port test score to date”. He was so thrilled and called to say that his bosses and co-workers were very impressed. His main supervisor told him that he most certainly had become more valuable to the company.

Peggy Anderson

Peggy Anderson is a single woman, 32-years-old who had no real occupational or marketable skills other than general laborer, building and grounds maintenance and service industry. She was trying to make ends meet but was continually finding herself out of work. She has worked two jobs at a time for brief periods. Her most recent occupation was an industrial painting laborer job, and though it paid well at \$14.00/hr, it was short lived. Most of her jobs paid slightly less than that, but were not long term with clear specific career options. It was apparent from the first meeting with Workforce Specialist Kay Roth, that Peggy would be suited for non-traditional occupations. She first came to the Gillette Workforce Center for assistance in finding another job, but then asked about funding for training. She was very interested in truck driving and was excited about prospects of getting the appropriate licensing to drive heavy trucks. The interest assessment confirmed her interest in the nontraditional work occupations so it was decided that WIA Adult traditional funding could be appropriately used to fund her training. Peggy started the truck driving program in June 2010 and completed with a certificate of completion (94% GPA) and a Commercial Drivers License with NT endorsements on in July of 2010. She started work in shortly after at Wyoming Red Rock as an inexperienced truck driver hauling rock, sand and gravel. Her rate of pay was \$18.00 with no benefits. She has since gone to work for Magna, driving a methane field water truck for \$17.00 and potential benefit t package. Though the wage is slightly less, it is still considerably more than she was making and has potential for benefits that she has never had before. She is overjoyed with her newfound career!

Workforce Investment Act Dislocated Worker Program

Participant Stories²

Alaska

Mr. Moore

Mr. Moore was laid off on June 15, 2009 from Schlumberger after 20 years of employment. He was employed as a Field Specialist III, supervising a crew and operating equipment, including cranes, which he learned on the job. Mr. Moore immediately recognized that he needed to relocate his family from Kenai to Anchorage to access as many job search resources as possible.

His assessment showed that in order to compete for crane operator positions he would need a NCCCO certification, which is an employer requirement. Research showed that training was available at the Tower Crane School in Phoenix, Arizona which provided mobile and tower crane training as well as a rigger/signalperson course. An out of state training exception was requested and approved. Mr. Moore began training on July 20, and completed by early August, successfully obtaining certifications as a mobile and tower crane operator, as well as a rigger and signalperson. In addition to the funding for training, WIA provided funding for housing assistance and COBRA premium reimbursement. Mr. Moore started applying for jobs upon completion of training, but due to the time of year, there weren't any jobs available, so he went to work as a tow truck driver, part time to get through the winter. In January, he was offered a job in North Dakota with ITS, an oilfield services company based out of Texas. His starting wage was \$80K per year with a \$150 per day on the job bonus, and the company paid for him and his family to relocate their household to North Dakota.



Warren Jones, Owner and Operator, Kanektok River Adventures, Archeological Tourism Business

Kanektok River Adventures (KRA) used the Rural Outreach Program for Entrepreneurs program to start up their business and create jobs for the area. Owner and Operator Warren Jones and other staff members participated in ROPE training workshops entitled “Developing a Business Plan” and “QuickBooks”. In these classes they learned necessary systems to keep a business strong but they also learned about diverse revenue sources to sustain the business for future generations. KRA benefited from ROPE’s free one-on-one business counseling with Director Deb Kvasnikoff, and has also used market research available through the Small Business Development Center’s National Clearinghouse. Kanektok River Adventures (KRA) began with a vision for a true Alaska outdoor-adventure eco-cultural tourism business. Warren Jones submitted a successful application to the Alaska Federation of Natives – Alaska Marketplace small business competition in hopes of creating up to 20 jobs for Quinhagak. This year the business has grown to sustain at least 15 and up to 20 local seasonal jobs such as General Manager, Coordinator, Camp Manager, Cook, Guide, and Boat Operator. In addition, high school students help with the digs. This business also supports local

² These stories were compiled from state Program Year 2009 WIA Annual Report Narratives. Each state’s report is available at: <http://www.doleta.gov/performance/results/AnnualReports/annual-report-09.cfm>.

Artisans and businesses selling locally made arts and crafts for visitors. Kanektok River Adventures is based in Quinhagak, Alaska, the only western Alaska village community focusing on excavation of archaeological sites. KRA provides tourism services to amateur archeologists and young Yupik student archaeologists who are busy gathering, recovering, preserving and storing culture-rich artifacts from the ancient past, some as old as 4,000 to 6,000 years. The company provides their customers with transportation, a base camp to stay in, and a host for all of the village activities. This adventure provides an opportunity for archaeologists to participate in all activities that support and encourage learning opportunities for elders and youth - restoring an ancient cultural landscape and providing a foundation for future preservation of all artifacts. This business creates an economy for the rural Alaskan village and provides a foundation for future preservation of all artifacts and for future tourism in the region.

Alabama

John Brouillette

John Brouillette was living the American dream. He had a family, a home, and a job that he loved working as an entry-level machinist. Then suddenly happiness turned to heartbreak and despair. After numerous years on the job, Brouillette got the news that he was being laid-off. With limited skills obtained on the job, Brouillette needed employment. He wanted to find work as a machinist, but realized he needed formal training in order to increase his opportunity for employment. With encouragement from a friend, Brouillette decided to enroll in the Machine Tool Technology Program at Bishop State Community College. Since being laid off, John hesitated about his decision to pursue training because money was tight. Then he heard about the WIA program and decided to apply for funding. Brouillette states that the WIA application process went well and he was approved. "I am appreciative of the program that's available to dislocated workers." Brouillette said. "I was able to go to school and get training for a field that I love. I learned so much about how 26 simple machines work and they taught me the complicated stuff, too." Brouillette states that his training has put him in a position to earn a great salary and his credentials qualify him to work at any shop, anywhere in the U.S. Brouillette is currently working as a machinist at Mack Manufacturing.

Russell Stover Jr.

Russell Stover Jr. previously worked at Stevens Graphics as a Purchasing Supervisor. When several management positions were abolished, Stover was left without employment. He enrolled in Lawson State and studied Heat/Ventilation/Air-Conditioning/Refrigeration (HVACR) repair. While in school, a classmate informed him about the WIA programs. Stover applied for assistance and has since received his short-term certification, his long-term certification, and is on the track to completing his Associate Degree in December 2010.

Arkansas

Tara Cupp



Tara Cupp felt trapped in a dead-end job at Whirlpool. While the pay was too good to justify leaving on her own, the unpredictable cuts in hours and continuous threat of being laid-off were a constant source of stress and worry. To complicate matters further, Tara's husband was also employed by Whirlpool under the same conditions. The thought of losing the family's entire livelihood in a layoff was terrifying to the

couple. That fear was realized in November 2006, when they were both dislocated due to a mass layoff by the company.

While the reality of major upheaval was spinning through her head, she felt a renewed sense of hope. Through the help of the Governor's Dislocated Worker Task Force, Trade Adjustment Assistance, and the Workforce Investment Act programs, she was able to revive her dream of becoming a registered Radiographer. Financially unable to attempt this journey on her own, her dream was out of reach. For Tara, becoming a dislocated worker was an opportunity to finally work toward that dream. She completed her associate degree and then went on to earn her bachelor degree and land a job with a local hospital. Tara is now able to feel a sense of security in a growing field of medicine. She has worked hard to achieve her dream, and she is finally able to apply herself knowing that this career is one in which she can continue to grow. Tara's WIA Case Manager, Angie Oliver said of Tara, "She is one of the best students I have had over the years. She always worked hard and maintained her grades while balancing her family life. I am very proud of her and her accomplishments."

Phyllis Dannels

Phyllis Dannels, dislocated worker from Syroco, graduated from Northwest Arkansas Community College (NWACC) with a Business Management Associate with a focus in Accounting. She was on the dean's list numerous times and made the President's list twice. I can remember the first time she came into my office inquiring about school. She was frustrated because she couldn't see herself going back to school with all of the younger students. With the encouragement she received from the staff, family and friends, she decided to enroll and the rest is history. After graduating from NWACC, she started looking for work. She received and accepted a few offers, but none of them were in business or accounting. She didn't turn them down because, as she would so often say, "Something is better than nothing". When I received the call from David Trapp at Hampton Inn looking for someone dependable, hard working, and a team player, I knew she would be a great asset to their company. Mr. David Trapp, General Manager, Hampton Inn has this to say about Phyllis. "Phyllis came to us at a very difficult time as we were understaffed and needed someone to do the job and learn quickly. Her background in accounting was an immense help as she only needed to learn hotel, which she learned quickly. Phyllis is always looking to help others; both guests and staff. She is well liked by all and is a great asset to the company. We are very happy to have such a well-rounded individual added to our team. We are in the top two internationally, and Phyllis is a contributor to that. Every time I call Rose at the workforce office, I ask her to send me another Phyllis."

Colorado

Daniel

Daniel was laid off in December 2008 as a shop foreman where he installed countertops for over eight years. Through WIA services at Larimer County Workforce Center, Daniel enrolled in the Energy Boost program at Front Range Community College, an 80-hour customized training program that retrains job seekers for production workers in the renewable energy field. He also started an AAS degree in Clean Energy Technology. Daniel received a job offer as a production operator from Vestas Wind Energy Company in May 2010 and completed his certificate in Clean Energy Technology shortly afterwards.

Leeann W.

After more than six years working as a systems administrator and network engineer at Electronic Data Systems Corporation, Leeann W. was laid off. She had been unable to secure employment without the required certifications or a 4 year college degree. She enrolled in computer training through the Franklin Career Center. Leeann obtained her Microsoft Certification as a Systems Engineer through George Mason University and was quickly hired. She currently earns \$110,000 a year.

Iowa

Mike

Mike lost his job at Winnebago Industries after the economic downturn. He applied and was eligible for unemployment benefits and started searching for a new job right away. After several months of being unable to find employment he started researching into the possibility of re-training. He started classes at Iowa Lakes Community College in the Biorenewable Fuels Technology program. After two years of working very hard in his classes he graduated from the program with a 3.06 cumulative GPA. He was a little concerned about finding employment in his field of study but within 2 weeks of graduating with his associates' degree he was employed full-time as a production operator at a local ethanol plant and making \$16.50 per hour. Mike is appreciative of the Workforce Investment Act dislocated worker program helping him with tuition assistance and transportation to and from training. He is also glad that the state of Iowa had training extended benefits available after his unemployment benefits ran out or he may not have been able to finish his degree.

Male Dislocated Worker

A 57-year-old baby boomer, who should have been planning for his golden years, found himself applying for unemployment due to a mass lay off. He had found himself in this position just five years ago when he was laid off from another manufacturing company in our region. During that period, he had depleted all his savings and was just now starting to get ahead, when his world turned upside down once again. Last time, the economy was in better shape and he found employment again in manufacturing. This was one of the biggest manufacturers of the region and he thought he would finish out his career there. He just needed 9 more years until social security and Medicare would be available to him. Now at 57, he was being laid off again. He needed a way to support his wife and teenage son for the next nine years. He had dropped out of school at an early age, but went back and got his GED when he was 37. He now believed the only way to avoid lay off in the future was to go back to school. He had always been interested in the construction industry and felt that this latest layoff was opening a door for him to truly do something he'd always thought about doing but just hadn't taken the leap to do it. He started attending Marshalltown Community College in January, 2009 in the Construction Technology Program. Even though his wife was working part-time, the UI and her wages weren't enough to pay all their bills. He came to WIA asking for financial assistance, so he could devote his time to school. School had never been easy for him; and at his age, he felt he needed to devote all his effort toward school just to keep up. WIA was able to help him pay his utility bills while he was in school through FAS payments. With WIA's help, he accomplished his goal of graduating in July, 2010 with his certificate in the Construction Trades. He also was the first person in his family to graduate from college! He's within inches of the end of his tunnel. The light is bright as is his future. He is now ready to secure a position in his new area of training. WIA will be providing

follow services as needed until he reaches his employment goal and gets back on the highway to success.

Steve

“Steve” was an employee of Davenport White Metal when that company closed down in the poor economy. He had been earning \$20.20/hr. He had worked over 14 years as a Tool Operator in contract positions and as a Machinist. He had no formal training or credential to aid him, and had never seemed to need any as he moved through his career in production. He scored high in his testing and was definitely in the right career track according to his Holland Interest Inventory results. He applied for WIA assistance when he was unable to land even an interview for a new job as a Machinist. We enrolled “Steve” and sent him off to Career Links Orientation (funded by Eastern Iowa Community College) to give him a new and fresh view of the workplace he was trying to reenter. After successfully completing that course, he was ready to enroll in training for CNC Programming a welding skills upgrade. The entire time “Steve” was attending his classes and energetically learning new skills, he continued to job search. However, despite a rigorous application regimen and exemplary work history, not one employer offered him so much as an interview. That changed the moment he earned the certificates that documented his new trade skills in CNC and welding. Immediately Sedona Staffing summoned him for a temp job with ESCP – a local company that specializes in rack & container manufacturing, fabricated parts, laser and plasma cutting, machined parts, and powder coating. “Steve” was very excited at the opportunity and was especially grateful to feel confident and very qualified to tackle a new position. Within weeks, “Steve” was back in our offices, proudly stating that he had been given a fulltime permanent position. He said that his new training had provided exactly what the job needed, and said his new boss verified that he would never have been given a chance without the updated training and new skill sets. “Steve” expressed great appreciation for all the assistance WIA gave him and says that without the guidance, support and training, he would very possibly still be unemployed.

Brad

Brad was referred to the Dislocated Worker Program from the Iowa Workforce Development staff in Region 10 in December 2007. He was let go from his job at US Cellular where he worked as a Customer Service Representative. He stated that he was devastated when US Cellular let him go and felt he would need training to find wages comparable to what he was making. Brad said he did do some computer support work at US Cellular within his team but that was not in his actual job description. He researched the Computer Support Specialist, two year degree at Kirkwood Community College and decided on that training. Consultant encouraged Brad to look into tutoring at the Kirkwood Computer Lab to gain additional experience prior to graduation. Brad did follow consultant’s suggestion and was hired part time to tutor other students in the lab. During Brad’s last semester at Kirkwood he was fortunate enough to obtain an externship with Ruffalo Cody, employer located right on the Kirkwood Campus. Brad was very happy about this opportunity not only for the experience but also because it was a paid externship. Upon completion of training Brad was hired on full time at Ruffalo Cody where he is still currently working.

Dedra

The following story illustrates how the program assisted both the worksite and the unemployed individual who was placed there. Dedra was enrolled in the Emergency Public Jobs (EPJ) program in September of 2008. Her position as the Director of Testing and Careers at West Harrison Schools had been eliminated after seven years of employment due to budget cuts. She did not have the credentials to become a school counselor and did not feel there was much potential for employment in the field as many school districts are also cutting back on staff. Dedra was placed at Willow Lake

Park in Harrison County and performed general park maintenance and storm clean-up. In November of 2008 she was also enrolled in the WIA dislocated worker program so that she could also begin certified nursing assistant training. She obtained her CNA license in December of 2008 and began practical nursing classes in January of 2009, while still maintaining her EPJ position at Willow Lake. In August of 2009, when her nursing classes became full time, she left the EPJ job to concentrate on her studies. She graduated in May of 2010 and accepted a position with Harrison County Emergency Management.

Tina

When Books Are Fun closed in early 2009 almost 150 folks found themselves without employment in a very stagnant economy. Tina was one of those affected by this closing. Tina had worked at Books Are Fun since 1991 when the company started. She had worked her way up into the Project Manager position and loved what she was doing. I first met with Tina at one of the many orientation meetings that were held with the employees. Tina felt she needed to find employment and wanted WIA help with that process. (She admitted the labor market had changed since 1991). Tina was enrolled in WIA and placed in Guidance and Counseling and Objective Assessment. Tina and I would visit often to discuss jobs and local opportunities. It became apparent that Tina may have to consider a certification/training and possibly a move. WIA assisted Tina with Project Manager Certification training as she had never had any proper training in that, but had done the job many years. During that training Tina grew in experience, education and self-assuredness. We were both very happy with her results. Again we went after the quality employment, this time Tina landed a job with Pronto Partners in Milwaukee, WI, and today she's employed full-time as a Project Manager and she's making almost 1½ times her salary at Books Are Fun. More importantly she is thrilled with her new job.

Kansas

Local Area III (Workforce Partnership)

Jean H.

Jean became laid off from Staples Promotional Products on January 23, 2010, where she made \$44,000 per year. Prior to her job at Staples, she had worked for DuPont based in Taiwan as a Regional Supply Chain & Business Coordinator, making \$55,000 annually. Working with her case manager to gather all the necessary documentation required for WIA training, she was finally able to enroll in the Project Management program at New Horizons. After attending school for only one week, she received a job offer with Cardinal Health Care of Kansas City, Missouri, which she accepted. Her job title is Operational Excellence Black Belt. Her new employer said they would pay for her Black Belt certification while working for them and her current salary is \$70,000. She went bowling with her friends to celebrate her employment when she fell and broke her ankle. Because her insurance went into effect immediately after she started her new job, all of her medical bills were covered.

Tom J.

Tom was a dislocated worker from Bayer Healthcare LLC, with a dislocation date of April 28, 2009. At the time of dislocation, he was making \$100,000 as a Manufacturing Project Manager. He came to the workforce center on January 4, 2010, interested in obtaining his Lean Six Sigma Black Belt from JCCC. He obtained employment on April 19, working at TEVA Animal Health in St. Joseph, Missouri, as a Capital Project manager. His salary is \$114,400 with earning potential exceeding \$140,000 annually. He received his certification on May 17, 2010.

John J.

John became a dislocated worker from IBM effective April 27, 2009. At that time, he was Project Manager/Liaison, making \$94,000 per year. When he came to the workforce center, he was interested in attending JCCC for the Business Management certification, which began March 10, 2010. He successfully completed the course and received his certification on April 16. He interviewed for and accepted a Project Manager position with Deloitte Consulting in New York. He is working out of their Kansas City office and his starting salary is \$92,000 annually.



Local Area V (Southeast KANSASWORKS)

Male Dislocated Worker

One client who was laid off from a local wheel manufacturing plant which shut down, attended a local technical school as a Dislocated Worker receiving WIA funding for HVAC. Nine days after completion of the coursework, a local HVAC company hired him. Another individual laid off as an HR administrative aide attended classes at a local Community College for medical records with the assistance of WIA funds. Upon graduation, she secured a job as a medical records clerk earning over \$13.00 per hour. Lastly, a client became laid off when his plant closed. He was able to attend welding school and receive master welder certifications with the aid of WIA funding, which also provided assistance by helping pay for his travel expenses for job interviews. He secured a position as a welder with a company that works nationwide. He has traveled over several states for welding jobs and earned over \$69,000 in his first 6 months of employment.

Kentucky

Kenny Botts



When Kenny Botts of Bowling Green lost his job with Belden Manufacturing in 2008, he lost not only his job, but many company benefits including health insurance. After being employed with Belden of Tompkinsville, for 14 years as a cell operator, Kenny now faced an uncertain future. He found a new direction when he attended a WIA Rapid Response meeting at the Belden facility conducted by a team from the Barren River Area Development District. Excited to learn about new training opportunities through the WIA program, Kenny enrolled in class at Bowling Green Technical College in January 2008. He graduated in May 2010, with a degree in industrial maintenance. Kenny then obtained a full-time position with Country Oven Bakery in Bowling Green, where he is earning a higher wage. As a result of his pursuit of higher education, he is being considered for a new internship program through the maintenance department at Country Oven. This position would more than double his current rate of earnings.

Louisiana

Kevin Breaux

Letter to Rapid Response Team, from January 20, 2010

“You may remember that I was one of your best customers at the IP Pineville Paper Mill closing (worker transition center). I wanted to let you all know that next week, I will start my new job at Boise Paper Mill in DeRidder, La. It is a very good job, possibly better than the one I had. I wanted to thank you for all the time spent on helping me with my résumé and interviewing skills. I am sure that the résumé got me the job. I also wanted to thank y’all for all the other classes, which helped me put together a “back-up plan” just in case the job hunting did not go well. The back-up plan was just as important as the job hunt, well anyway, it made me feel a lot better about being unemployed.”

*Thanks again,
Kevin Breaux*

Maryland

Frank G., Southern Maryland

Frank G. was a dislocated worker, laid off from his position as a Construction Manager with a company in Georgia in 2007. Customer started his own construction business that did not provide consistent work due to the poor economy. He was receiving unemployment benefits when he came into the WIA program. The Client Services Manager (CSM) worked with the customer on job leads and discussed his job search strategies.

The Case Manager reviewed his resume and made recommendations for improvements to it. CSM was working with him on possible training options. The customer was originally interested in pursuing Project/Program Management training through the WIA program. The Case Manager referred him to the College of Southern Maryland to check out job opportunities, since customer had experience teaching in the Construction Trades. He was originally referred to the local WIA program by Maryland’s Professional Outplacement Assistance Center (POAC) and he attended the Early Intervention workshop at the Leonardtown One Stop office. The WIA CSM also referred customer to the Southern Maryland Job Match Re-Employment program. The Client Services Manager suggested checking into job opportunities at the College of Southern Maryland. The CSM also referred the customer to the Southern Maryland Job Match Re-Employment program, our region’s rapid response program, designed for mid to upper wage earners (over \$40K).

Customer is in a career position as the Director of the Center for Technology and Energy for College of Southern Maryland and a Carpentry Instructor there and expects to continue his employment with them.

Evangelin Redd, Baltimore County



Healthcare may be a high-growth, high-demand industry, but that didn’t keep Evangelin Redd from losing her job with a health insurance company. Ms. Redd had been working at a desk job—steady work, but with no growth potential – when she was laid off after 21 years of service. Suddenly, she was a dislocated worker – divorced, 55 years old, with a \$1300 monthly mortgage to pay on her own. With no income other than unemployment compensation and food stamps, she was concerned about losing her home. Ms. Redd was devastated to be out of work. “It was a horrible feeling,” she recalled. Desperately seeking employment, she heard about Baltimore County’s Workforce Development Center at Hunt Valley. “From the time I walked in the door, everybody was very kind, very

professional.” Ms. Redd especially appreciated the Career Path Strategies/Early Intervention seminar. “Shemel Bowden, who presented the seminar, was a dynamic speaker. I went from having very low self-esteem when I walked in the door to thinking that I could get back out there like a champion and gain employment.” Ms. Redd’s career consultant, Annie Hatchett, explored career options and helped her look for jobs. “She talked with me about what I wanted to do. I wanted to work in the healthcare field, hands-on. I had been working part-time as a CNA [certified nursing assistant] since 1997, but my certification had expired so I had to start over again. This is where I got all the help from the Center.”

“I went from having very low self-esteem...to thinking I could get back out there like a champion and gain employment.”

She enrolled in GNA/CNA (geriatric/certified nursing assistant) training, with financial support from the Center, but “from the first day I walked in the class, I felt doomed to fail.” And fail she did, but not for long. She had kept Ms. Hatchett up-to-date on her difficulties throughout the training, so the career consultant was able to find another GNA/CNA program, at the Ghandi Institute of Health, that better suited Ms. Redd’s learning style. “They are excellent instructors,” Ms. Redd said. “My teacher took pride in her teaching, and in her students. I got a lot out of the way she taught her class.” She achieved her GNA/CNA in mid-2008, thanks to her own hard work and the Career Center’s persistence.

Today, after working brief stints in two nursing homes, Ms. Redd is well on her way to building her own business. While working at the nursing homes, she pursued the paperwork necessary to start an assisted living business, acquiring her Medicaid provider number and her Certified Medications Technician license, and taking First Aid and CPR classes at the American Red Cross. While she currently earns money providing in-home care for one patient, Ms. Redd plans to eventually expand her business, bringing other Medicaid-eligible elderly or disabled people into her home and hiring additional staff. “This is what I like doing – taking care of other people who can’t take care of themselves,” she says with pride. “If the workforce development center hadn’t been there for me, I don’t know what I would have done. God sends people into your life. From the day I walked in, I knew I was okay. I couldn’t have done it by myself. They were there for me; they care about people. I just so appreciate it.”

Rose Madison, Upper Shore

The Great Recession hit Maryland’s Eastern Shore especially hard. Layoffs and closings forced hundreds of highly skilled workers out of the workforce. Many had great work experience, but no recent job search experience, and found themselves completely unprepared for the challenge of finding a job in today’s fast-paced employment environment.

Easton resident Rose Madison found herself in that position when she lost her job at age 57 in a workforce reduction in February 2009. “I was always one to stay in a company for many years,” she recalled. “When I chose to change careers, I always had a new position before giving my notice. It was never a problem to get hired.” After five years as a Sales Representative at Cambridge International (a manufacturer of conveyor belts and wire cloth) and steady work for years before that, Ms. Madison “really had no idea where to start.” Not one to stay at home, she began volunteering at Habitat for Humanity Choptank in April, while pursuing paid employment. A fellow



Habitat volunteer (who happened to be the daughter of the Upper Shore Workforce Investment Board executive director) referred Ms. Madison to USWIB for help.

“Fortunately, the Upper Shore Workforce Investment Board [USWIB] came to my rescue,” Ms. Madison said. USWIB’s two-day “Dependable Strengths” workshop helped her identify her transferable strengths and taught her how to express those skills in a functional resume. She learned interview preparation strategies and practiced answering tough questions in a positive way. USWIB arranged for Mary Kraft Staffing and HR Solutions to provide a longer, more intensive “boot camp” workshop covering job search resources, networking, personal skills, job-specific cover letters and resumes, and more interviewing techniques. Meanwhile, Ms. Madison continued to volunteer at Habitat, but with USWIB’s help she transitioned in September to the Office on Aging’s Senior Community Service Employment Program, funded by the federal Older Americans Act. That program enabled her to earn minimum wage for up to 20 hours a week at Habitat.

After completing the Mary Kraft boot camp, Ms. Madison put her new skills to work and landed four interviews immediately, two of which resulted in job offers at higher pay than her Cambridge International job, where she had earned \$15/hour plus commission. Susan Devlin, Habitat’s executive director, had come to rely on Ms. Madison, so when she learned they were about to lose her, she offered a contract position at \$12.50/hour, beginning February 1, 2010. Ms. Madison accepted, despite the pay cut, because “I love the job,” she says. “It’s so nice to work for a nonprofit and feel I’m doing something positive for my community.”

“I am in a job I love and obtaining the education I have always wanted, thanks to the Upper Shore Workforce Investment Board.”

She credits her current employment to the skills she learned and the confidence she gained through the USWIB’s workshops, where she “learned how to stand out to prospective employers and how to sell myself as the best candidate.”

Ms. Madison’s experience highlights several lessons. First, volunteering can open the door to employment. In this case, Ms. Madison learned about USWIB through a fellow volunteer. Second, volunteering is a great way to make connections: Habitat’s executive director is a USWIB member, which helped ease the transition to the Senior Community Service Employment Program. And finally, Ms. Madison learned that

the workforce investment system is a path to more than employment – through USWIB’s assistance, she is pursuing her longtime dream of higher education, attending Chesapeake College. Funds from the American Reinvestment and Recovery Act paid her tuition last year; with those monies now spent, USWIB is using its dislocated worker funds from the Workforce Investment Act to cover Madison’s tuition and books. She is on her way to completing the 33 credits she needs to earn a Business Technology Certificate, which will help her in her current job as well as in future endeavors. “All of my dreams have come true,” Ms. Madison concluded. “I am in a job I love and obtaining the education I have always wanted, thanks to the Upper Shore Workforce Investment Board.”

Marilyn Baldwin, Western Maryland



“I loved my job, and I felt awful,” recalled Marilyn Baldwin about getting laid off. “I’m 55 years old, and I didn’t think anybody would hire me because of my age.” Thirteen other workers – one of whom had worked there for 50 years – lost their jobs in that October 2006 downsizing at Statton Furniture in Hagerstown, and further layoffs followed. Ms. Baldwin had been at Statton six years, rising from customer service to stockroom manager.

The Western Maryland Consortium wrote to offer retraining under the Trade Assistance Act. That mailing brought Ms. Baldwin to the Consortium's Hagerstown office. The Consortium staff "helped me figure out what I wanted to do and who would offer the training. They told me my business administration degree was a dinosaur and advised me to go back to school. I went to a few classes, thought about what I wanted to do. They had all these great self-taught classes. I had used computers, but I didn't know what I knew. Sharon Swope at the Consortium helped me do a resume, and she also helped my husband. She really knows what people want and what they don't want. It gives you a lot of confidence." After completing computer training at the Consortium, Ms. Baldwin earned her Paralegal Certificate at Hagerstown Community College (HCC) in May 2008, winning the Award of Excellence for maintaining straight A's. Until she began her studies at HCC, Ms. Baldwin "spent every day at the Consortium as if it were a job. I went there early in the morning and stayed until they closed. They served coffee and made it seem like it was a job. What I was doing was self-training on the computer and they had newspapers there and I looked for a job. That way I didn't have to sit at home and rot – it gave me the feeling I had a job." Now she's working full-time, for an attorney in nearby Waynesboro PA. "I found it through my teacher at HCC – she emailed our class that this job was available. A lot of our class applied for it. I put on a cover letter, sent off my trusty resume, sent a follow-up letter. I really love it. I like the speed of it; it's busy, you really have to keep things moving." Ms. Baldwin praises the Consortium staff. "Cathy Bergeman, my case manager, would always say 'Oh, you're so awesome,' which you really need to hear when you've lost your job. They brought in speakers, consultants, people who gave training tips. They talked about what to wear, how to wear my hair ... I'd been in a factory and had been wearing jeans for a long time. The Consortium referred me to the community college. I got handed off from one nice person to the next – they all knew their jobs really well." Before she lost her job, Ms. Baldwin had never heard of the workforce development system. Now, she says, "If I ever need to get another job, I'd definitely go back to the Consortium."

Minnesota

Leah

After getting married in 2003, Leah moved to Fergus Falls to begin her new life with her husband. At that time, she visited the WorkForce Center to understand the employment opportunities available in her new hometown. She secured full-time employment shortly thereafter, working with a company called Detail at Retail, which provided electrical services in Home Depot stores. After two years, the company announced it was going out of business due to economic hardship, meaning that Leah would soon be without work and without health insurance.



She returned to the WorkForce Center as a dislocated worker, enrolling and initiating counseling with Michelle, a DW program counselor. She decided to return to school in the Health Information Technician program at North Dakota State College of Science. After being laid off in May of 2005, she began school the following August. She found a part-time job at a local hospital to supplement her husband's income. In addition to counseling, the Dislocated Worker program offered support by paying her tuition and purchasing books for her program. After graduating, Leah applied for a position as a tumor registrar with Lake Region Healthcare. Just before Christmas, Leah was offered the position. Leah now collects and records information related to cancerous and benign tumors, carefully documenting them into a central database. Each state then shares this information with the national center, where medical doctors and personnel select the most appropriate treatment for

specific tumors. Leah recognizes that her job impacts every individual who currently has or will have cancer, along with the families and friends of these individuals. Leah put it best: “I am thrilled and honored to be a tumor registrar. I am excited to go to work and be a small part of something so big that will benefit people beyond my lifetime.”

Mary McCormack

My name is Mary McCormack; I was laid off from TRW Automotive in Winona because my job moved to Mexico. When my employer announced the layoff, representatives from the Winona WorkForce Center came to talk with us, informing us of the training programs that would be available.

Thanks to the Dislocated Worker program, I enrolled in the Medical Assistant Program at Western Technical College in La Crosse. My counselor and staff members with the WorkForce Center were patient and encouraging, always urging me forward. In the beginning, I often felt frustrated, as it is not easy to make a snap decision on a career change. I graduated in December of 2009 and am now working part-time, gaining great experience and unbelievable knowledge! Ellen, my Dislocated Worker program counselor, keeps in touch with me, letting me know of other job opportunities that are available and that will fit into my schedule. I am thankful to be employed and no longer collecting Unemployment Insurance benefits.

As a medical assistant I work for a doctor with Integrative Healthcare of Winona. In my job, I escort patients to their exam rooms, record vital signs, draw blood, ensure appropriate inventory for the lab, and supervise the front desk. I work with a wonderful group of people; each of my co-workers takes the time to explain the information I need to do my job well.

I am thankful for the help Winona WorkForce Center and our taxpayers’ dollars offered, allowing me obtain my education. I would not have been able to afford it on my own after losing my job. I do wish that we were not losing so many jobs to other parts of the world.

Mary Anne Morris



In April of 2009, Mary Anne Morris was laid off from her job as a receptionist/administrative assistant at a property management company after working there for four and a half years. Mary Anne spent most of her adult years raising her four sons and working in various jobs such as attendance/lunch supervisor at her children’s school and in the HR department for a retail business. She mainly worked to contribute to her household income, but expressed to her Dislocated Worker program counselor that she was not necessarily fulfilled. Mary Anne didn’t have the chance to go to

college as she was busy raising her family.

Being laid off ended up being a blessing in disguise. Now that her sons have grown up and she was without a job, she finally had the chance to realize her dream of going to college. When Mary Anne came into the program she was unsure of the career she wanted to pursue, but knew that it had to be within the realm of healthcare.

Mary Anne was proactive in her career exploration and attended education and job fairs to see “what was out there.” She ended up narrowing down to two choices, and actually wrote up two training proposals, one for the Electroneurodiagnostic Technician (ENDT) program at the Minneapolis Community and Technical College, while the other was for Health Information Technology at Anoka

Technical College. After learning more about both careers, she felt she was better suited for the ENDT program, where she would be working more directly with patients.

Mary Anne started school with ARRA funding. Since then, Mary Anne has blossomed, maintaining a 4.0 GPA and making the dean's list. She has even been asked to tutor other students in this intense coursework. Mary Anne completed an internship at the University of Minnesota ENDT clinic last semester and has started another one in St. Cloud this summer. On July 8th, Mary Anne was offered a part-time job at Abbott Northwestern Hospital in the Noran clinic, earning a higher salary than she ever had in the past.

In her words, "For the first time in my life, I feel I am doing something for me." Christina Lira, her DW program counselor, had the opportunity to watch her come from a place of uncertainty and a lack of fulfillment, to a place of confidence and wholeness. Mary Anne expressed that she is finally working in her "dream job."

Tim

Tim was working as a senior electronic technician at Watlow Controls in Winona when he was laid off in December of 2008. After eleven years with the company, this layoff came as a shock to Tim, who expected to retire from the company.

Before he was laid off, Tim was referred to the Winona County WorkForce Center to apply for Unemployment Insurance benefits. Tim promptly began working with a counselor with the DW program, who discussed all of the services available to him.

At that point, Tim thought he was going to go into the same career—just working someplace else. While job searching, he found that electronic technician positions were non-existent and was getting very concerned about the lack of available opportunities.

One of Tim's friends suggested he attend a solar energy workshop at Winona Senior High sponsored by Winona County Environmental Services on July 22, 2009. Tim remembers this date because during this workshop, he had a "light bulb moment." Since he had owned his own business prior to working at Watlow, and was interested in solar energy, he decided to start his own solar business. His counselor enrolled Tim into Project GATE II, a pilot program designed to support dislocated workers who are at least 45 years of age with launching or growing their own businesses. Through Project GATE II, Tim worked with the local Small Business Development Center representative for assistance with financial issues relating to business ownership.

On January 15, 2010, the State of Minnesota notified Tim and his business partner that their company, Winona Renewable Energy, LLC, was officially recognized and that they were legally able to conduct business. Tim's financial outlook is good. He anticipates that his annual income will be more than double that of his previous job.

When asked, Tim states "the Dislocated Worker program was helpful. My case worker informed me of job leads, and identified resources when I decided to start a business. Being part of the Project GATE II Program allowed me to fully concentrate on business start-up while continuing to



"The Dislocated Worker program was helpful. My case worker informed me of job leads, and identified resources when I decided to start a business."

receive Unemployment Insurance benefits.” The 15 months from date of layoff to business start-up was the perfect length of time to start his company.

Nebraska

Cherri

Cherri worked as a Materials and Production Planner at a factory in Dewitt until the plant moved production to China. Although Cherri had a Bachelor’s Degree in Business Administration, she lacked the Teaching Certificate that would allow her to teach business classes at a high school or college level. Cherri had done all her research on what she needed to do to get a teaching certificate and found that the University of Nebraska at Kearney had a great program. Cherri started classes and is now finishing up her student teaching. She will graduate in December 2010. During this education adventure Cherri has faced the challenges of cancer and treatments, plus relocating her family to York, Nebraska for her husband’s job. Cherri has always kept a positive attitude and her grades and college performance have been more than outstanding.

Charlie

Charlie had lost his job in Omaha. While enrolled in the Greater Omaha (Tri County) Dislocated Worker program, he had a stroke and is very fortunate that through therapy he was able to minimize the stroke’s affects. The WIA case manager referred Charlie to Experience Unlimited to develop networking skills. They provided him with several job leads. Charlie’s 16 year old son had a friend whose dad worked for a company that proved to be the most successful lead. The company interviewed Charlie and hired him for a position earning \$55,000 per year in Lincoln. He and his wife bought a house in the Ashland/Gretna area so they can be near his son as well as close to work.

Nevada

Judy

Judy was employed in the medical field for seven years but she found herself suddenly unemployed due to current economic conditions. Although she looked for work for 2 years, she couldn’t seem to secure employment. She enrolled in the WIA Program in the fall of 2009 at Catholic Charities of Southern Nevada. After applying for many positions it became apparent that she lacked the self confidence and computer skills to be successful in the work place. Partnering with Nevada Job Connect we were able to provide the co-funding for Judy to attend short term pre-vocational training. Before completing her training Judy was offered and is currently employed full time as an administrative assistant.

Nevada Partners Inc. Graduates

Nevada Partners’ WIA Adult and Dislocated Worker Department has been partnering with Build Nevada, a pre-apprenticeship program currently placing participants in weatherization and energy auditing jobs, to provide work support and on-the-job training. A female graduate, who enrolled at Build Nevada after being laid off as a casino slot floor employee, is working for \$10.60 an hour for a contractor as a weatherization technician, helping to make homes more energy-efficient. A male graduate, who had been laid off as a security guard, got a job as a laborer installing flooring for a home construction firm, making \$15.75 an hour. Another male graduate, previously employed as a head steward at Mandalay Bay, got a job as a weatherization technician for \$10.60 an hour. These

are beginning jobs in construction and green technology, and graduates will earn substantially more with experience.

New Mexico

Mr. B

Mr. B a dislocated worker previously employed for Qunu as an Engineering Manager, and unemployed for seven months obtained WIA services at Workforce Connection of Central NM (WCCNM). Mr. B falls in the category of a dislocated worker because of the high wages he earned, he is overqualified which restrict him from obtaining an available position by various employers. He participated in the ARRA pilot project "Pathways to Success." Upon successful completion of the program, Mr. B was hired at a financial software solutions company called Mimics. The company is very pleased with his performance and has assigned him to his first big project/client, which will be in Jamaica.

Mr. M

Mr. M a dislocated worker from PNM unemployed since September 2009, was seeking work as an electrician's helper. The WCCNM Business Consultant specializing in the Construction Field Industry conducted outreach in construction and determined that jobs for electricians' helpers are currently in low demand, but licensed electricians are in great demand. WCCNM Center provided Mr. M assessments, which he scored extremely well on; he was referred to the Association of Builders & Contractors to register for the Electrician's Apprenticeship Program. Mr. M was hired as an Electrician's Helper/Apprentice through the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) OJT contract tying him to a sponsored Apprenticeship with Corbin's Electric. This is sponsored apprenticeship which allows for full benefits start of employment. His employer, Corbin's Electric is thrilled with his performance. Corbin's Electric is in fact, so enthusiastic with the WIA program that they are now seeking to sponsor additional apprentices in partnership with WIA.

Male Dislocated Worker

A Dislocated Worker laid off since August 2009, applied for WIA services in December 2009 from the Deming Workforce Connection through the Southwestern Area Workforce Development Board. He requested assistance in receiving certification at the National Commission for the Certification of Crane Operators (NCCCO), as most potential employers require certification in order to operate cranes in New Mexico, or any other state. NMWCC Case Manager helped him with his WIA application and researched approved training providers for the NCCCO certification and determined none available in New Mexico, but did locate a training provider in Phoenix called Tower Crane School. The school submitted proper documentation to the SAWDB Administrative Entity our dislocated worker was approved to enroll by mid- January 2010. He completed his Employment Development Plan and assessments then started his training on February 8, 2010 in Arizona. He completed his training early March and received his NCCCO certification and was hired on March 15, 2010 by Western Industrial of Apache Junction, Arizona as a crane operator.

Mrs. A

Mrs. A, a referral from a community advocacy organization to the NMWC in Ruidoso, received an initial assessment and registration then began working with the NMWC Skills Team to access her current skills, abilities and interests. Mrs. A. previously assisted her spouse in their construction business during their entire marriage but as the economy took a downturn so did their marriage. Mrs. A suddenly found herself in transition from a married mother of four minor children (one with

special needs) to a single mother needing employment outside the home. Upon referral from the Skills Team, Mrs. A was determined eligible for and in need of WIA training services as a Displaced Homemaker. The NMWC Skills Team worked one-on-one with Mrs. A assisted her with job search, updating her resume, and interviewing skills. Initially, Mrs. A was in an emotionally frail state as her self-confidence and self worth had been shaken, several disappointing interviews and tears, she worked with NMWC Skills Team, and overcame many obstacles, interviewed and was placed for an OJT by Foster Care Industry. She was hired in the position of office manager with the Foster Care Center. The job was completely different from any position she had held previously, but she was excited to work in a job where she was going to be able to help children. Mrs. A successfully completed her OJT and has since received increases in pay and additional responsibilities. If you ask Mrs. A how she made it through this rough period of her life as a displaced homemaker, she will tell you that it was the support and services she received from the staff at the NMWC who helped her become self sufficient and self confident again.

North Carolina

Kim Arrowood



In June 2009 Kim Arrowood came to the Henderson County JobLink Career Center looking for a new direction. Arrowood's life had drastically changed. She had worked for an accountant firm, as an office manager/network administrator since Aug 1998 and truly enjoyed her job. However, her life changed when she was informed that she was being laid off.

Through WIA counseling Arrowood decided that she wanted to get a certificate in the Office Administration with a Medical Office Certificate so she could make herself the most marketable individual in a wide variety of fields while also using her existing office background. She enrolled in the Office Administration Medical Office Certificate program at Blue Ridge Community College. She excelled in all of her classes and constantly demonstrated the desire to be successful in every possible task. In May 2010 she graduated and earned her certificate.

Shortly after completing the program, Arrowood was offered and accepted a position with Minute Man Products as an Administrative Assistant to the Executive Officers. This was made possible because of her previous office experience, her recent dedication to completing a certificate program, and above all, a positive can do attitude that she has carried through this entire process.

Roger Lewis

On November 16, 2007, Roger Lewis was enrolled into the WIA Dislocated Worker program after being laid off from a manufacturing company. He was sponsored for training in the HVAC program at Wayne Community College by the WIA Dislocated Worker Program. He earned his certification and is currently a Weatherization Specialist with WAGES (Wayne County's Community Action Agency) in Goldsboro, NC. Now that he has accomplished his training goal, he is looking forward to a brighter future and greater opportunities ahead.



When discussing his new job, Lewis says he is very happy in his new career. He states, that he finds the work at WAGES particularly rewarding because he is helping the neediest in his community and the environment at the same time. The WAGES Weatherization Program is involved in reducing the energy burden for low-income households through client education, air sealing, and adding insulation where practical. To insure client safety, the program also checks for hazards, lead-based paint, mold and mildew, carbon monoxide, and ventilation. Once a program that just replaced windows and doors, weatherization is now more involved with evaluation of the home and client as it relates to overall energy usage.

Lewis said, “I would like to thank those in the WIA program and Wayne Community College who gave me this chance to pursue a new career. I came to the Wayne County JobLink at the age of 57, a high school graduate and an unemployed factory worker. I want to thank the WIA staff who encouraged and guided me throughout my journey toward a successful career change. Being HVAC trained and certified has opened up many new opportunities for me.”

Jennifer Fox



Jennifer Fox’s past work history consisted of several manufacturing jobs which have resulted in lay-offs. After her last lay-off in 2008, she explored the idea of returning to school to be a teacher in hopes this would provide her with a steady career in a field she would enjoy.

She enrolled at Mitchell Community College and earned an Associate Degree in Elementary Education. After graduation, she began seeking employment in the local school systems as a teacher assistant. Unfortunately, school budgets were being cut at that time and the opportunity to work in this area did not materialize.

She began working in a part-time teacher assistant position at A Better Place Christian Academy where she has been for the past eight months. Fox enjoys her interaction with the children. WIA provided her the opportunity to move into a more fulfilling career. Her long-term goal is to continue on for a Bachelor Degree in Education to be a licensed teacher.

Magdalena

Magdalena Little came to the Montgomery County JobLink Career Center after losing her job at a hosiery manufacturer. She received assistance through the WIA Dislocated Worker Program.

Little enrolled in the Dental Assisting Curriculum at Montgomery Community College. On July 29, 2009, Little completed the requirements for an Associate’s Degree in Dental Assisting. On October 2, 2009, she met the requirements of the Dental Assisting National Board’s (DANB) Certified Dental Assistant (CDA) or General Chairside (GC) examinations.

On November 30, 2009, she entered training related employment with Sparkling Smiles of Asheboro, NC as Certified Dental Assistant. In March 2010 she began employment with Moore County Dental Care Center in Southern Pines, NC and received a substantial increase in salary.



Derwin Roberson



In June 2009 Derwin Roberson applied for WIA services in the Dislocated Worker Program in the Cumberland County Local Area and started classes in August. He was one of the first participants to receive training assistance under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act from the Cumberland County Local Area. He was fortunate to enter the WIA Dislocated Worker Program at just the right time.

In December 2009 Roberson graduated with honors and his grades placed him on both the Dean's and President's Lists. In May 2010 he obtained a Basic Plumbing Certificate and became a Licensed General Contractor. He was hired with Coffman Plumbing as a full-time plumber earning \$12.00 an hour in June.

Jennifer Collier

Jennifer Collier worked many jobs in retail, fast food, and manufacturing businesses, but always had a desire to become a registered nurse. She took the first step to achieve this goal in 2001, enrolling in nursing assistant classes at Piedmont Community College (PCC). Over several years, she took all of the prerequisites for entrance into the nursing program. The goal of a nursing degree, however, was out of her reach; Jennifer was married and raising a family and she could not afford to attend school while working full-time.



In August 2005 Collier's job in manufacturing was downsized, and she was suddenly without employment. She had faced unemployment before and she was always able to find another job at another place, but she wanted this time to be different. Collier did not want just another job; she wanted a career. She enrolled in nursing classes at PCC and was assisted for a period of time with tuition and supplies from the Employment Security Commission. As she entered her final year of nursing school, those benefits ran out, and she was left wondering how she could afford to make her dream a reality. Collier hated the thoughts that all of her hard work and time were about to go to waste. She then received information about Human Resources Development classes offered at the Caswell County JobLink Career Center. She completed the Orientation to Health Care Careers and was referred to Workforce Investment Act program for additional assistance.

In 2009 Collier received the Bachelor of Science degree in Nursing from North Carolina Central University. She graduated Cum Laude and was inducted into the international nursing honor society, Sigma Theta Tau. She went to work at Duke University Hospital and plans to continue on her path of education in 2011 with Grand Canyon University online courses to acquire a Master of Science in Nursing-Nursing in Leadership in Health Care Systems. She is also enrolled in the final two classes at PCC to receive an Associate Degree in Business Administration.

Collier credits the WIA Dislocated Worker Program and services she received at the Caswell County JobLink Career Center with helping her to get to where she is now. She said "she now has an exciting, fulfilling career that enables her to make a difference in the lives of many."

Johnathan Horne



Johnathan Horne was laid off from a local mill just over a year ago. He went to the Employment Security Center (ESC) where a representative from Montgomery JobLink suggested he take a skills assessment. The assessment indicated his strengths were in the nursing field.

He studied for and obtained his Medication Technician license. He applied at Sandy Ridge Assisted Living in Candor and was hired as a Medication Technician/Patient Care Assistant.

“I never pictured myself making a living in the nursing field,” said Horne. It turns out he really enjoyed his work, so he decided to learn more.

He inquired about a Health Care Specialist class offered at Montgomery Community College (MCC). In six months, he earned a certificate in Nurse Assisting I, Medication Aide and Geriatric Aide.

Ohio

Dan Edwards

In 2009, Dan Edwards was laid off from his position with Goodrich Aircraft Wheels and Brakes in Troy, Ohio (Area 7). He was in need of a job and Innovative Scientific Solutions, Inc., an engineering research and development company, was looking to hire a new employee. Edwards was hired through the WIA Project HIRE Program. The program, an ARRA-funded initiative, assists dislocated workers to find jobs by providing up to \$6,000 in on-the-job training (OJT) to employers. Through his OJT, Edwards now has a fulltime job with Innovative Scientific Solutions creating state-of-the-art prototypes to measure force.

Shawn Eltringham of Salem had been in the workforce since graduating from Leetonia (Ohio) High School in 1993. However, all that changed in January 2009, when she was laid off from American Standard where she worked for 11 years. With her layoff and her husband (who also worked at American Standard) being cut back to four days a week, Eltringham felt she needed to pursue higher education so she could move out of manufacturing and factory labor positions. She decided to pursue an associate’s degree in accounting at Kent State University. In July 2009, Eltringham was determined eligible for Trade Readjustment Assistance (TAA/TRA), but she was told that funds would not be available until January 2010. Disappointed, she turned to Mahoning and Columbiana Training Association (MCTA) in Area 17. MCTA stepped in with ARRA stimulus funds and paid for her tuition until her TAA/TRA funding became available. In September 2009, thanks to MCTA and ARRA funds, Eltringham was able to begin her studies at Kent State University–Salem.

Puerto Rico

Male Dislocated Worker

Dislocated worker visited the Mayaguez One Stop Center on January 23, 2009 in order to get the skills needed to be more competent in the world force. He had a High School Diploma and was a dislocated worker from the Holiday Inn Hotel, where he had worked as Security Manager. After being evaluated, he was referred to receive an Individual Training Account to study Digital Graphic Design and Development of Web Pages. Upon completion of the course and after unsuccessfully seeking for a job, this dislocated workers decided to establish his own business: Café Cibernético Patria. Then

some of his employees are also our participant's, since Mr. Morales presented us a proposal to hire personnel. We also helped him prepare a brochure for his store. Currently this man is a new small business owner contributing to the Mayaguez economy.

Male Dislocated Worker

Southwest Local Area present the success history of a 41-year-old dislocated worker resident in the Municipality of Cabo Rojo, who was laid off from the Bristol Myers of Mayaguez on May 30, 2008. He visited the Local Area and was referred to several jobs without been hired. He chose explore Computer and Network Specialist training and received and ITA's to complete it. As part of the training, this dislocated worker completed his required practice hours in Hewlett Packard Company in Aguadilla, emphasizing his responsibility, professionalism and commitment to his work. This company then hired him as R&F Technician IV position since August 2, 2010, with an annual salary of \$ 30,800. The Southwest Local Area is proud of this man success as a result of retraining provide through the One Stop Center.

Male Dislocated Worker

This Electrical Engineer was laid off for economic reasons by the company he was working for 10 years due to bankrupt. Case management determines that he needs upgrading their knowledge in Photovoltaic Electricity, because all jobs vacancies in its branch requested engineers with expertise in the area of photo voltage. In order to update their skills was referred to the Puerto Rico Polytechnic University, where successfully finished his training. Later with credentials in hand, was referred to a new job offer and was hired.

Female Dislocated Worker

A single mother attended the Ponce One Stop Center concerned in obtain a job opportunity. She had been recently dislocated from a textile manufacture industry located in Ponce. During the first interview the Case Manager recommended her to the redefine her occupational goal to obtain a credential in an occupation that will provide increased employment opportunities. She was oriented about the high grow occupations and in the ITA accounts. Although his priority was obtaining a job, she realized that needed to upgrade her academic profile, which was high school diploma. This young mother decided to obtain a Credential in Licensed Practical Nurse (LPNs) from the Ponce Paramedical College.

During the vocational training her grade evaluations were excellent; she was outstanding for her dedication, professionalism and effort, keeping excellent grade average. After training she took the Nursing Examination Board which she approved in the first attempt. She returned to the One Stop Center and as part of the follow-up services she received assistance in writing her resume, a presentation letter and a professional portfolio. The Case Manager referred her to a few job opportunities. Finally and after some jobs efforts she was hired in the Ponce Women Hospital as Licensed Practical Nurse (LPNs).

South Dakota

Rose Kallappa

The Huron Local Office has known Rose Kallappa off and on since 2001. Having spent years struggling to find and keep jobs, her history included a drug felony that made it impossible for her to qualify for subsidized housing. Her two small children relied on her completely as she almost



never received child support payments. With no car and no driver's license, her mobility was restricted. Adding to the stress, she attempted to help out a relative in potentially violent circumstances.

Finally, last winter while working part-time as a waitress for \$4.50/ hour plus tips, she began to realize that she had to make a real change, a lasting change, for herself and for her children. She came back to DOL to talk about possibilities and began her new journey with the New Year, taking the assessments and enrolling in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP). It was a slow process and she faltered from time to time, neglecting her commitments at the local learning center.

The spring came with bad news; the café where she worked was being sold to a new owner and Rose did not expect to be kept on staff. She hoped at least to earn a bonus promised by the current owner for all employees who remained working until the sale date. Her fears were realized in May. Now unemployed, Rose focused on her job search (required by SNAP) and on preparing to take the National Career Readiness Certificate (NCRC) tests. She completed a Job Search Assistance Program workshop and improved her ability to stick to a schedule at the learning center.

Discussions with DOL staff and Rose's assessment results revealed a strong interest in types of work often considered non-traditional for women. Electrical work, carpentry and welding were all being considered when a new welding course was offered in Huron. Considering her success on her first two NCRC tests and her improved commitment to her future, both the staff at the DOL office and the learning center encouraged her to enroll. Rose did very well in the welding class and had great attendance. Best of all, before she even completed the course, Trussbilt, a local manufacturer hiring entry-level metal fabricators, hired her as a welder, full-time at \$10/hour. After probation she will qualify for benefits. Money is still very tight and working full-time makes it hard to complete her last NCRC test. Her change was a long time coming, but now Rose has a marketable skill, one she can develop to improve her future and those of her children.

Tennessee

Heather Smith

Heather Smith always wanted a career in medicine. She obtained her CNA license and worked at minimum wage for three years. Then, she decided it was time to continue her education in hopes of a better paying job. So she applied for and was accepted to TTC Hohenwald's LPN program. With WIA's assistance for travel, IV Therapy, and state board fees, Heather finished in the top of her class. She accepted a job, as LPN, with Buffalo Valley in Hohenwald and earned \$14 per hour, nearly a 50% increase from her previous wages and another step up on the healthcare occupational ladder.

Christina Skelton



In 2008, Christina Skelton worked two jobs and her husband worked for Nissan. Later in the year, Christina was laid off from one job. Also, her second job, as a substitute teacher, was not able to supply her with enough hours. In addition, her husband was laid off from Nissan. Since Christina and her husband had two daughters (ages seven and eleven), the family struggled to pay its bills (house/car payments and utility bill). Christina was encouraged by family and friends to see a career advisor at the Career Center; which she did. Completing her assessments, she entered the nursing program at the Tennessee Technology Center in Hohenwald. While Christina was in school, she received mileage reimbursement, childcare, and other

WIA support. After graduating, in April 2010, and after improving her resume, she received several job interviews. Christina was offered a job at Complete Care Choice in August. While working there, she was offered nursing jobs at CCA in Clifton, at Wayne Medical Hospital, and a part-time position at Vanderbilt.

Shannon Powell

Shannon Powell had worked retail management for most of her career. Each job was a step up. She moved to Tennessee and was hired as the Store Manager for Circuit City in Spring Hill.

About the time she got the store going, Circuit City closed the chain. Shannon stayed until the end: helping close the store, bringing in Career Center personnel to meet her employees, and finally helping her employees make important decisions. Then it was time for Shannon to take care of herself and her family (including a spouse and three children). Soon, even her spouse became unemployed.



Her dream was to be a nurse. So she soon met all of the Career Center's requirements, applied for school, met the school's requirements, and waited for acceptance from TTC-P and her Career Center Scholarship. Shannon was good to go and enthusiastic, yet reality soon hit – she had to spend a lot of time studying. In fact, Shannon had no idea how hard the course would be. Before long, money problems were followed by family problems which were followed by car problems.

Yet, Shannon graduated during May with a Practical Nursing diploma and was ranked near the top of her class. She took and passed the IV Therapy class; next came the NCLEX review class. Finally, she nervously took her licensure exam and passed with flying colors. (She even showed her license to Career Center personnel.) Shannon became employed as a home health care nurse -- the job she wanted. If anyone were to ask Shannon how she became a nurse, part of her long answer would include the Maury County Career Center's help to make her dream come true. Not content with being an LPN, Shannon wants to take another "step up" to become an RN before her MSN.

Terri Marshall



Terri Marshall was Fisher employee in Linden, TN. After realizing that the plant was going to close, she came into the Career Center. A single mother, Terri wanted a stable career to support herself and her daughter. So, she met with her career advisor, started her assessments, and struggled with the WorkKeys Test. After Ken Powis worked with Terri, she received a Gold certificate and was accepted to the Special LPN Class in Perry County. Her instructors commented about how much time Terri spent studying. She kept studying and the WIA kept helping – it helped her with travel reimbursements, tires, and tutoring services. Having graduated and passed her board, she is now working at Perry Community Hospital in Linden, TN. Terri is an inspiration to her daughter and to everyone who dreams of a better life. Anything is possible with determination. According to Terri, "it took a lot of prayer and with God's help, I got through it."

Steve Taylor

Steve Taylor came into the Career Center after being laid as a track hoe operator for several months. He was nervous about his unemployment insurance ending soon, and he needed a job. Staff at the Lawrence County Career Center assisted Steve in developing a resume which was e-mailed to an employer who called him the next day. He went to work earning \$22 per hour and was very appreciative of all the assistance he received at the Career Center.



Bill Frye

Bill Frye was laid off from Dura where he had worked for 17 years; so he looked into truck-driver training. Already working two days a week at McDonald's, he needed more income; so, he applied with Johnson Controls, was hired, and has been employed there for seven months. His job at Johnson Controls started at \$12 per hour; since then, however, he has received a raise. He states that he is fortunate to have a full-time job.

Jeremy Holley

Jeremy Holley was laid off from Timken after he worked there for nearly three years. Most of his previous work experience was also in manufacturing. When Jeremy first came to the Career Center, he was already determined to become an EMT. He had also been serving as a volunteer fire fighter and was passionate about the field of emergency service.

In December, Jeremy completed the EMT program at Columbia State. His financial situation forced him to work at Frito Lay in Fayetteville; still, he was determined to work in the field for which he trained. In February 2010, Jeremy was hired as the Deputy Director of the Giles County Office of Emergency Management. He was told that of all the applicants, he was the only licensed EMT and that his licensure had played a big role in his securing the position. Jeremy is thrilled with his new job.

Wisconsin

Brenda

"Hello. My name is Brenda. I am a 45-year-old mother of six children and grandmother of one grandson. After working for a Central Wisconsin window company for 13 years, I was permanently laid off on August 28, 2008. My husband, John, lost his job at the same time. Both lay-offs were due to the economic downturn. Since then, our whole lives have changed. We both are taking classes at North Central Technical College in the Welding program. It is the best thing that has ever happened to us. I started slowly, having been out of school for 25 years. I was a little rusty, and I needed to brush up on my math and reading skills to pass the placement test. After just two months of study, I was ready and passed the Accuplace test and was accepted onto the wait-list for the Welding program. The following semester, I enrolled in the Welding program. Women in welding are considered to be in a non-traditional occupation.

Having learned all different kinds of welding, blueprint reading, metallurgy, and automated classes, I enjoy welding more and more every day. We have made a lot of fun things on the CNC plasma cutter, including holiday decorations that we sold to make money for our Welding Club. The Club earned

about \$1,500 for their work. Women do very well in welding, and enjoy it. I was proud of myself for how well I had done.”

Ed

Knowing what it's like to work at a company for 31 years and then losing your job, Ed is using that knowledge and empathy to help his former co-workers. The 52-year-old was working at the Janesville Assembly plant in December when the last Tahoe rolled off the line on December 23, 2008. He landed his new job as Employment Training Specialist in late January 2009. But for Ed, his new position isn't just a job — he lives with the highs and lows of each of the laid-off GM workers as he tries to find them suitable options for their futures. "Now, I'm building lives, not vehicles," he said. Ed went through all of the steps any unemployed worker would do including JobFit, assessments and orientations, which help him better relate to the dislocated workers.

Wyoming

Ray

Ray was an unemployed male who was laid off from his most recent employer, Northwinds of Wyoming.

He qualified for WIA services in the Dislocated Worker Program. Ray has mechanical abilities, but has worked in the methane industry doing pipeline and equipment operation. His skills offered minimal placement opportunities at the time of application and participation, as the methane industry was in a slump and the country's economic outlook was sliding. Ray researched the Diesel Mechanic program at Gillette College and requested assistance with funding for this program through the Gillette Workforce Center. Ray has completed the first year, though he is one class short of his certificate in Diesel Technology. Ray is going on for his certificate and his ASA in Diesel Technology. While attending school, Ray qualified for the State Diesel Skills Competition (Wyoming Skills USA Leadership and Skills Competition). He placed 2nd in the Diesel Competition and 3rd in the Extemporaneous Speaking competition. After the first year of schooling, Ray went to work for Windcreek Services as a shop and field hand. According to Workforce Specialist Kay Roth, he is making \$18.00/hr with no benefits, operating equipment and doing pipeline work, and using some of his diesel skills.

National Emergency Grant (NEG) Stories

Iowa

J.W.

J.W. had been out of work for almost a year when he was enrolled in the Emergency Public Jobs program in November 2008. His work history was somewhat sporadic before that and he was residing at a homeless shelter when I first met him. Mr. W also had limited transportation and was a recent parolee. But from the beginning of his involvement with the program, Mr. W displayed an eagerness to work and a willingness to whatever tasks he was assigned.

Mr. W's skills were utilized on several flood recovery/repair worksites. He obtained a number of skills through his work experience and others as well through fire and chainsaw safety training. Mr. W successfully completed his maximum hours of work experience during which he earned the respect of both his fellow workers and site supervisors.

Mr. W continued on into Phase 2 of the program and successfully completed Heavy Equipment training and achieved a NCCER Certified Operator credential. The participant eventually obtained a full time permanent position with the City of Cedar Rapids' Public Works Department currently making \$15.58 an hour. Both his training achievement and the network he established in his work experience led to this opportunity and subsequent employment.

Mr. W has expressed many times to himself and the rest of the staff, how EPJ changed his life around and that he would forever be thankful for the opportunity it provided him.

Male Dislocated Worker

A 26-year-old married man, with a small child and wife to support, had his life suddenly turned upside down, when he was laid off from a major manufacturer in early August of 2008. He had thought he would be there until his retirement, just like the generation before him had been. But that era is gone from our community and this young man was now faced with this reality. He recognized he had to do something different, if he were to survive in this new global economy. He opted for school. He started school on his own motivation. He knew it was going to be a difficult time financially for his family; but he knew the sacrifices he and the family were making now would pay off in the future. Although he thought he was prepared to live on the limited financial resources he had available to him while in school, through the Trade Assistance Act, his wife's newly found part time job and his part time job; the birth of his second child just prior to his second and final year of school put him into a panic. It was at this point that he accessed our region's ACE/Lennox NEG. This grant helped pay for the childcare that enabled him to finish school. Without this assistance, he told us, he would have dropped. Our WIA/NEG support didn't cover all of the weekly child care expenses, but came close (paid about 90 percent of the bill). This young man graduated in May 2010 in construction technology. And, one of the best parts about this young man, he is employed in his field, at a wage of \$17.00 per hour. This was his first educational experience beyond high school, made available to him through TAA and NEG. He's out of the tunnel and on the highway to success.

New Hampshire

Janet

Janet is a single mother of three laid off from the Wausau Paper Mill. Her new employment goal was to work in an office management position. Janet realized that after many years of working in a manufacturing environment she would need new skills to compete in a very tight labor market such as exists in the North Country of New Hampshire. Jane enrolled in the NEG Wausau Paper project and working with her WIA and Trade Act counselors, Janet was able to enroll in an Office Assistant Certificate program at White Mountain Community College. While maintaining a home for her children, she made time for study, attending classes and completing home work assignments, all along remaining upbeat and focused on her goal. Janet completed her training in May 2009. She updated her resume and in a short time was able to secure a position with a local hardware store as a full-time office manager earning \$9.50 per hour. The money is less than what she was making in the factory, but Jane is happy to finally have a job that she truly enjoys and grateful that she was able to find a local job when there are so few jobs available in the area.

Kevin

Kevin is a dislocated worker from Prime Tanning, a leather manufacturing company that closed in October 2008. Kevin worked for Prime Tanning for 13 years as a color wheel operator, earning \$15.12 an hour. This was a very specific position for which there was not an immediate labor market need in the Seacoast area where Kevin lives. Kevin enrolled in the Prime Tanning NEG project at the local NH Works office, where he received career counseling, resume assistance and job search advice. He was consequently able to secure a position with National Gypsum Company in Portsmouth NH for 40 hours a week earning \$18.79 an hour, a considerable achievement given the current state of the economy and the lack of manufacturing jobs in the area.

South Dakota

Carrie Mennis

Carrie Mennis felt she had been very lucky finding good jobs, considering her lack of a four-year college degree. During 13 years in various office/management jobs, she had acquired new skills in addition to learning typical office administrative duties. That string of good luck came to an end, however, when she learned her current company was closing business. Now she questioned her ability to become employed again, competing against individuals with college degrees in a very tough job market. Would her work history compare favorably when applying for the limited openings in small town Madison, South Dakota?

As she worked through the information provided for dislocated workers by DOL's Rapid Response Team, Carrie began to grasp the possibility that maybe her job loss was really an opportunity to continue her education and finally capture that degree. In-depth discussions with DOL staff assured her the Dislocated Worker Program could help her attain her education goal. Small as it is, Madison is home to Dakota State University, where Carrie spent a week talking to representatives in the admissions and financial aid departments, as well as several degree areas. Deciding to pursue an associate degree in Business Administration, Carrie suddenly found herself a college student again. Only two months later, she was offered a full-time job on the campus of South Dakota State University (SDSU) in nearby Brookings. With the encouragement of the career counselors at the DOL office, Carrie found a way to continue her education while accepting an entry-level secretary position in the electrical engineering department.

Noting her dedication to balancing school and work, the staff at SDSU encouraged Carrie to complete a bachelor's degree instead, which she completed this summer through Moorhead State University. Degree in hand, Carrie was promoted to a program coordinator position in the alternative power technologies group at SDSU. Her future plans include a master's degree in industrial management and continued employment at SDSU.

Trade Adjustment Act (TAA) Stories

Colorado

David

As an Army veteran and dislocated worker with TAA status, David was faced with a dilemma. After many years as a skilled manufacturing painter with a major corporation in Pueblo, that door closed. After a specially designed two week intensive Job Club with his laid-off colleagues, David wanted an opportunity to go to college but did not have the basic academic or computer literacy levels needed. Through services customized to meet his needs at Colorado Rural Workforce Consortium, David has begun college and now owns a computer. David is just one of many examples of how leveraging workforce funded programs with innovative staff intervention results in customer successes. Customer and dislocated worker, David, is pictured at the Pueblo Workforce Center.



Iowa

Female Dislocated Worker

A middle-aged, single mom of two teenagers, found herself unemployed for the third time since earning her AA degree. This last lay off met the criteria for a TAA petition. This time she was determined to turn this negative situation into a positive and enrolled at a 4yr institution to complete her BA degree. Even though the services available through a trade petition are excellent, as her luck would have it, she was commuting just under 50 miles per day to school; and was unable to receive mileage from TAA. She would be driving 48 miles per day round trip. Her UI benefits did not even cover the family monthly bills. There was absolutely no extra money to buy the gas to drive back and forth to school. Region 6 WIA dislocated worker program partnered with the trade program to provide the transportation assistance she needed to get back and forth to school. Even with the help of TAA, WIA, and her UI benefit, she realized she was going to need additional income to support herself and two teenage draughts while she was in school. After many discussions with her WIA case-manager it was decided that she look for a part time entry level position within an organization/company that could offer her advancement once she earned her degree. She looked diligently for work and after several rejects she was offered an entry level part-time job at a residential health care facility. The plan paid off for her in the end. Once she graduated with her BA in Human Services, she was offered a full time permanent position. She's now earning a self sufficiency wage, with good benefits. Without the "light" of gas money, she never would have been able to complete her degree. She's out of the tunnel and on the highway to success.

Male Dislocated Worker

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financially for his family; but he knew the sacrifices he and the family were making now would pay off in the future. Although he thought he was prepared to live on the limited financial resources he had available to him while in school, through the Trade Assistance Act, his wife's newly found part time job and his part time job; the birth of his second child just prior to his second and final year of school put him into a panic. It was at this point that he accessed our region's ACE/Lennox NEG. This grant helped pay for the childcare that enabled him to finish school. Without this assistance, he told us, he would have dropped. Our WIA/NEG support didn't cover all of the weekly child care expenses, but came close (paid about 90 percent of the bill). This young man graduated in May 2010 in construction technology. And, one of the best parts about this young man, he is employed in his field, at a wage of \$17.00 per hour. This was his first educational experience beyond high school, made available to him through TAA and NEG. He's out of the tunnel and on the highway to success.

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North Carolina

Kim Cox



In July 2007 Kim Cox found herself one of many textile workers who had lost their job due to plant operations being moved overseas. The plant where she was working as a Production Scheduler. Representatives from the Mountain Area JobLink Career Center met with Cox, and many of her co-workers on site, to discuss the options available to them through the JobLink Career Center and the WIA Dislocated Worker Program. Although she had over ten years of office experience, she knew a degree would be invaluable to compete successfully in today's tough job market. In addition to being given the opportunity to obtain an Associate's Degree in Office Systems Technology, Cox was encouraged to take classes in Medical Office Administration, because of the concentration of medical offices and facilities in the Asheville area. After starting classes, former Anvil employees were awarded the TAA Petition, which helped with both educational and living expenses while she completed her degree. In May 2009 Cox graduated with high honors from the Office Systems Technology Program. In April 2009 the department accredited her with the Academic Achievement Award.

Prior to graduation, Cox was hired to assist with the ARRA Summer Youth Employment Program putting her newly acquired database skills to work. While she completed the Medical Office Administration Diploma, she continued to work at the JobLink Career Center. In January 2010 the Mountain Area Workforce Development Board hired Cox on a permanent basis as an MIS Specialist. In May of 2010 she graduated from the Medical Office Administration Program. She continues her education on a part-time basis in the Web Technologies Associate Degree Program at Asheville-Buncombe Technical Community College where she anticipates graduating in 2012.

In addition to working as the MIS Specialist, she maintains five web sites including her own and her husband's who is a chainsaw artist.

Michael O'Kane Programming Logic Instructor said, "It is a pleasure to work with her". After reviewing an assignment Cox had submitted. He said, "A lot of people struggle with this material but even those who got everything working did not come up with the best, most elegant solutions...except for you! Nicely done."

Workforce Investment Act Youth Program *Participant Stories*³

Alaska

Rubin Castneda

Rubin Castneda came to The Learning Connection in the fall of 2009 at the invitation and nudging of a good friend to begin working on his GED. He was a 20-year old single parent that desired to start a career to allow him to provide long term for his son's needs. Rubin dropped out of school at a young age to work with his parents, immigrants from Mexico. Rubin never returned to school until he was let go at his long term job as a fleet manager for a rental car company. With a reading level of 12.9 + (twelfth grade, nine plus months) Rubin zipped through the GED test process. He enrolled in the Juneau Construction Academy and was placed into the Introduction to Welding class where he impressed his instructors with his hard work ethic. Rubin is always eager to learn all things new and he completed his WIA credential goal by obtaining not just one, but several credentials. His Commercial Driver's License (CDL) is one of the credentials that let him live his dream job of driving big rigs in Juneau as an employable driver for the stable year round transportation industry. AAA Moving Company has been his training ground and his employer knows they have found a good employee as they continue to promote and give him more responsibility. Rubin was funded by WIA Youth to obtain his CDL at the Tlingit and Haida Vocational Training and Resource Center (VTRC). He turned 21 in February 2010 and is the first student at the VTRC to finish as quickly as he did.

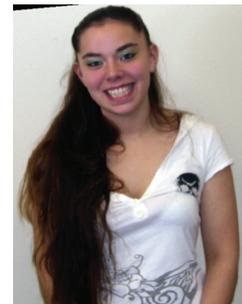


Rubin's credentials include:

- Alaska Commercial Driver License Class A with Haz Mat and NPT Endorsements
- Professional Truck Driver Institute
- OSHA 10 hour
- Scaffolding and Fall Protection
- Basic Carpentry
- Basic Welding
- First Aide/CPR
- GED
- State of Alaska Food Worker Card

Katrina Kearney

Kachemak Bay Campus in Homer announced that Katrina Kearney, a pre-nursing major, has been selected as a 2010 Coca-Cola Nationalist Finalist based on scores she earned in the annual All-USA Academic Team competition. As a finalist, she will receive a \$1,000 scholarship. This program is sponsored by the Coca-Cola Scholars Foundation and administered by Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society.



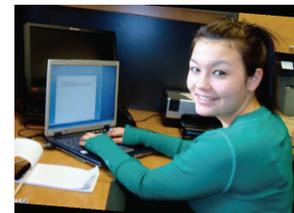
The Coca-Cola Scholars Foundation is one of the most recognized and respected

³ These stories were compiled from state Program Year 2009 WIA Annual Report Narratives. Each state's report is available at: <http://www.doleta.gov/performance/results/AnnualReports/annual-report-09.cfm>.

corporate-sponsored scholarships in America. Katrina earned her CNA license in December of 2007 while attending Homer Flex High School through the campus DOL sponsored WIA Youth Job Training Program. Upon graduation in 2008, Katrina was awarded the UA Scholars scholarship for being in the top ten percent of her class. While attending KBC, she maintained a 3.87GPA. Katrina has applied to UAA's A.A.S. Registered Nurse program for the fall of 2010. Katrina's goals are to get her Masters of Nursing degree in Public Health and work in rural Alaska.

Dylanne Nassuk

Dylanne Nassuk, a young woman from the remote village of Koyuk on the Bering Straits near Nome, worked as an Office Assistant for the EET Division in Nome, and successfully completed her Summer Youth Employment term. Dylanne also graduated this spring from Koyuk High School and will be attending the University of Alaska Anchorage this fall.



Alfred Charliaga



Alfred Charliaga is an 18-year-old Alaskan Native student in Kodiak, Alaska who did not graduate with his class. Alfred has taken four years of architectural drafting at Kodiak High School and is spending his summer working on an architectural project funded by the Workforce Investment Act and the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act. Alfred was recruited by the Kodiak Learning Café to complete his requirements for a high school diploma and to use his drafting skills to design a 3 dimensional version of the plans for a new high school in Kodiak. Alfred excelled academically by moving to a level 7 (the highest level) on KeyTrain® in Applied Mathematics and Reading for Information. He will earn high school credit for his academic performance. In addition, he learned how to use sketch up and sketch up pro to take two dimensional architect plans and build them into a 3-dimensional model. He has spent hours researching green design and is building a school that meets the needs of Kodiak students and the community, and is energy efficient. Alfred comes to work on time every day, is focused on the job, and is a team player. Alfred will complete all the requirements for his diploma by August 30 and is planning to pursue a career in architectural drafting. His success is directly related to the Kodiak Summer Youth Employment Program and the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act.

Alabama

The Dannon Project has impacted over twenty-five (25) children of convicted individuals with assistance in completing their GED preparation classes and over twenty-five (25) individuals received Certified Nursing Assistant training, which has been helpful in securing employment at various locations in the healthcare industry.

Shannon Flannigan

Shannon Flannigan, "I have really enjoyed the Dannon Project Certified Nursing Assistance Program (CNA). We did a lot of different skills and had different speakers to come to class to discuss different topics. I really loved the Pathways Out of Poverty lady that came. She talked to us about the different levels and aspects of poverty and how we see it in everyday life. I also liked Integrity in the Work Place. We talked out how to show integrity wherever you go at work or home - just have some type of integrity about yourself. We attended Nursing Assistant Solutions for the CNA training, which was

a lot of fun for me because I have always wanted to work in a hospital. I learned how to check blood pressure, tell time in military time, change a patient, weigh a patient, and so on. We even had clinical training at Cherry Hill Nursing home, and I really liked that because we got a change to interact with the elderly and to help them out as if I was really a CNA. I took my certification test and passed. I was so happy and excited because I had finally finished something that I had always wanted to do. Once I received my certification, the Dannon Project helped me get a job at East Glen Center for Nursing and Rehabilitation as a Certified Nursing Assistant, and I have been there ever since. I love what I do! Thanks Dannon Project!”

Arkansas

Lucas London

Lucas graduated from Hughes High School in Hughes, Arkansas in 2010 and was not able to find a job since he didn't have any relevant work experience or job skills. He heard about the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) Youth Programs while looking for work in the Arkansas Workforce Center at Forrest City and decided to fill out the appropriate paper work to set things in motion. After being determined eligible for the Temporary Assistance for Needed Families (TANF) Summer Work Experience Program, he was assigned to a maintenance position at Hughes High School. Lucas knew he would be a good employee if someone would just give him the chance to prove himself. By the end of the summer Lucas had impressed his supervisors to the extent that he was encouraged to apply for a full-time maintenance position with the high school. With the help and assistance of Career Advisor Neysa Pendergrass, Lucas now has a full-time job with Hughes High School.



Corey Starr



“My name is Corey Starr. I came from a broken home and have run the streets most of my life. I didn't have anything but the clothes on my back and a slim group of my friends to comfort me. The world around me told me, ‘Corey you will never make it or become anything’, but all of these thoughts and feelings changed when I was enrolled into the workforce youth program (Youth Employment Services). I am now employed full-time at the Montgomery County Library under the sweetest, most kind-hearted librarian who supports me in everything I do. I attend GED classes two days a week. My teacher has been so helpful and encouraging. I have now finished my GED. My future goal is to become a computer software engineer. I plan to start college in the spring. I know that I can complete my goal through the workforce system. Now, I have friends and everyone in the workforce to support and encourage me. I can and will succeed. Thank you, workforce, for giving me this opportunity to rise above the obstacles of life. I will take advantage and make you proud. I am very grateful to call all of you my friends and mentors.”

Johnny Myrick

Johnny Myrick is a special kind of success story. He comes from a broken family with a multitude of barriers. Like the good big brother he is, he came into our Booneville office with his younger sister to return her application for our program. He wasn't thinking of himself at the time and didn't realize that he too was eligible to work through the TANF-WIA Summer



Employment Program. Even though Johnny is only 19 years old, he had been out on his own for quite some time and had struggled to get by on money he earned doing odd jobs and a small allotment of food stamps. He dropped out of school in the 10th grade and now realizes how hard life can be without job skills or an education. With no one to guide or encourage him, Johnny did not have the confidence to return to school to earn his GED, or to secure a meaningful, steady job. That all changed when he walked through our doors. Johnny has had a tremendous transformation of his life over this short summer. His Case Manager, Ms. Kyle Cummings took Johnny under her wing and gave him the encouragement he needed to consider the possibilities that were available to him. He was hired to work in the maintenance department for the Booneville Human Development Center at 40 hours per week. He was so proud to be able to earn a decent wage, and he managed his earnings very carefully. His appreciation for his job has been evident in his attitude and commitment. He has taken his position very seriously and has proven himself to be invaluable to his Supervisor and his fellow staff members. They see the potential in this young man, and the respect he gives and receives has strengthened his confidence to the point that he is now ready to enroll in GED classes. His employer is so impressed with Johnny's work ethic and good manners that they are considering hiring him as a permanent full-time employee once he completes his GED. They have been very supportive of him and are willing to work around his class schedule if needed, in order for him to accomplish that milestone in his life. Once those around this fine young man saw the true value in him, he was able to see it in himself as well. His outlook on life has changed and he is now ready to take that next step into his new life. World, meet Mr. Johnny Myrick....

Colorado

Josefina



Josefina, age 19, who has never had a paying job, joined the WIA Youth program in February 2010 through the Colorado Rural Workforce Consortium. This high school senior, who is also a participant in the local high school Health Academy program, has a goal of one day becoming a family physician. Participating in the high school's Health Academy program requires simultaneously taking college courses and finding the resources to pay for classes. Josefina was able to successfully take and complete college courses with financial assistance from Pueblo's WIA Youth

program. Josefina is pictured giving her "Presentation of Learning" on her training work experience in the Building Your Work Career program. Next on Josefina's WIA Individualized Employment Plan, or IEP, is to attend Colorado State University - Pueblo.

Iowa

Mary

Mary enrolled as a 17-year-old single parent of a one year old. Mary dropped out of high school at an early age and had been attending alternative school off and on. Mary was receiving public assistance when she applied for services and had no driver's license. Mary had been kicked out of the alternative school on numerous occasions due to attendance rules. Mary lacked the motivation to finish her education. Mary was supported by multiple agencies as she worked towards a plan for her future. Each time Mary was kicked out of the alternative school, staff worked to get her re-enrolled and assisted her to get back on track moving towards high school completion. Two years into the enrollment, Mary sparked the needed motivation to earn her diploma. Mary sailed through the last

year of alternative school with “flying colors”. Once Mary obtained her diploma, she became interested in pursuing further education. As Objective assessment was completed, it was determined that Mary’s goal to work in the medical field was appropriate. Mary enrolled in the CNA course and successfully completed the clinical experience as well as the coursework necessary to obtain her state certification. Mary began working as a full time CNA. Mary is well on her way toward supporting her daughter by earned income without public assistance.

Female Youth

A 17 year old high school dropout and single mother, enrolled into the WIA youth program in Region 6 the fall of 2008. She was relying upon FIP & food stamps to meet her family’s basic needs. She began immediately working towards her GED with support services of child-care and incentive & bonuses. She had a long term nursing goal, which the WIA staff counseled her through the initial steps of getting started into a 75 hour C.N.A. course. Upon completion of the 75 hour course, she began working at a local nursing home while continuing to attend her GED sessions. She also continued on with her C.N.A studies & completed the 80 hour advanced CNA training course. In the spring of 2009 she successfully completed her GED. She was very proud of this accomplishment. With staff guidance she applied at the Iowa Veteran’s Home. She was once again very proud of herself when she was hired on full time. She put in a significant amount of hours & was able to achieve self-sufficiency for her family. The biggest bonus of it was that she really enjoyed the work!

Staff continued to counsel her as she considered pursuing additional training. She decided to begin the pre-requisites for LPN status. She was guided through the financial aid and enrollment process and began attending the spring semester of 2010, at the local community college. She hit a road block unfortunately when her step-father was diagnosed with terminal cancer. She was therefore forced to end her studies in order to see to her family. She has hopes of returning to her training sometime soon. In the mean time she has maintained her employment at the Iowa Veteran’s Home and has been able to establish new housing in a home for her family which she is very proud of. In providing follow up services to her she continues to express gratitude to the WIA program and happiness in regards to her current situation. She’s out of the tunnel and on the highway to success.

Sara

Sara participated in our summer job program during the summer of 2009. She was a young mother also attending the alternative high school. Sara earned her C.N.A. certification through the GAP assistance program prior to the summer. During the summer of 2009 she was enrolled in the Creating Futures Youth Program and received support and guidance as she transitioned from her alternative high school to college. She received assistance with funding for transportation. Sara will be completing the program as she is working full time as a C.N.A. earning \$12.25 per hour. She has put her plans for nursing school on hold but since she has worked as a C.N.A. for six months she plans on getting support in post program services to receive her certification as a medication aid.

Kentucky

Mallori Carter

Mallori Carter always knew that she wanted to work in the health care field as a registered nurse or a nurse anesthetist. During her senior year in high school, Mallori participated in a Medicaid nurse aide class, a program that prepares students to work in long term care facilities. She obtained her certification to become a nursing assistant and knew



immediately that she wanted to pursue this career. ARRA funds and WIA services through the Barren River Area Development District (ADD) gave Mallori the tools she needed to pursue a Bachelor of Science degree in nursing at Western Kentucky University. She found a position with the Medical Center in Bowling Green. Stimulus funds gave Mallori the opportunity to fulfill her dream and become self sufficient.

Sasha Burden



Sasha Burden gets to witness miracles every day as a registered nurse (RN) at Commonwealth Health Corp in Bowling Green. After Sasha graduated from Butler County High School she enrolled in Owensboro Community and Technical College, but she was financially unable to continue her vision of becoming a nurse without financial aid assistance. The Barren River ADD gave her the financial help she needed to finish her degree and become a full-time RN. Now Burden is making a difference in the lives of other people while achieving her dream.

Allen Cox Jr.

Allen Cox Jr., a Glasgow native, has thrived since completing the six-month Success Academy in Glasgow. The on-the-job training program teaches job skills, character education, career education, ethics and ACT preparation in order to prepare students for the workplace. The WIA program allowed Allen, a high school dropout, to go back to school while working at a local car dealership in the service department. Through the program he graduated and was hired as a full-time mechanic at Bailey Gibson Car Dealership in Glasgow. He plans to attend technical school at General Motors.



Mary Ray-Branam

When Mary Ray-Branam was only 16, she was a high school dropout, pregnant and dependent upon public assistance. She turned to Donna Dietz at Gateway Academy in Mayfield for guidance. Donna recommended the WIA youth program, funded through the West Kentucky Workforce Investment Board, to help Mary earn her diploma. Mary enrolled in the academy's youth program and received her diploma ahead of schedule. After giving birth in September 2009, she entered a paid-work experience through the WIA youth program at Mills Health and Rehab in Mayfield and completed the employer-paid CNA program. Upon completion of the work experience through WIA, she was hired full time. In January 2010, Mary began classes at WKCTC to pursue her goal of becoming a registered nurse. "Working with the WIA program got me one step closer to fulfilling my career goal," she said.

William Lancaster

William Lancaster, a 19-year-old sophomore telecommunications major at Murray State University, spent his summer doing what he likes to do – computer technology, and he got paid for it. As a WorkNow Kentucky participant, William was employed by the Jefferson County Public Schools Information Technology (IT) Program, through KentuckianaWorks and the YOU Center as the contractor. During the summer, William got a variety of experiences including reimaging computers, repairing machines and setting up machines, wiring computer labs in schools for Internet access, and computer network infrastructure set-up. "It's giving me experience with the work, of course, but personally it's teaching me small things that will help me later – job skills, job etiquette," he said. In addition to getting hands-on experience, William is proud to be able to earn money for school and to

purchase things he wants like a new computer. His summer job gave him a way to contribute to the household. "It gave me financially a way of contributing back to the family," he said.

Jacob Johnson

Through WIA youth and on-the-job-training (OJT) programs, Jacob Johnson gained work experience, occupational specific training, employment level TABE scores and a permanent employment opportunity. Jacob participated in Summer Works, the ARRA-funded WKWIA summer youth employment program where he worked at Hopkinsville Electric System (HES). When he completed his work experience with the Summer Works program, Jacob looked for direction to accomplish his occupational goals. WKWIB staff referred him to the Youth Workforce Connections (YWC) program at Hopkinsville Community College where he enrolled for training. Jacob completed gas metal arc welding for entry-level occupational specific training. The program coordinator worked with HES administration to provide an additional 500 hour work experience to further develop Jacob's skill set. Once he completed the training, Jacob transitioned into temporary employment with HES. A short time later a position on the right of way crew became available at Pennyriple Electric. WKWIB staff worked with this employer to provide an OJT opportunity for Jacob. Following a 90-day probationary period he transitioned into permanent status as an employee of Pennyriple Electric. Jacob's supervisor at Pennyriple Electric states that he is doing really well and that the previous experience he acquired through the WIA programs placed him in a better position than others who begin with no previous work experience.

Louisiana

Bryan and Ryan Wright

The devastation from the recent oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico has decreased the economic development along coastal Louisiana. As a result, many residents in the town of Jean Lafitte have experienced tremendous financial distress. In order to assist the oil spill victims, Jefferson Community Action Programs (JeffCAP) decided to create the Lafitte Summer Youth Job Program to employ youth to help support their families. The six-week program started in July 2010 and has employed 31 participants. The youth, ages 16 – 24, worked at various Jefferson Parish departments and centers. The program also has career and technical professionals who serve as mentors to provide these young people with real on-the-job experiences and valuable life skills. Lafitte residents Bryan Wright and Ryan Wright are stellar examples of the program's goal. The 21-year-old twin brothers worked at the Lafitte Senior Center as administrative assistants. While learning how to manage various office tasks, they have also learned how to sew. The Wright twins attended a sewing class for the center's senior citizens. They have worked diligently to produce several quilts for the town citizens who are sick or bereaved. "I told myself that I want to learn how to sew, and I am going to learn," Bryan said. He said the center's sewing teacher is a professional tailor, and she taught him how to use a sewing machine for the first time. This job helped me to pick up a new skill that I never had before." Sewing has definitely intrigued the brothers. They both admitted to their childhood dream of becoming top-notch fashion designers someday. Ryan said the Summer Youth Job Program might help them to turn that dream into a reality. "I do love fashion," Ryan said. "This could be a good thing."

"This job helped me to pick up a new skill that I never had before."

Golois Mouelet-Nguimbi, Mid-Maryland (Carroll County)



Born in Congo, 17-year-old Golois Mouelet-Nguimbi and his family, who had lived “all over Africa,” obtained their green cards in September, 2006, and moved to the United States. Through a church connection, they settled in Westminster where Golois entered 12th grade, speaking fluent French but no English. Dedicated, he studied English at night in order to excel in high school during the day. Fortunately, his English classes were in the same building as the Carroll County Business & Employment Resource Center (BERC, the One Stop Career Center). He spotted the name of the Youth Coordinator, Max Bair, and contacted him in February, 2007. “I asked him to help me get a good job, finish high school, get my license...so before the summer I started applying for jobs. We went all over the place looking for jobs. We went to Wal-Mart, Giant, nursing homes. Mr. Bair went with me, he took the car and went from place to place” until Golois landed a part-time grocery cashier position at \$7/hour. Mr. Bair had recognized Golois’s potential, so he called to offer Golois a ride when learning of a job fair at Carroll Hospital Center. He was subsequently hired as a floor technician, earning \$9/hour working part-time.

After graduating with honors from Winters Park High School, Golois entered Carroll Community College fulltime as a Computer Information Systems major. “I was elected to the student government association. The first year I was a senator, this year I am the treasurer of the SGA. I have to report on the student activities, I am a liaison between the Community College foundation board and the student life office.” BERC paid for his books, and he secured tuition grants and scholarships as well. Golois graduated from Carroll Community College in May, 2009, and enrolled as a junior honors student at University of Maryland-Baltimore County (UMBC) in fall 2010. His goal is to receive a degree in Education, and he hopes “to teach math one day.” Golois continues working at Carroll Hospital Center while attending college. His position has moved into a permanent part-time position, allowing him to receive health care benefits. He adjusts his hours based upon his school commitments – working up to 40 hours/week in the summer months. His success at the Center has earned him not only a raise but the distinguished honor of being named “Employee of the Month.”

Aaron Sierak, Susquehanna (Harford County)

“I lost motivation to continue,” recalls Aberdeen resident Aaron Sierak about dropping out of school during his junior year despite earning As and Bs. “My grandfather had just passed away, my grandmother came to live with us, and there was a lot of stress at home.” A friend told Aaron about Reconnecting Youth, a dropout recovery program run by the Harford County Public Schools in partnership with the Susquehanna Workforce Network. “One day I just called them. Miss Boo [Martha Chrismer] came out to talk to me and gave me all the information. I didn’t have to go anywhere else; it was all right there in front of me. They offered to pay for my learner’s permit, and for the classes, and for pretty much everything else. So all I had to do was apply myself. That was my only focus.” Once he got started, Aaron didn’t waste any time. He earned his GED within three months, entered Harford Community College, and obtained a Pell Grant for the first year’s tuition. He’s working toward his Associate’s degree and, eventually, his registered nursing certification.



Michigan

Antonio Battle

Antonio Battle worked a variety of unfulfilling jobs throughout his life and was ready for long-term, sustainable employment when he visited a local Michigan Works! Service Center.

Battle was selected to participate in the American Reinvestment and Recovery Act (ARRA) summer youth employment program and was placed at ADAC Automotive as an assembly/maintenance worker. He was responsible for a variety of basic duties, including performing safety inspections, under the direction of his supervisor. Because of his efforts and abilities, Battle was given an opportunity to assist a manufacturing engineer and to be a member of an inspection team. This experience enabled Battle to learn more about lean manufacturing and provided hands-on training. Battle's excellent performance, attendance and attitude did not go unnoticed. When the ARRA summer youth employment program work experience ended, his supervisor requested that he continue working with the organization permanently, and Battle accepted the offer.

Battle reached his goal of self-sufficiency by earning a competitive wage, which not only allows him to provide for his family, but provides a sense of accomplishment and success.

Minnesota

Gracey

A teen parent, Gracey, is making success look easy. She is a 2009 high school graduate and has just earned her Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA) certification. Gracey enrolled in The WIA Youth Program through Inter-County Community Council in Crookston, Minnesota.

Gracey is fortunate to have a supportive family to help care for her almost two-year-old son, so she could finish high school and take the CNA course. She has already been offered a job at the local hospital which pays \$10.59 an hour. Not only does she have a job at the hospital, but they have offered her a scholarship to help with the cost of continuing her goal to become a registered nurse. Gracey realizes that her success story inspires other Hispanic teens to look up to her as a role model. They are asking her questions about her experiences. Gracey encourages other Hispanic teens to think about a medical career. She knows that being bilingual in working with patients who speak Spanish will be invaluable to her employer and co-workers. Her more immediate goals are to save money and purchase a car as she continues to pursue her registered nursing degree at the nearby technical college.



Quote from Youth Participant:

"Because I am a single mom it is hard for me to find work. With this program I was able to find work at a site that could work around the hours that I had day care, and now I have a good reference when I apply for jobs."

Azia

Azia spent her summer in STEP-UP working at the Hmong American Mutual Assistance Association (HAMAA). She worked with children in HAMAA's summer enrichment program and also performed

administrative tasks. During the first couple of weeks on the job, Azia struggled with acclimating to an organization that served primarily the Hmong community and was staffed with mostly native Hmong speakers. Azia had little previous exposure to the Hmong community and culture. After a rocky start trying to adjust to a new environment, Azia began to learn more about the Hmong language and culture. She began to use words and phrases in Hmong, helping her to become more engaged with her co-workers.



Now Azia views her experience as valuable to helping her reach her goal of becoming a doctor someday. She understands that she will need to be able to work with people from all backgrounds and cultures in her chosen profession. “It was really hard at first,” comments Azia, “but after a while, I felt like I just fit in.”

Azia was selected to represent the youth interns at the end-of-summer STEP-UP Celebration, telling nearly 1,000 interns, parents, mentors, and employers about her experience with STEP-UP. Azia will be experiencing another new adventure as she begins her high school experience at North High School. Her positive experience at HAMMA encouraged her to embrace new opportunities, while helping her feel like she is on a pathway to a successful future.

Demareia



Demareia applied for Minnesota Valley Action Council’s Summer Youth Employment Program in 2009. On her application, she wrote, “I know and love working with people.” Demareia attended orientation in Saint Peter, Minnesota at Gustavus Adolphus. At this workshop, she learned how to conduct interviews, and think about her future career. She enjoys helping people, which led her to look for a job in the human service field. She started working for Nicollet County Human Services Department. At work Demareia was quiet and shy, but with the encouragement and support of MVAC staff and her worksite supervisors, her self-confidence and self-esteem increased tremendously. Demareia had aspirations to attend college. With assistance from MVAC staff, Demareia applied for and was accepted into South Central College in North Mankato, Minnesota.

A year after participating in MVAC’s Summer Youth Employment Program, Demareia continues to attend post-secondary school at South Central College and was offered a work-study position where she works as a support staff member.

When asked about her experience as a participant of the summer program, she states, “It has changed my life for the better.”

Allen

Allen joined Southeast Minnesota Workforce Development, Inc.’s youth program seeking help in finding a job. He had a high school diploma, National Guard training in mechanics, some work experience, and a good work ethic.

Based on Allen’s initial strong performance with a team at community worksites, Workforce Development, Inc. was able to place him in a stimulus-funded work program at McNeilus Steel, Inc. “My manager said that I am a great worker, have a positive attitude and willingness to learn



more” said Allen. But while the shop manager was impressed with Allen’s work, he also expressed concern that Allen lacked the proper education to advance in the field of diesel mechanics. Allen applied for a WIA scholarship to attend Riverland Community College in the Diesel Mechanic Diploma Program, starting spring of 2010. Allen is currently working full-time at McNeilus Steel, Inc. in the warehouse and with his manager’s support is planning to attend classes.

Male Youth



“As a young adult in rural Stearns County, I have not had much opportunity to obtain employment or continue my education. I graduated from an alternative high school in April 2009. I contacted the WorkForce Center in St. Cloud to find out about CareerONE.

Through my participation in CareerONE, we worked in teams of eight youth with a team leader and learned about career pathways, reality budgeting, workplace safety and work readiness skills. I was able to work in this team and earn my work readiness credential. My team worked at the Bend in the River Park in Rice where we painted a historical farm house. CareerONE was great. I learned a lot and I got a nice paycheck.

After completing CareerONE, I contacted the Youth Career Planner to find out about returning to post-secondary school. I am preparing to attend the St. Cloud Technical College for an Accounting degree.”

Lacie

“My success in the field of education would not be complete without the help of the WIA Youth Program. While I was attending Bemidji State University studying music, education was my main priority thanks to the assistance that I received from this wonderful program. Funding is always a concern for college students, but I was able to work limited hours which helped me keep my grades up and my head in the game. Now, I’m an Instrumental Music Teacher working in Red Lake Falls, Minnesota. I teach fifth grade band, sixth grade band, Junior High Band, Senior High Band, Drum Line and Kindergarten classroom music. How much better could it get? Thanks to this program, I have landed my dream job! Thank You!”



Victoria



Victoria was an exceptional seventeen-year-old YouthLEAD participant. Victoria is currently a senior Honor Roll student attending Como High School where she is involved in Choir, National Honor Society, and the Multi-Cultural Excellence Program. She is a volunteer at Feline Rescue Shelter and Regions Hospital. Victoria successfully completed her work experience at Turn-Style Consignment located in Roseville. Her supervisor/store manager was so pleased with Victoria’s work performance and positive attitude that she was offered a permanent position.

Victoria has bloomed into a confident and empowered young woman. Victoria is pleased to contribute to the family finances. Her mother is elated with her accomplishments and the services

that YouthLEAD has provided. Victoria plans to attend University of St. Thomas with a major in Veterinary Science.

Montana

RC

RC, age 18, was both homeless and a high school dropout at enrollment. She expressed interest in a healthcare career and she was placed in a work experience at the Hospital. While at the hospital, RC talked to many different employees to learn about available jobs. At the same time she took the GED test. In less than six weeks, RC had passed her GED test and was hired full-time by the hospital as an environmental services aide. Subsequent to those successes she completed the certified nursing assistant course at the University of Montana and passed the CNA exam. Her current job at the hospital pays \$10.19 an hour and she is hoping to apply for the next open CNA position. Her future plans are to continue post-secondary education in nursing at University of Montana. RC recently remarked that she never believed she could attend college. (RC has not lived with her family for over two years.)

KO

KO, 20 was a single mom on TANF at enrollment. KO was interested in a healthcare occupation and was placed in a work experience at the Hospital in the graphic arts department. KO was determined to get a job at the hospital and applied for numerous jobs during her work experience. In October she started a CNA class at the University of Montana and around the same time she was hired by the hospital as an admissions clerk working full-time making \$11.20 an hour plus benefits.

BH

BH, age 18, was a youth aging out of foster care and had just received his GED at enrollment. BH had been kicked out of Job Corps in December 2008, for fighting. BH chose the plumber's assistant job at the College. During the work experience, his supervisor remarked that BH was willing to do the "dirty" work that some regular employees avoided. With the work experience coming to an end, BH expressed interest in continuing a career in a trade and had a particular interest in welding. The case manager helped BH apply for financial aid and enrollment at University of Montana. BH received Pell grants and a grant from the Student Assistance Foundation. BH is finishing his first semester at University of Montana, but is unsure if he wants to continue. He is now exploring apprenticeship opportunities and recently completed an application to the Laborer's Apprenticeship program.

B'linda

B'linda, age 19, TANF recipient and single mom, had completed her first year at the University of Montana pursuing an AAS degree in Office Technology Management at enrollment. She expressed interest in performing administrative work in a healthcare facility and was placed at the Hospital in the graphic arts department. She successfully completed the work experience and is now completing her third semester at the University of Montana.

AB

AB, 18, is a single parent and has a learning disability and had recently graduated from high school when enrolled in the summer program. AB has a desire to work with special needs children. During the summer she successfully completed a work experience at the hospital as well as her enrollment and financial aid applications for her first semester at University of Montana. In September she

started post secondary and is planning to get a two-year degree in Early Childhood Education. AB is eligible for another work experience program funded by the Department of Public Health and Human Services. Through this program she is being matched with Family Outreach where she will have an opportunity to work as a direct service specialist for children with disabilities.

KH

KH, 20 was a homeless youth with a felony. At enrollment he was struggling to find any employment because of his criminal background, but he had saved enough money from his last job to pay the tuition at University of Montana for the CNA class. KH has a career goal of being a nurse practitioner. KH's has a deferred sentence---meaning if he pays his fines, completes his community service and stays out of trouble, the felony will be removed from his record in June, 2010. The case manager tried to find KH a job with a healthcare facility, but KH continued to fail the background check. In the meantime, a work experience was developed with a property maintenance business where KH performed lawn maintenance, minor repairs, painting and other custodial duties. In September, KH passed the CNA test. He also passed a CPR and First Aid classes in October. Just recently, the case manager was able to arrange a short-term work experience with a local group home for 160 hours. If KH successfully completes the work experience, it is very likely he will be hired. KH is planning to enroll at University of Montana in January, 2010 to begin the nursing program.

Nebraska

Florence

Florence is a refugee from Sierra Leone. She came to the U.S. to escape the Civil War that was taking place in her country, join her father and pursue a better education. Her dream was to become a doctor. Unfortunately, Florence continued to experience difficulties after her arrival. Her dad and his girlfriend mistreated her so Child Protective Services had to place her in foster care. When Florence came to the One Stop Employment Solutions WIA SummerWorks program, she was a senior with a 3.8 GPA, "aging-out" of care. She has since graduated from high school, successfully completed her SummerWorks employment and has been hired part-time by the worksite. After enrollment in WIA as a "Year Round" participant in Greater Lincoln, she moved into her own apartment. She is currently attending Southeast Community College. In addition to school and her part-time job, Florence has been completing the requirements of U.S. Immigration Services in the hope that she will one day become a U.S. citizen. Florence continues to excel in her undergraduate studies. She is well on her way to achieving her dream to complete medical school and is an inspiration to all youth.

Nevada

LaShana Smith

Positive Youth Impact activities are funded by WIA youth funds. They provide comprehensive education and career services to youth ages 14 to 21, both in and out of school. In June they held a graduation gala to recognize the 52 students who had graduated from high school, 48 of whom were WIA clients. This is the first group that started their program as freshmen, and the record number of graduates is a testament to the effectiveness of their support, which includes intensive case management, help with credit retrieval and high school proficiency exams, tutoring, meaningful work experience, and mentoring. One of NPI's most notable successes is LaShana Smith who arrived at Nevada Partners, Inc. (NPI) with several at-risk barriers. Through interaction with ACT-SO, a national arts competition, LaShana was exposed to professionals who saw her potential and



supported her efforts to attend Berklee College of Music in Boston. She is in her second year there, consistently on the dean's list for high scholastic achievement and receiving a full scholarship from the Bill Cosby Foundation.

Jasmine Edwards



The Shade Tree provided transient youth with summer work experiences that in the past, has not been considered. Furthermore; most of these youth were residents and lived at the facility because they were homeless. A total of 42 students participated in The Shade Tree's summer youth jobs program. With the dedication and commitment of Program Director, this student Jasmine Edwards was able to realize a goal that she now knows is possible!

"It's been a long road in my life. I wasn't able to choose all the circumstances that have befallen me. However, there comes a time in your life when regardless of the situations you go through or the people you have encountered; you have to take responsibility for you. You can't wallow the past to determine your future or let people to decide it for you. At times all you will have left is you.

I owe a lot to Shade Tree. They helped me become a stable, self-reliant, and productive citizen. Just months ago I had almost completely given up my dignity, home and almost myself respect only to resign myself to a life on the streets. I was always independent and strong-willed, but the streets seemed to whittle away at my inner strength, breaking me down. Then I read a book, which helped me to change my perspective and attitude. This in turn led me to return to The Shade Tree. This time would be different, I was sure of it. Once again I began the process of making sense of my life and myself. Finally, I got my "big break". I saw a flyer for a summer youth work program and began to inquire about the program. I am 24 years old so I was barely eligible; however I took full advantage of this rare opportunity. The youth work program helped me to overcome many obstacles that otherwise would have been difficult to achieve on my own. Sometimes in life I think we forget that we need others to help us and that we need to help each other.

The youth work program helped me to gain skills and experience I wasn't able to acquire because sometimes if you do not have experience in certain professions employers won't even give you the opportunity to gain the skills needed. They will just consider you inept and hire the next person prepared for the job. This youth work program not only gave me well needed skills and experience, but also something I almost lost. Hope!

I have been through insurmountable hurdles in my life however chronic homelessness and stable employment were the hardest obstacles I needed to overcome. The Shade Tree and the youth work program helped me to accomplish these difficult feats.

A few months after I was employed I moved into my first apartment. Also, when the youth program was extended they allowed me to continue working. Finally, because I proved that I was a reliable, punctual, and ethical worker, The Shade Tree embraced me and brought me into the family. I have always admired all the staff and the work they do to help thousands of women to become self-sufficient, stable, and independent. I am thankful daily to The Shade Tree and the youth work program for allowing me to do the same for others. I am very proud to say that I am now a member of The Shade Tree staff."

During the summer of 2009, the Workforce Connection of Central New Mexico (WCCNM) received nearly \$2.6 million in federal stimulus money for programs throughout the Central Region, with \$1.2 million for summer youth employment programs in Bernalillo, Sandoval, Torrance and Valencia Counties. The funds were intended to help stimulate economic growth in the region, and help youth receive valuable work experience, work readiness, and educational improvement skills.

Ms. G

At the time of enrollment into the Workforce Connection of Central New Mexico (WCCNM) Summer Youth Employment Program in Valencia County, a young lady, Ms. G was pregnant, basic skills deficient, parentless, and 17 years of age. When Ms. G came into the program, staff saw in her the determination and commitment it takes to graduate from high school, raise a child on her own and continue on to post secondary education. Staff contacted Garcia and Associates, a CPA firm in Los Lunas. Upon speaking with Garcia & Associates they verbalized a need for a mature, older applicant, simply because accounting tends to be a rather dry field, not offering much excitement. Staff was able to convince the firm to interview Ms. G, even though she did not meet some of his specific requirements. Garcia & Associates called staff shortly after interviewing Ms. G and stated, "You were right, she has determination and grit". Throughout the summer Ms. G continued to come to work on time, was a quick-study and took the initiative and performed tasks on her own. Ms. G received "excellent" ratings on all her evaluations. Ms. G completed her hours and went back to school in the fall. In November 2009, Ms. G delivered a beautiful baby boy and in December graduated from Los Lunas High School. In January, Garcia & Associates was able to come up with additional funding for another employee and brought Ms. G on board permanently where she continues to do an excellent job. At last contact with Ms. G, she informed staff she was attending UNM/VC and had shifted her concentration from architecture to forensics. She is not sure whether she will stay with her current concentration, but is determined to complete her four-year degree. Ms. G thanks the WCCNM and the summer program for allowing her to receive meaningful work experience, ensuring a brighter future for her and her son.

Ms. A

A young lady, Ms. A enrolled in the WIA Summer Youth Program on May 11, 2009 in Sandoval County. Ms. A is 17 years old, just completing her junior year in high school. As a single mother and being basic skills deficient, she had many barriers to employment. Ms. A requested summer work experience to earn some money, gain experience and to support her and her child. Ms. A completed the BEST Training and was placed at the Town of Bernalillo- MVD, as a clerk/receptionist. Her duties included filing, answering phones, and customer service. Her supervisor said that she did an excellent job at accepting directions, and she made good progress on her performance throughout the summer program. Ms. A successfully completed her 200 hours of work experience, gaining valuable skills that will assist her in attaining and retaining employment in the future. Since completing the summer program, Ms. A completed her senior year at Independence High School and graduated in May 2010. In addition to attending school and graduating from high school, Ms. A maintained a part-time job. Ms. A now expresses an interest in joining the Navy and wants to eventually work for the FBI.

D.G.

A young man, D.G. enrolled in the 2009 WIA Summer Youth Employment Program at the age of 22 years old in Torrance County. D.G. lived with his mom, stepdad and siblings and was burdened as the main caregiver for his family, as his mom was ill and could not work. D.G. requested work experience

to earn money to help support his family and to gain job training to assist him with finding employment in the future. D.G. completed the BEST Training and was placed to work at the City of Moriarty, to assist their maintenance and repair crews. D.G. is basic skills deficient and was referred to tutoring with an online tutoring program to increase his basic skills. D.G. successfully completed his work experience, gaining good work skills. He is currently living in Albuquerque and working for Central New Mexico Rural Electric Cooperation (CNMEC) as a lineman. D.G. recently visited the WCCNM office to update staff on his successes and to thank the program for giving him the skills he needed to find employment to support himself and his family.

Ms. LMT

A young lady, Ms. LMT enrolled in the WIA Summer Program for services in May 2009 in Bernalillo County. She was 22 years old, born and raised in Chihuahua Mexico. She became a permanent resident of the United States in December 2005 to help improve her future goals. She had minimal work experience but was eager to learn and establish her career, improve her skills and gain meaningful work experience. Ms. LMT completed the BEST training and was placed to work at Central New Mexico Housing as a receptionist. She received excellent training and acquired great work skills. She consistently worked 20 hours per week and was rated as “excellent” in every category on her evaluations throughout her work experience. Upon completion of her training, she was hired full time by Central New Mexico Housing and is doing extremely well. She is pursuing her GED through CNM and looks forward to accomplishing her goal of completing her education. Ms. LMT expressed to staff that she would not have had this opportunity in Mexico, and that she is grateful to WCCNM for the opportunities given to her throughout the summer program.

North Carolina

Corey Queen

In January 2008 Corey Queen enrolled in Get REAL Program. Get REAL is a program designed to prepare out-of-school youth, ages 16 through 21, for meaningful employment and economic independence through educational and career training opportunities that promote life-long learning. The program is a collaborative effort among DavidsonWorks, Davidson County Community College, and the business community of Davidson County. This was a new experience for him, but he had no problems fitting in with the other students at Get REAL Program.



Queen took the assessment and scored high enough to enter into the GED program immediately. His hard work in the class was a perfect example of his determination of completing the program. He did everything that was asked of him and more and was elected into the Student Government Association. His interest was in working on cars and he completed career research on which community colleges offered his major. During this time Queen still maintained his focus on getting his GED. He started working on the Pre-GED test and did a good job on several of the tests. After additional review, he made the scores to take the final GED test and obtained his GED in November 2008.

The next step Queen took was to enter into Davidson County Community College and major in Automotive Systems Technology. He has completed one year of a two-year program and is presently working

Raymone Garnes



Raymone Garnes applied for WIA services through the Alamance County Building Futures Program as a 20-year-old high school dropout. He left school in 2007 and desired assistance in obtaining a General Educational Development (GED). In October 2009 his case manager referred him to Alamance Community College and Garnes began GED classes four days per week. He received supportive services in the form of

transportation to and from classes. Also during the fall of 2009 his case manager was able to set up a part-time paid work experience for him through Burlington Housing Authority's After School Program, where he learned valuable soft skills to strengthen his work ethic. Immediately, reports from his supervisor were above average to excellent.

On March 16, 2010, Garnes passed his first GED test. The subject of math was a huge hurdle, but after that, he was full speed ahead and began knocking off the remaining tests. On June 25, 2010, Garnes received his final test results and learned that he successfully obtained his GED. But that is not the only good news he received. Burlington Housing Authority has been so pleased with his job performance that they have determined that there will be a job opening in the fall and they have offered Garnes a position working with the Housing Authority's After School and Summer Enrichment Department.

Stephanie McDonald

In September 2008 Stephanie McDonald came to the Johnston County Industries (JCI), Yes I Can Program pursuing completion of her GED. Upon facing many obstacles and barriers, she completed her GED and continued her education by obtaining her CNA I and II credentials, as well as her Medication Aide Certification. In addition, she completed a work experience through JCI and as a result, was hired as a CNA at Meadowview Assisted Living in Smithfield, NC.



One of McDonald's barriers to education and employment was the lack of transportation. JCI, Yes I Can Program arranged transportation with the local transit system, JCATS. Although she experienced limited transportation, and along with many other barriers, McDonald remained persistent and focused on her goals. She realized that it was vital to her success to begin turning her failures into success and started studying to obtain her driver's license and saving money to purchase her first car. Upon achieving all of her short term goals, McDonald continues working in nursing and gaining more experience that will help her move up in her career. JCI, Yes I Can Program is a Capital Area Workforce Development Board WIA Youth Program.

Jasmine Phillips

In 2005 Jasmine Phillips enrolled in the WIA Youth Program and Collaborative College for Technology and Leadership (CCTL-Early College). Through guidance and counseling, Phillips overcame numerous barriers to achieve educational goals, which required focus, ambition, and perseverance.

On May 14, 2010, Phillips received her High School Diploma and an Associate of Arts Degree. She enrolled at Mitchell Community College and intends to transfer to Winston-Salem State University this spring, where she will pursue a degree in Psychology. Her aspirations are to obtain a career in social work and eventually open a counseling center for young children.



She is participating in 2010 Summer Youth Employment Program. She attends academic enrichment and leadership activities designed to encourage responsibility and positive social behaviors. In addition, she is able to improve employability skills and prepare for adult roles through summer employment opportunities. Phillips plans to utilize all available resources to progress and develop, so that she may someday assist and guide those in need.

Fiona McLean



In May 2009 Fiona McLean applied for the WIA Youth Program in Alamance County. She was a single mother attending Alamance Community College wanting to become a medical assistant. She had exhausted all her PELL Grant for the year and wanted to continue to take classes during the summer semester. With the help of WIA, Mclean was able to take classes that summer and was provided with transportation assistance.

In the spring of 2010, McLean found out that she was pregnant with her second child and was due in the middle of the semester, but she had a plan and was not going to drop out of school. She spoke with all of her professors and worked out a plan if she were to miss any classes, and made sure not to use any absences before the baby. McLean delivered the baby on a Thursday night, missed one class on Friday, and then was on her spring break. She returned to school the following Thursday. McLean managed to take 6 classes that semester and received a B in all her classes.

McLean finished her graduation requirements during the summer 2010 semester, and on June 10th she had her Medical Assisting Pinning Ceremony. On July 16th, she graduated from ACC with an Associate's Degree. She will take the national certification exam this fall, and upon passing, will be a licensed medical assistant. She has begun her job search submitting numerous job applications and has started receiving phone calls for interviews. She is also participating in a paid work experience at the Alamance County JobLink Career Center where she learned basic soft skills and developed a strong work ethic.

Sable Adams

On January 27, 2010, Sable Adams came into the Lee County Youth and Family WIA Youth Program office to apply for services. The 18-year-old high school graduate after not being able to find a job, decided to go to Job Corps. She soon discovered that Job Corps was not a good fit for her career and personal goals, so she returned home. She decided to pursue a Welding Certificate through the JobsNOW "12 in 6" Program offered at Central Carolina Community College. She entered the welding program as the only female in the class and the youngest student. On May 5th she



received the welding certificate in the three-part course and received an outstanding evaluation from her instructors and the staff at the Lillington campus. On June 2nd Adams began her second certificate for the welding program.

Upon completion of the three-part welding program with Central Carolina Community College, expected in December 2010, Adams will be starting on-the-job training with a welding company in Fort Bragg, NC.

Megan Holt



Megan Holt was born without her left forearm and hand. While many people would let this handicap hold them back, she does not. She is an excellent student and an asset to her employer. Holt writes:

“My name is Megan Holt and I am currently a senior in high school. Last summer through the Surry E-Link Program, I worked in the front office at North Surry High School answering the phones and relaying messages to various staff members. I was 16-years-old at the time and that was my first job ever. The experience was amazing and it was the best first job that I could’ve asked for.

Currently, I am employed at Tonda Phillips’ Allstate Insurance Office through the Surry E-Link Program. My job is absolutely wonderful! I love the office setting. Tonda and Julie are two very great people to work with and I enjoy helping the members of our community. And starting out here through the program actually got me a job working directly for Tonda! But truthfully, if it weren’t for the E-Link program, I wouldn’t even have this job.

I am so thankful for this program and for everything that has come along with my participation in it. The paycheck that I receive through the E-Link Program has helped me to become a more responsible person because I am able to help pay for some of my own bills now. This helps to take some financial stress off of my family, which has a low income. Also, I have gained so much experience and have developed better communication skills, which will aid me throughout the rest of my life. This program has been a true blessing from God for me and I am extremely grateful for everything.”

Tiera Willams

Tiera Williams was eager to work this summer, but had no idea how she would find employment. When the Scotland County Schools ARRA operator began accepting applications for enrollment into their ARRA Summer Youth Employment Program, she immediately applied and was enrolled. She began working at a local nursing home.

Williams had a narrow view of nursing home facilities and was worried that there was nothing for her to gain by working there. After just a few days of connecting with patients and working with staff, her attitude completely changed. She realized that most of the patients were confined or immobile and were unable to make choices for themselves. On the other hand, she had the freedom to go wherever she wanted and the ability to make her own decisions. She learned that the patients greatly depended on the compassion and care given by the staff.



Williams' experience at the nursing home changed her entire outlook on life. She has become more aware of her health, food intake and daily exercise. "My experience at Edwin Morgan Center taught me to sincerely value my life, my health, the ability to walk, talk, and most importantly, the ability to care for myself," said Williams. "What an awesome experience for a college student."

Because of Williams' outstanding job performance, her work experience was extended 4 additional weeks working at a partner facility. Not only did she gain self-awareness from this summer experience, but also gained work experience, which will help her when seeking future jobs. "Each day I become more sensitive and caring to other people due in part of the opportunity I was afforded through the program," said Williams.

Carolina Wall



On October 24, 2007, Carolina Wall, a 2010 Mount Airy High School graduate, was accepted into the Surry County eLink Program. Carolina was a quiet and shy ninth-grader with a sweet smile and a friendly attitude.

The eLink Program has given Wall the opportunity to succeed in multiple job opportunities. She has been able to participate and benefit from working at the local Chamber of Commerce as well as Surry County United Fund where she helped implement and maintain an exciting new community resource database. Wall has gained skills from working within the school system as a teacher assistant in the afternoon and assisting the school nutrition department with a summer feeding program. Wall has received positive feedback from these employers stating that she has been dedicated, dependable, and hard working.

Through the aid of the eLink Program, Wall not only has achieved multiple academic goals, but she has also graduated from Mount Airy High School, earning an academic scholarship sponsored by our program. She will attend the local community college.

Charles Lambert

Charles Lambert came to the Summer Youth Employment Program at Piedmont Community College as a younger youth. From high school youth to out of school youth, with multiple areas of his life in chaos, he was constantly challenged with negative influences. Some of the many challenges that he faced were not doing well in high school classes, poor attendance history, and being tempted by friends to be involved in gang activity.

When Lambert turned 18, he enrolled in the Youth Employment Services (Y.E.S.) Program at Piedmont Community College with the goals of obtaining his GED and gaining a Welding certification. Not only has he accomplished his educational goals, but he has also become a leader in the program. Lambert serves as the Assistant Project Coordinator on the Youth Advisory Committee and regularly takes a leadership role in school and community activities.



In November 2009 the Y.E.S. Program conducted a "Giving Thanks" food drive in which he was an active participant. Non-perishable goods were collected and given to local families or to the local

domestic violence shelter. He demonstrated genuine compassion for the families he served and even chose to participate again during the Christmas season when the program sponsored a family.

In Piedmont Community College's Summer Youth Employment Program, funded through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009, Lambert accepted and successfully completed his worksite placement from June 23, 2009, to August 13, 2009, in the Film and Video Department at Piedmont Community College. The Summer Youth Employment Program provided Lambert with the opportunity to gain work experience in a real workplace and to engage in career exploration. Along with his peers, Lambert worked 27 hours per week and benefited from 3 hours per week of classroom instruction on work readiness skills and basic skills remediation.

Lambert's experience in the Summer Youth Employment Program also helped him gain confidence in the value of his skills and abilities. He was able to use his welding skills to assist in building sets for plays and other events during his placement. He learned about the teamwork that is required to set up the stage and had the opportunity to contribute to this effort in a tangible way. He also participated as an officer on the Youth Advisory Committee. As an officer for this committee he was responsible for making the program more visible in the community and to encourage the full support from the other members. He did this by willingly accepting the leadership responsibility during our food drive.

Despite his early doubts about his worth as a student, Lambert has excelled academically. He was on the Dean's List Fall 2009 and the President's List Spring 2010. Lambert is presently pursuing a Business Administration degree and has set his next goal to be an entrepreneur with the desire to start his own welding business. He plans to graduate May 2011.

Faith Barber



As the next to the youngest of eight children in a single-parent home, Faith Barber struggled with several barriers to education and employment. Despite her struggles, Barber's strong determination and hopes for a bright future enabled her to set the following goals for herself when she enrolled on August 6, 2009, in the Forsyth County eLink Youth Program: improve her grades at school, increase one Education Function Level (EFL), complete the eLink Job Readiness Training course, graduate from high school, and obtain employment. She has accomplished all of these goals and more!

Barber completed the 36-hour Job Readiness Training class and later began a 4-month paid work experience as a Store Associate at Food Lion Store #593. Second, not only did she improve her grades in school, but she also increased three grade levels from her initial testing at enrollment in the eLink program. On April 23, 2010, the eLink Youth Program assisted her financially as she completed her Nursing Aide I certificate. On June 12, 2010, she was the first in her family to be awarded her high school diploma and be accepted into a university. She will be attending North Carolina A&T State University majoring in Nursing. Finally, because of her display of hard work and integrity, the managers at Food Lion decided to hire her permanently to work weekends while attending college.

Barber has displayed determination through all she has faced and has worked hard to get where she is today. When asked about her barriers and accomplishments, Barber stated, "It's not about where you come from, but where you're going that matters."

Jordan Kay

This is a continuation of the Jordan Kay success story featured in the 2008 Annual Report. Jordan Kay was paralyzed at an early age and confined to a wheelchair. He successfully completed the welding program at the North Dakota State College of Science (NDSCS). While attending NDSCS, Jordan assisted the faculty in the design of a lift wheelchair which allowed him to stand and complete his welding tasks. He began seeking permanent employment but found that his disability was a barrier even with the specially-designed wheelchair.

The Minot community had recently welcomed a new business to the area with a welding position available. Staff in the Minot Customer Service Office started advocating for Jordan to secure this position. The first time the company CEO was in the Job Service Office he learned about the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) Work Experience program and about Jordan. The CEO was impressed with the local, state, national and international attention Jordan had received and agreed to provide him with a work experience. A WIA-funded work experience allowed Jordan to enhance his welding skills.

In order for Jordan to have access to the parts he would weld, accommodations were needed. He contacted the North Dakota division of Vocational Rehabilitation for assistance. Vocational Rehabilitation provided funds to purchase supplies for the accommodations and it allowed Jordan to effectively complete his work.

The work experience ended in March 2010. Jordan then applied for and was successful in obtaining the welding position as a permanent employee.

Nathan Belgarde

Nathan Belgarde first came to Job Service at the age of 16 with his mother who was in the Job Opportunity Basic Skills, TANF program. As a participant in the JOBS program he was required to complete his GED. By regularly attending classes at the Adult Learning Center he was able to graduate in May 2007.

After graduation Nathan returned to the Grand Forks Customer Service Office to explore careers and discovered an interest in the nursing and medical field. WIA funds allowed him to start the Certified Nursing Assistance (CNA) course at Northland Technical College, which he successfully completed to receive his CNA certificate.

Using the Job Service website Nathan searched for CNA work for over three months and was unsuccessful. Nathan again visited Job Service to request assistance for a WIA-funded work experience at Valley Memorial Homes for three months. The Assistant Director of Nursing at Valley Memorial Homes said that he was one individual they didn't think would work out, but he turned out to be one of the best employees. He was always on time, showed compassion for the residents and their families, was an excellent member of their team, and very friendly. Nathan was hired as a permanent full-time member of their team earning \$11.30 per hour with benefits.

In July 2010 Valley Memorial Homes recommended Nathan as a good candidate for the Certified Medication Administration (CMA) course at a state community and technical college. He received WIA Youth funds and completed the course in August 2010.

Currently, Nathan is employed at Valley Memorial Homes as a CNA and a CMA earning \$13.25 per hour with full benefits. He is also attending Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University at the Grand Forks Air Force base part-time working towards his general education requirements. He then plans to transfer to a technical college to begin a pharmacy technician program.

Over the past four years Nathan overcame a challenging environment to become a successful and respectful young man. He continues to succeed in all that he strives to achieve. Nathan is an excellent example of a youth who took advantage of the WIA Youth program opportunities.

Ohio

Terron Moton

Terron Moton knew he wanted to change his life. A dropout at age 16, hanging out with the “wrong crowd,” in trouble with the law, and without a job, Moton had hit a dead end. He knew it was up to him to take his life back. Last October he walked into the SuperJobs Center (Area 13) hoping to find a job. He found much more — the stepping stones to a new life. Moton, now 18, was referred to Connect2Success, a collaborative comprised of a number of social service agencies that work to get out-of-school youth into a GED program or back into high school. He met with Will White, a coordinator at Connect2Success. “Terron told me he wanted to find employment,” White said. So, White referred him to the Urban League of Greater Cincinnati, which offers a work readiness program called SOAR for individuals who face obstacles finding a job. Moton graduated from SOAR in November 2009. He interviewed at the St. Bernard Soap Company and was hired in December 2009. In January 2010, he passed his GED. Connect2Success and the Urban League of Greater Cincinnati are both funded by the Southwest Ohio Region Workforce Investment Board (Area 13).



Jalon Cleveland



For 2009, Jalon Cleveland was one of two ARRA summer youth who interned at the Juice Radio Station (107.3) in Toledo (Area 9). Cleveland took broadcasting classes at her high school, which proved to be invaluable as she was able to take part in various aspects of radio production.

Working behind the scenes, she assisted staff in creating commercials and kept the radio station organized and running efficiently. Cleveland now looks forward to a possible career in broadcasting.

Jacob Anderson

In PY 2009, the Madison County Youth Works Program (Area 7) served 32 youth in paid summer work experiences. As a young adult, Jacob Anderson was fortunate to participate in the stimulus program. At the age of 24, Anderson had worked a variety of different jobs, but had found it very difficult to secure meaningful employment.



For his eight-week summer work experience, Anderson was placed at Buckeye Ford as a lot attendant. Within his first couple of weeks on the job, Anderson proved to his employer that he had the determination to do well and the skill set to match. His hard work paid off and he was offered a full-time position with Buckeye Ford.

Austin Blind



As part of the WIA Summer Youth Program, Austin Blind worked at Morris Hardware in McConnelsville (Area 15). Blind did a wonderful job. As a result, Morris Hardware hired Blind to work part-time while he continues his high school education.

Oklahoma

Ashley Avery

Ashley Avery was a young lady who participated in the TANF Summer Youth Employment Program working as an office assistant for Mayes County Court Clerk's Office. After working there for a short time she gained the confidence to take control of her life. She found permanent employment as a home health aide for the Department of Human Services in Mayes County. She has been able to get her own home, she is self sufficient for the first time, and she is attending classes to obtain her certification.

Christopher Cox

Christopher Cox is an 18 year old 2009 high school graduate from a low income family of nine who wanted to work to earn some extra money before starting college. Christopher inquired about the summer work program after seeing a flyer at Canadian High School and was accepted into the ARRA Summer Program. He started working at Canadian High School and also completed the Green Knowledge Educational Workshop during the summer program. Christopher said the money he earned will help him while attending college, and the job skills he gained he will use always in life.

Elizabeth Berger

Elizabeth Berger was looking for a summer job when she heard about the ARRA Youth Summer Work Intern Program. The internship she pursued included intensive workforce and life skills training and work as a child care assistant at the Simmons Center in Duncan. While overseeing the little ones, Elizabeth broadened her interpersonal and leadership skills and developed an interest in the medical field. Returning to Duncan High School as a senior, she is also enrolled at Red River Technology Center pursuing certification as a certified health care professional and a Licensed Practical Nurse. A hard-working self starter, Elizabeth already has a history of success, including 2006 Miss Junior Teen Oklahoma finalist, a Carpentry and Construction Training Certificate of Completion, and a Silver Oklahoma Career Readiness Certificate, among other honors and awards.

Taylor

Taylor had been unemployed for nearly six months and was receiving food stamps when she enrolled in the WIA Youth Program in May 2009. A high school graduate with good work history, Taylor had a career goal: She wanted to become a dental assistant. With WIA funds backing her, Taylor enrolled in Dental Assistant training at Francis Tuttle Technology Center in August 2009, graduating in May 2010

and quickly finding work in her new field. She is now able to support herself and her young child and is very appreciative of the assistance that made her training possible.

Calvin

As a part of a Payne County youth program, Calvin was placed at the Elite Repeat Resale Shop in Stillwater, where he quickly became very popular. He was given responsibilities and support that allowed him to take pride in his work and gain immeasurable insight into the working world of retail, which was close to his chosen career path. After he left the summer job, a store manager wrote a letter of thanks to the WIA program manager, saying Calvin had worked well with many bosses and with many volunteers and in many departments. As he relaxed, he became comfortable taking casual ribbing along with others and fit in well, the manager wrote. But that was not enough. Two weeks later, the store's business manager also wrote, enclosing a check for \$10,000 "in acknowledgement of the wonderful work done by Calvin at our store this past summer."

Puerto Rico

Female Youth

Northwest tells us the story of a young woman with a difficult economic condition since her childhood, which overcome herself and achieves her goals with the WIA services. This youth due to their socio-economic situation left the school at age of 15, to begin working to help his father with the economic burden for a 12-member family in their home. At that tender age she began working in the textile sewing industry, which ran several years without achieving an improvement in their wage conditions. Improvement job opportunities were limited by their poor education.

She decided to free her fear and shyness and apply to finish high school in the Northwest Local Area, since the lack of academic preparation had closed opportunities in workforce. She achieved her diploma with honors and change in her life, leaving behind the barriers that impeded him to overcome. After finished her high school diploma, she was hired as Special Education Assistance in the Puerto Rico Department of Education. This young woman feels happy and proud of will work with special needs children. Only complete this goal, arise new opportunities, hopes and challenges in her live, to realize that with a change of mind she can reach the sky.

Male Youth

A 19-year-old youth resident in public housing in Rincón Municipality, school dropout and offender visited the Northwest One Stop Center, to participate in a summer job experience, which was assigned to work in the Parador Villa Antonio, being excellently assessed for his work. Later in a youth program outreach activity in the Santa Rosa residential housing of Rincón, he showed his interest in take the Landscape and Gardening training. In addition, of his own interest, he raised the interest of several neighbors and friends school dropouts with the same desire to overcome, to take that training. All they were provided with the opportunity to train as a landscape gardener, and they didn't miss the opportunity.

This young man in the follow-up service of the pre-vocational training always expressed his desire to finish the high school. He was highlighted in the training for his leadership. Then, when he obtained his certification, Case Manager prepared business cards and began self-employment preparing courtyards and gardens. Several months later this youth began preparing to complete high school. When case manager offers support services, especially transportation, he indicated that he had saved the money won as a landscape gardener for buying his own car for transport to training. In

that car he was carrying a group of school dropouts of Rincón which were also in the process of completing their high school. Her attendance was perfect and he being the best average grade in the alternative school service. After graduation he visited the local area to show to the One Stop Center staff his grade medals.

Currently this youth is studying a vocational training as Medical Emergencies Technician at the Interamerican University in Aguadilla Campus. His goal is to complete a bachelor degree to be Registered Nurse. This older youth is example of success, not only for his perseverance and discipline, but because he shared his desire to overcome with other and offered them his unconditional support to achieve their goals. With his overcoming he takes the goals of many others.

South Dakota

Kelsey Stevens

When the staff at the Spearfish DOL Local Office first met Kelsey Stevens, she was a new student at the local alternative high school in 2008, living with her mom and learning how to cope with attention deficit disorder. Although she'd had a rough time of late, she wanted to work. Her first job was in a seasonal position at a local ski lift.

Later, the DOL staff determined WIA would be appropriate for Kelsey and began formal and informal assessments, which revealed her interest in healthcare and a high ranking for spatial ability. To get Kelsey some experience in a healthcare setting, DOL staff searched for a worksite that could accommodate her youth and her limited hours available for work.

The Lead-Deadwood Regional Hospital offered to start her as an office assistant. They were pleased to see that she worked well. Kelsey was able to complete all her high school credits just a few weeks later and was touched when hospital staff held a surprise graduation party for her.

Now, she was really on her way. The work experience was changed to full-time. The staff arranged for her to do job shadows in a couple of departments. Everyone encouraged her to take further training. Kelsey completed phlebotomist training this spring with good grades, leading to a job at Rapid City Regional Hospital at \$9.75/hour and good benefits. Her next goal is to save her wages until next spring when she will become eligible to take her national certification tests. She wants to cover that cost all by herself and shows every indication of doing so.

Tara Poncelet

Tara Poncelet, age 20, grew up on a horse farm. Deciding that postsecondary education was not a path for her to follow, she wanted to work in an office setting. However, with only seasonal/short-term experiences to outline on job applications, Tara Poncelet was finding that job hunting in the economic downturn offered only limited options. In order to maintain her housing, she was working out her rent by doing repairs on the rental house in rural South Dakota.



When the stimulus package offered an opportunity to earn a paycheck, it was good news. When she saw the stimulus package also meant work would include training in an area of interest, the news became great!

Her rural background was just what the Superintendent of Horse Shows for the South Dakota State Fair needed with the start of summer. Despite limited formal computer application knowledge, she seemed to inherently know how to create and track contestants, stall assignments, contests, required veterinary authorizations, etc.

Soon she was not only handling incoming calls for the horse division, but other animal divisions as well. As the summer progressed and others became more stressed with the fast-approaching start of the fair, Tara seemed to become even more confident, able to see what needed to be done and do it. She was recruited to the main office to help answer incoming calls and quickly learned how to use the software application for concert ticket sales as well. All the staff appreciated her communication skills and willingness to ask questions in order to do the job correctly.

Although the 2009 summer stimulus project was ending, state fair staff wanted to keep Tara. She likes working for the state fair office but knows even if there wasn't a job for her, she would have a much better work history and references for the next job search. Much to the relief of Tara and other staff at the fair, the State Fair Board was able to offer Tara a full-time secretarial position at \$9.29/hour with benefits.

Tennessee

Julian



Julian grew up with his family in New Orleans where his father owned a business. But when Hurricane Katrina made landfall, they quickly left the region and came to Knoxville to stay with his grandparents until the storm passed. They returned to find their house and his father's business destroyed. So they returned to Knoxville where Julian became involved with the WIA In-School Youth Program. He was a hard-working student who enjoyed playing basketball and working at his part-time job with the Boys and Girls Clubs. In May 2010, he graduated from high school and received a scholarship to Carson Newman where he currently attends and plays basketball.

Chris Delk

Chris Delk was enrolled last year in the Jobs for Tennessee Graduates at Hickman High School (with JTG being sponsored by South Central Workforce Alliance). He distinguished himself by taking the role of Vice President of the Tennessee Career Association (representing both county high schools) and also by winning first place for Telephone Techniques in the JTG state competition. Chris then graduated from Hickman High School in May 2010. Because of his participation in JTG, he also qualified for the South Central Workforce Alliance sponsored Youth Summer Work Program. He received a position with Sole Supports, one of the county's premier employers. (Sole Supports, part of the growing medical industry in middle Tennessee, manufactures orthotics for foot care.) Chris worked in the production lab where he assisted other technicians in developing and producing orthotic equipment. Each week, Sole Support management rated him as an excellent employee, and after his six-week assignment, management then offered Chris a full-time position. He now enjoys his job with a great company in a growing industry.



Tyler Woods



A young man placed at Sole Support is Tyler Woods, a 2010 graduate of East Hickman High School. While at East Hickman High, he participated in the JTG program. The JTG program's goal, along with the Summer Youth Employment Initiative, is to help prepare and to guide youth through their educational and career paths. "This experience has taught me responsibility and how to get along with fellow employees. I hope to continue working while taking night classes at Columbia State Community College," stated Woods. While working at Sole Support, Woods was given a variety of tasks to

complete by his supervisor Jon Warren. "He has caught on really well and has performed beyond my expectations," stated Warren.

Wisconsin

Stephanie B.

"The Summer Jobs for Youth 2009 Program was a great way to get work experience. As a Marketing Aide for the Workforce Development Center, I learned different rules that come with paid work. Also, in this hard economic time, jobs were scarce during the summer. I looked at websites for temporary work and there was nothing close to a graphic design job. Through the Summer Jobs for Youth 2009 Program, I was able to find a career related job just for the summer. Next summer, I am hoping to get co-op work, as a temporary/seasonal graphic designer. Because of this I could really use programs like the Summer Jobs for Youth 2009 Program in the future."

Eighteen year old Stephanie was diagnosed with autism when she was a baby that challenged social and academic skills. Through co-enrollment with vocational rehabilitation, Stephanie was able to get support and enroll at the Waukesha County Technical College (WCTC) in the Graphic Design program. Now that Stephanie is at WCTC, she strives to attain better oral communication skills so that she becomes more comfortable communicating with other students, teachers, family and friends. She plans on pursuing a Bachelor's degree, and continue volunteering at different non-profit organizations to gain friends and experiences.

John

John, age 18, has overcome great personal barriers to become successful with his summer youth employment experience. John was placed at A & D Machine, Inc., in Red Granite after he expressed an interest in machining. The six months John has been in the program have brought about noticeable changes such as an increased self-confidence and a more positive attitude. Currently John is attending Fox Valley Technical College for welding and working part time at A & D Machine, Inc. John has done exceptionally well at A & D, and is expected to be hired full-time.

Edwin

Edwin is a 16 year old participating in the summer employment program at Northwoods LP. He has never had a job before this opportunity. Edwin's employers appreciated his work and dedication to his job. They are supplementing his hours, allowing him to work 40 hours a week. Edwin is learning important job skills and work ethic while helping out his employer.

Emily

For 19-year-old Emily, giving up has never been an option. Born premature, and with ocular albinism, a genetic disorder that rendered her legally blind, Emily has been conquering insurmountable odds since the moment she was born. With no intention of quitting any time soon, she has found success through the Shades of Green Summer Youth Program with Workforce Connections, Inc. Emily was placed with the UW-Extension office where she wrote and typed articles for newsletters and local newspapers, made publicity calls for the Energy Fair, assisted at the 4H Youth Camp, and lent a hand with the Juneau County and State Fair. Emily is also currently enrolled in the Western Technical College GOAL program where she is completing some preparatory work for entrance exams.

Austin and Seth

Both Austin and Seth know and appreciate the value of working at the historic Stonefield Site to receive job experience and skill-building, in addition to helping with their family's economic situations. With the money Austin made, he helped out his family with groceries and gas. His father is out of work due to a back injury he incurred while working at a cheese factory. While his funds helped with those necessities, he also set some aside to take his family camping for a week - a much-needed respite in difficult times. "I wanted to make sure they had some time to have fun this summer," he explained. This is Austin's first job experience, although he has done much volunteering. He said the summer job reinforced his desire to enter farming after high school because he likes to fix things and see a good job accomplished.

Seth's funds go to three main areas - helping his parents with gas money, paying the bills at home, and obtaining school clothing. The 17-year-old soon-to-be junior at Lancaster High School is considering three post-high school fields: culinary, butchering, or carpentry, with the latter having the inside track due to his experience this summer of repair jobs such as cutting fence posts to size. Seth really enjoys the work and doesn't want it to end after the eight-week period. He said, "I've tried to get a job, but they want someone who is older or more experienced." He thought the work would be harder, but realizes that if you enjoy something, it doesn't seem like work. He has used his newly-acquired work etiquette in his everyday life.

Wyoming

Leslie

Leslie was a 16-year-old young woman in the custody of the State of Wyoming due to child abuse/neglect. In addition, she had a new baby of her own. She was referred to WIA at the Cody Workforce Center by her caseworker. Leslie had a desire to make her life better. Youth workforce specialist, Jim Delozier, was able to place Leslie in an ARRA work experience at Yellowstone Behavioral Health as a receptionist. It was a complete success! She completed the work experience – even while recovering from a surgical procedure. Near the end of her senior year of high school, Leslie received more work experience; this time under traditional WIA, at the Park County Library restaurant, the Biblio Bistro, in Cody, as a Bistro Helper. Once again, Leslie performed her job in an outstanding manner. She also completed a CNA course and was accepted into the 3-year nursing program at Northwest College in Powell, with a demanding class load for a young, single mother. Leslie is definitely up to the challenge. She secured financial aid and currently lives with her son in campus housing. Jim is very confident she will become a Nurse; a profession that will suit her well. Leslie is a great example of someone with the odds stacked against her, who received really good support from caseworkers, foster parents, school, WIA, and other resources. The thing that made it all work for her was her own

drive to succeed. Jim was very happy to play a small part in her success story. It was very refreshing to see a young person with her outlook and desire for success.

Whitney

Whitney was an 18-year-old recent high school graduate when she applied for WIA funding to assist her with training. Whitney wanted to enter the health care field and, having spent a good deal of time with her aging grandmother, Whitney very much wanted to work at the Manor (nursing home) in Newcastle to make a difference with the elderly in their quality of life. Whitney was working as a clerk for her mother at SaversMart when she applied for WIA. SaversMart is a second hand store selling a wide variety of used items. Whitney had aspirations of having a career that she enjoys, and that provides her with an income to support herself. Whitney began the CNA classes with 10 other students, in a brand new venue. Eastern Wyoming College Outreach partnered with the Weston County School District #1 and the Newcastle Workforce Center, to utilize the old school building in Osage, Wyoming as a county-wide training center. The CNA class was the first use of the old building which had been a Kindergarten through 8th grade school for the tiny unincorporated village of Osage. The superintendent and high school principal worked tirelessly cleaning and moving old items out of the proposed new classroom environment, and moving in new items needed for training CNA students, including a hospital bed and other common nursing home-type furnishings. Whitney did well in her training. She successfully completed, and passed the state licensing allowing her to be a CNA. Workforce Specialist, Candy Driver-Ratigan, said the Newcastle Workforce Center was also able to fund a work experience for Whitney at the Manor Nursing Home, and she has now been a valuable team employee at Weston County Health Services.

Terry Settlemyre

In February of 2009, the guidance counselor from Dubois High School called Terry Settlemyre, Riverton Workforce Specialist, and said she had someone that could really use some assistance of any kind. He came from a single parent family that was making ends meet, but just barely. If the Workforce Center, could find him a job for the summer, it would be doing them a big service. Seth was a quiet, soft-spoken young man but very confident; one of those people you just like right from the start. As Terry started into the interview, he asked Seth to tell a little about himself. The answer Terry received was not expected. He talked about his mother and how hard working she was, about school and the things they were doing, about growing up in Dubois. Not once did he mention anything about needing a job to help make ends meet.



Terry was sure the counselor knew what she was talking about so he quizzed Seth further about the job and why he wanted to work for the summer. After careful thought, he said that if he had the job, maybe his mother wouldn't have to work quite so hard and he could buy his own clothes for school next year. He said he had thought about going into the restaurant business and becoming a chef when he graduated.

Looking for a job for a summer youth in Dubois is definitely a plan-ahead thing, when all the tourists get there. In the off season, the restaurants run on a skeleton staff and most of their people come on in late April and May for the tourist season. So by the time the kids are out of school, most of the slots are filled. After checking with the Town, Terry convinced Seth that if he would try it there and didn't like it, Terry would do his best to find him a prep cook job. Seth stayed the summer. He was assisted through a WIA work experience component.

In the spring of this year the Town of Dubois approached Terry with an idea. They would like to have Seth back again but this time as a Water Treatment Plant Operator trainee and after the training period, keep him on as a full time employee. Seth was in favor so a waiver was obtained to exceed the training budget limit. The agreements were put in place and Seth was on his way to becoming the new Water Treatment Plant Operator for the Town of Dubois.

Amy Cross, Dubois Town Clerk, wrote an e-mail about the Town's partnership with the Department of Workforce Services, serving Seth. She said, "I am impressed to see how through cooperative players a work study program has developed to provide opportunity for Dubois to grow their own."

The Dubois School, Dubois students, Mayor, Job Services, [Department of Workforce Services] WQPCA, Kim Parker of DEQ, and Tim Hayes are all cooperative players. These efforts were inspired by a young man that cares about the environment and wants to continue to live in Dubois. These efforts will give him a good opportunity —with no guarantees —but in the least if Seth can gain an entry level certification, this is something that he can take to any small Wyoming Town."

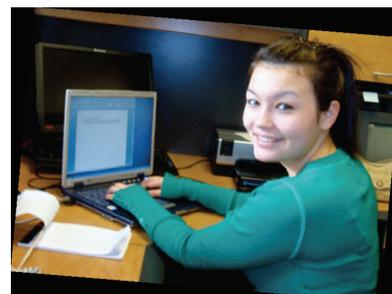
Just as a passing thought, Terry was up there recently monitoring, and had a hard time finding Seth. He had the Treatment Plant running smoothly, so he'd grabbed a weed eater and was beautifying the city park.

Workforce Investment Act American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) *Participant Stories*⁴

Alaska

Dylanne Nassuk

Dylanne Nassuk, a young woman from the remote village of Koyuk on the Bering Straits near Nome, worked as an Office Assistant for the EET Division in Nome, and successfully completed her Summer Youth Employment term. Dylanne also graduated this spring from Koyuk High School and will be attending the University of Alaska Anchorage this fall.



Alfred Charliaga



Alfred Charliaga is an 18-year-old Alaskan Native student in Kodiak, Alaska who did not graduate with his class. Alfred has taken four years of architectural drafting at Kodiak High School and is spending his summer working on an architectural project funded by the Workforce Investment Act and the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act. Alfred was recruited by the Kodiak Learning Café to complete his requirements for a high school diploma and to use his drafting skills to design a 3 dimensional version of the plans for a new high school in Kodiak. Alfred excelled academically by moving to a level 7 (the highest level) on KeyTrain® in Applied Mathematics and Reading for Information. He will earn high school credit for his academic performance. In addition, he learned how to use sketch up and sketch up pro to take two dimensional architect plans and build them into a 3-dimensional model. He has spent hours researching green design and is building a school that meets the needs of Kodiak students and the community, and is energy efficient. Alfred comes to work on time every day, is focused on the job, and is a team player. Alfred will complete all the requirements for his diploma by August 30 and is planning to pursue a career in architectural drafting. His success is directly related to the Kodiak Summer Youth Employment Program and the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act.

Arkansas

Johnny Myrick

Johnny Myrick is a special kind of success story. He comes from a broken family with a multitude of barriers. Like the good big brother he is, he came into our Booneville office with his younger sister to return her application for our program. He wasn't thinking of himself at the time and didn't realize that



⁴These stories were compiled from state Program Year 2009 WIA Annual Report Narratives. Each state's report is available at: <http://www.doleta.gov/performance/results/AnnualReports/annual-report-09.cfm>.

he too was eligible to work through the TANF-WIA Summer Employment Program. Even though Johnny is only 19 years old, he had been out on his own for quite some time and had struggled to get by on money he earned doing odd jobs and a small allotment of food stamps. He dropped out of school in the 10th grade and now realizes how hard life can be without job skills or an education. With no one to guide or encourage him, Johnny did not have the confidence to return to school to earn his GED, or to secure a meaningful, steady job. That all changed when he walked through our doors. Johnny has had a tremendous transformation of his life over this short summer. His Case Manager, Ms. Kyle Cummings took Johnny under her wing and gave him the encouragement he needed to consider the possibilities that were available to him. He was hired to work in the maintenance department for the Booneville Human Development Center at 40 hours per week. He was so proud to be able to earn a decent wage, and he managed his earnings very carefully. His appreciation for his job has been evident in his attitude and commitment. He has taken his position very seriously and has proven himself to be invaluable to his Supervisor and his fellow staff members. They see the potential in this young man, and the respect he gives and receives has strengthened his confidence to the point that he is now ready to enroll in GED classes. His employer is so impressed with Johnny's work ethic and good manners that they are considering hiring him as a permanent full-time employee once he completes his GED. They have been very supportive of him and are willing to work around his class schedule if needed, in order for him to accomplish that milestone in his life. Once those around this fine young man saw the true value in him, he was able to see it in himself as well. His outlook on life has changed and he is now ready to take that next step into his new life. World, meet Mr. Johnny Myrick...

Colorado

Bob

Recently laid off from his job as a computer support consultant, Bob sought out Arapahoe/Douglas Works! for assistance in upgrading his Microsoft SQL certifications. With support from the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) through ARRA funding, Bob updated his certification and is employed making \$95,000 a year.

Kentucky

Mallori Carter



gave Mallori the opportunity to fulfill her dream and become self sufficient.

Mallori Carter always knew that she wanted to work in the health care field as a registered nurse or a nurse anesthetist. During her senior year in high school, Mallori participated in a Medicaid nurse aide class, a program that prepares students to work in long term care facilities. She obtained her certification to become a nursing assistant and knew immediately that she wanted to pursue this career. ARRA funds and WIA services through the Barren River Area Development District (ADD) gave Mallori the tools she needed to pursue a Bachelor of Science degree in nursing at Western Kentucky University. She found a position with the Medical Center in Bowling Green. Stimulus funds

Yulanda Bradshaw



Through the Cumberland Workforce Investment Act (WIA) adult program, Yulanda Bradshaw enrolled in the physical therapy assistance (PTA) program at Somerset Community College (SCC) using ARRA funds. While a student, she was presented the American Physical Therapy Association (APTA) 2010 Minority Scholarship Award at the APTA National Conference and Exposition in Boston. This award is presented annually to physical therapy students who have demonstrated academic excellence, community service, service to the physical therapy profession and made significant contributions to multiculturalism efforts in their communities and college campuses. In addition, Yulanda received the John T. Smith Scholarship and was elected as a SCC student

ambassador and president of her class while in college. Yulanda was able to get the education she needed to pursue her dream career and excel in the classroom and community because of the Cumberland WIA and federal funds. She graduated with an associate of applied science degree and is now preparing for the certification test.

Andrew Compton

The Green River Workforce Investment Act (WIA) received approximately \$600,000 of federal stimulus funds to place 104 youth and adults with local employers during the summer of 2010. The statewide WorkNow Kentucky program provided valuable work experience to eligible participants through ARRA. For participant Andrew Compton, WorkNow Kentucky also led to summer employment for his wife and daughter. Andrew, a skilled carpenter, was faced with little work and lots of expenses. Through the WorkNow program, he was placed with J.R. Williams TV, Appliance & Satellite in Ohio County making repairs to the company's 100-year-old building. In addition, his wife and daughter were hired temporarily by the company in different positions.

Although the jobs were only temporary, it has placed the family in a better financial situation, increased each person's skill level and provided them with work experience.

William Lancaster

William Lancaster, a 19-year-old sophomore telecommunications major at Murray State University, spent his summer doing what he likes to do – computer technology, and he got paid for it. As a WorkNow Kentucky participant, William was employed by the Jefferson County Public Schools Information Technology (IT) Program, through KentuckianaWorks and the YOU Center as the contractor. During the summer, William got a variety of experiences including reimaging computers, repairing machines and setting up machines, wiring computer labs in schools for Internet access, and computer network infrastructure set-up. "It's giving me experience with the work, of course, but personally it's teaching me small things that will help me later – job skills, job etiquette," he said. In addition to getting hands-on experience, William is proud to be able to earn money for school and to purchase things he wants like a new computer. His summer job gave him a way to contribute to the household. "It gave me financially a way of contributing back to the family," he said.

Jacob Johnson

Through WIA youth and on-the-job-training (OJT) programs, Jacob Johnson gained work experience, occupational specific training, employment level TABE scores and a permanent employment opportunity. Jacob participated in Summer Works, the ARRA-funded West Kentucky Workforce Investment Act (WKWIA) summer youth employment program where he worked at Hopkinsville

Electric System (HES). When he completed his work experience with the Summer Works program, Jacob looked for direction to accomplish his occupational goals. WKWIB staff referred him to the Youth Workforce Connections (YWC) program at Hopkinsville Community College where he enrolled for training. Jacob completed gas metal arc welding for entry-level occupational specific training. The program coordinator worked with HES administration to provide an additional 500 hour work experience to further develop Jacob's skill set. Once he completed the training, Jacob transitioned into temporary employment with HES. A short time later a position on the right of way crew became available at Pennyrile Electric. WKWIB staff worked with this employer to provide an OJT opportunity for Jacob. Following a 90-day probationary period he transitioned into permanent status as an employee of Pennyrile Electric. Jacob's supervisor at Pennyrile Electric states that he is doing really well and that the previous experience he acquired through the WIA programs placed him in a better position than others who begin with no previous work experience.

Louisiana

Bryan and Ryan Wright

The devastation from the recent oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico has decreased the economic development along coastal Louisiana. As a result, many residents in the town of Jean Lafitte have experienced tremendous financial distress. In order to assist the oil spill victims, Jefferson Community Action Programs (JeffCAP) decided to create the Lafitte Summer Youth Job Program to employ youth to help support their families. The six-week program started in July 2010 and has employed 31 participants. The youth, ages 16 – 24, worked at various Jefferson Parish departments and centers. The program also has career and technical professionals who serve as mentors to provide these young people with real on-the-job experiences and valuable life skills. Lafitte residents Bryan Wright and Ryan Wright are stellar examples of the program's goal. The 21-year-old twin brothers worked at the Lafitte Senior Center as administrative assistants. While learning how to manage various office tasks, they have also learned how to sew. The Wright twins attended a sewing class for the center's senior citizens. They have worked diligently to produce several quilts for the town citizens who are sick or bereaved. "I told myself that I want to learn how to sew, and I am going to learn," Bryan said. He said the center's sewing teacher is a professional tailor, and she taught him how to use a sewing machine for the first time. "This job helped me to pick up a new skill that I never had before." Sewing has definitely intrigued the brothers. They both admitted to their childhood dream of becoming top-notch fashion designers someday. Ryan said the Summer Youth Job Program might help them to turn that dream into a reality. "I do love fashion," Ryan said. "This could be a good thing."

"This job helped me to pick up a new skill that I never had before."

Michigan

Antonio Battle

Antonio Battle worked a variety of unfulfilling jobs throughout his life and was ready for long-term, sustainable employment when he visited a local Michigan Works! Service Center in Muskegon/Oceana.

Battle was selected to participate in the ARRA summer youth employment program and was placed at ADAC Automotive as an assembly/maintenance worker. He was responsible for a variety of basic

duties, including performing safety inspections, under the direction of his supervisor. Because of his efforts and abilities, Battle was given an opportunity to assist a manufacturing engineer and to be a member of an inspection team. This experience enabled Battle to learn more about lean manufacturing and provided hands-on training. Battle's excellent performance, attendance and attitude did not go unnoticed. When the ARRA summer youth employment program work experience ended, his supervisor requested that he continue working with the organization permanently, and Battle accepted the offer.

Battle reached his goal of self-sufficiency by earning a competitive wage, which not only allows him to provide for his family, but provides a sense of accomplishment and success.

Mississippi

Emma Breitbarth

Veteran Emma Breitbarth, a Learning Support Representative, was laid off from the Caterpillar Remanufacture Plant in Corinth, Mississippi in March of 2009. She endeavored to find suitable employment that would match her job skills and education level in the local area (within driving distance). After searching for several months during this economic downturn she could not find comparable employment in the private sector. As the needs of our agency increased with the addition of the STEPS program we found that Mrs. Breitbarth met the requirements of the position and she applied. During her interview the interviewers determined that Mrs. Breitbarth not only had the credentials but also the personality to perform this job with minimal training. Mrs. Breitbarth was employed by MDES on March 1st of this year. At the time of this report she is doing an exceptional job in her new career.

Montana

DB

DB, 21, single mom was hired by a private sector employer after successfully completing her work experience at the Attorney General's office. Impressed by her abilities but unable to hire her after the work experience ended, Attorney General staff referred her to the employer. She was hired in a full-time position and makes \$12 an hour.

CB

CB, 22, single mom on TANF with a premature infant at enrollment, was interested in administrative work, but needed a schedule to accommodate her child's daycare schedule and doctor appointments. CB chose a receptionist position with an insurance agency. The agency was very cognizant of CB's needs and therefore willing to work around her schedule. The supervisor also offered to mentor CB in the insurance business. CB excelled at the work and expressed an interest in a career track. CB was enrolled in ARRA Adult, WoRC program and Family Investment Center and ARRA Youth. Together, the four programs provided financial assistance for CB to attend the Connolle-Morton Insurance School where she completed and passed the property, casualty, and surety insurance licensing exam. CB has been hired by the insurance agency and currently makes \$8 an hour and works 32 hours a week.

RC

RC, age 18, was both homeless and a high school dropout at enrollment. She expressed interest in a healthcare career and she was placed in a work experience at the Hospital. While at the hospital, RC talked to many different employees to learn about available jobs. At the same time she took the GED test. In less than six weeks, RC had passed her GED test and was hired full-time by the hospital as an environmental services aide. Subsequent to those successes she completed the certified nursing assistant course at the University of Montana and passed the CNA exam. Her current job at the hospital pays \$10.19 an hour and she is hoping to apply for the next open CNA position. Her future plans are to continue post-secondary education in nursing at University of Montana. RC recently remarked that she never believed she could attend college. (RC has not lived with her family for over two years.)

JS

JS, 22, was an offender and parent of two young children at enrollment. JS was interested in learning a trade and was matched with the weatherization program. The ARRA Summer Youth program funded seven weeks of the work experience. After that time, the funding was picked up by the Youth Experiencing Security and Success program. In October a weatherization tech position was opened and JS applied. Even though JS had a criminal background, his excellent performance over the summer and dependability helped him get the job. He will now make \$14 an hour, plus benefits.

CL

CL, age 22, was a TANF recipient, dropout and parent of three children at enrollment. CL indicated an interest in a hospitality-related or receptionist position. She was placed in a work experience at the Hospital where she was a floater working as a receptionist at both the hospital and doctor's offices, as well as filling in at the gift shop. While at the hospital, CL applied for several positions and at the end of August she was hired as a full-time wellness coordinator making \$10.09 an hour.

KM

KM, 21, has a disability and had a poor work history at enrollment. KM never stayed with a job very long because of various reasons including struggling with substance abuse issues. KM expressed an interest in working with individuals with disabilities. A work experience was set up with a group home where KM thrived! The group home expressed interest in hiring KM after about six weeks. He now works full-time as a direct service specialist and makes \$9.50 an hour. The group home indicated if KM received a CNA license he would receive a \$1 an hour raise. KM is currently taking the CNA class at the University of Montana and is expected to finish in mid-December.

KO

KO, 20, was a single mom on TANF at enrollment. KO was interested in a healthcare occupation and was placed in a work experience at the Hospital in the graphic arts department. KO was determined to get a job at the hospital and applied for numerous jobs during her work experience. In October she started a CNA class at the University of Montana and around the same time she was hired by the hospital as an admissions clerk working full-time making \$11.20 an hour plus benefits.

BH

BH, age 18, was a youth aging out of foster care and had just received his GED at enrollment. BH had been kicked out of Job Corps in December 2008, for fighting. BH chose the plumber's assistant job at the College. During the work experience, his supervisor remarked that BH was willing to do the

“dirty” work that some regular employees avoided. With the work experience coming to an end, BH expressed interest in continuing a career in a trade and had a particular interest in welding. The case manager helped BH apply for financial aid and enrollment at University of Montana. BH received Pell grants and a grant from the Student Assistance Foundation. BH is finishing his first semester at University of Montana, but is unsure if he wants to continue. He is now exploring apprenticeship opportunities and recently completed an application to the Laborer’s Apprenticeship program.

B'linda

B'linda, age 19, TANF recipient and single mom, had completed her first year at the University of Montana pursuing an AAS degree in Office Technology Management at enrollment. She expressed interest in performing administrative work in a healthcare facility and was placed at the Hospital in the graphic arts department. She successfully completed the work experience and is now completing her third semester at the University of Montana.

AB

AB, 18, is a single parent and has a learning disability and had recently graduated from high school when enrolled in the summer program. AB has a desire to work with special needs children. During the summer she successfully completed a work experience at the hospital as well as her enrollment and financial aid applications for her first semester at University of Montana. In September she started post secondary and is planning to get a two-year degree in Early Childhood Education. AB is eligible for another work experience program funded by the Department of Public Health and Human Services. Through this program she is being matched with Family Outreach where she will have an opportunity to work as a direct service specialist for children with disabilities.

KH

KH, 20, was a homeless youth with a felony. At enrollment he was struggling to find any employment because of his criminal background, but he had saved enough money from his last job to pay the tuition at University of Montana for the CNA class. KH has a career goal of being a nurse practitioner. KH has a deferred sentence---meaning if he pays his fines, completes his community service and stays out of trouble, the felony will be removed from his record in June, 2010. The case manager tried to find KH a job with a healthcare facility, but KH continued to fail the background check. In the meantime, a work experience was developed with a property maintenance business where KH performed lawn maintenance, minor repairs, painting and other custodial duties. In September, KH passed the CNA test. He also passed a CPR and First Aid classes in October. Just recently, the case manager was able to arrange a short-term work experience with a local group home for 160 hours. If KH successfully completes the work experience, it is very likely he will be hired. KH is planning to enroll at University of Montana in January, 2010 to begin the nursing program.

LN

LN, 21, is a single mom on TANF. LN also struggles with the challenges of being an insulin dependent diabetic and related health issues. LN expressed interest in law enforcement, administration or nursing. LN chose the Department of Justice’s Criminal Investigations Bureau as her summer worksite. LN initially struggled with attendance problems, but DOJ altered her work schedule so that she could work four days a week and one day a week could be used to meet her appointment obligations. This accommodation, along with personal and career mentoring helped LN realize employment success. LN now has a goal to pursue a degree in criminal psychology. She has completed her FAFSA and is planning to start classes at University of Montana in January, 2010.

Jasmine Edwards

The Shade Tree provided transient youth with summer work experiences that in the past, has not been considered. Furthermore; most of these youth were residents and lived at the facility because they were homeless. A total of 42 students participated in The Shade Tree's summer youth jobs program. With the dedication and commitment of Program Director, this student Jasmine Edwards was able to realize a goal that she now knows is possible!



"It's been a long road in my life. I wasn't able to choose all the circumstances that have befallen me. However, there comes a time in your life when regardless of the situations you go through or the people you have encountered; you have to take responsibility for you. You can't wallow the past to determine your future or let people to decide it for you. At times all you will have left is you.

I owe a lot to Shade Tree. They helped me become a stable, self-reliant, and productive citizen. Just months ago I had almost completely given up my dignity, home and almost myself respect only to resign myself to a life on the streets. I was always independent and strong-willed, but the streets seemed to whittle away at my inner strength, breaking me down. Then I read a book, which helped me to change my perspective and attitude. This in turn led me to return to The Shade Tree. This time would be different, I was sure of it. Once again I began the process of making sense of my life and myself. Finally, I got my 'big break.' I saw a flyer for a summer youth work program and began to inquire about the program. I am 24 years old so I was barely eligible; however I took full advantage of this rare opportunity. The youth work program helped me to overcome many obstacles that otherwise would have been difficult to achieve on my own. Sometimes in life I think we forget that we need others to help us and that we need to help each other.

The youth work program helped me to gain skills and experience I wasn't able to acquire because sometimes if you do not have experience in certain professions employers won't even give you the opportunity to gain the skills needed. They will just consider you inept and hire the next person prepared for the job. This youth work program not only gave me well needed skills and experience, but also something I almost lost. Hope!

I have been through insurmountable hurdles in my life however chronic homelessness and stable employment were the hardest obstacles I needed to overcome. The Shade Tree and the youth work program helped me to accomplish these difficult feats.

A few months after I was employed I moved into my first apartment. Also, when the youth program was extended they allowed me to continue working. Finally, because I proved that I was a reliable, punctual, and ethical worker, The Shade Tree embraced me and brought me into the family. I have always admired all the staff and the work they do to help thousands of women to become self-sufficient, stable, and independent. I am thankful daily to The Shade Tree and the youth work program for allowing me to do the same for others. I am very proud to say that I am now a member of The Shade Tree staff."

New Hampshire

Karen

Karen is 56-years-old, single, and self-supporting with only one year of college. She had been out of work for two years. Her previous job was Director of Marketing earning \$65,000 a year. When she walked into the NH Works office in July 2009, Karen had used up all available unemployment, her 401K, and most of her savings. She did not have medical insurance, felt like the world no longer needed her, and that she was no longer of value. She could not stop crying, let alone get out of bed and perform basic activities of daily living. Somehow she had the strength to reach out one more time. When she came to the office, it was clear she needed attention beyond WIA. The WIA Counselor called the local health clinic and got her in to see a health professional immediately. The WIA Counselor worked with Karen providing career counseling, including the development of a new employment plan. Karen followed the plan, continued with her medical counseling, and in two months was ready to tackle an intense training program to upgrade her skills and make her marketable again. Karen attended and completed the ARRA funded Web Design track at Blended Solutions in Manchester. She is now employed at Prospect Hill Leads for Technology, in Nashua, NH, as their Marketing Director. This company is a start-up company, and Karen is earning \$20 per hour.

New Mexico

During the summer of 2009, the Workforce Connection of Central New Mexico (WCCNM) received nearly \$2.6 million in federal stimulus money for programs throughout the Central Region, with \$1.2 million for summer youth employment programs in Bernalillo, Sandoval, Tarrant, and Valencia Counties. The funds were intended to help stimulate economic growth in the region, and help youth receive valuable work experience, work readiness, and educational improvement skills.

Ms. G

At the time of enrollment into the WCCNM Summer Youth Employment Program in Valencia County, a young lady, Ms. G was pregnant, basic skills deficient, parentless, and 17 years of age. When Ms. G came into the program, staff saw in her the determination and commitment it takes to graduate from high school, raise a child on her own and continue on to post secondary education. Staff contacted Garcia and Associates, a CPA firm in Los Lunas. Upon speaking with Garcia & Associates they verbalized a need for a mature, older applicant, simply because accounting tends to be a rather dry field, not offering much excitement. Staff was able to convince the firm to interview Ms. G, even though she did not meet some of his specific requirements. Garcia & Associates called staff shortly after interviewing Ms. G and stated, "You were right, she has determination and grit". Throughout the summer Ms. G continued to come to work on time, was a quick-study and took the initiative and performed tasks on her own. Ms. G received "excellent" ratings on all her evaluations. Ms. G completed her hours and went back to school in the fall. In November 2009, Ms. G delivered a beautiful baby boy and in December graduated from Los Lunas High School. In January, Garcia & Associates was able to come up with additional funding for another employee and brought Ms. G on board permanently where she continues to do an excellent job. At last contact with Ms. G, she informed staff she was attending UNM/VC and had shifted her concentration from architecture to forensics. She is not sure whether she will stay with her current concentration, but is determined to complete her four-year degree. Ms. G thanks the WCCNM and the summer program for allowing her to receive meaningful work experience, ensuring a brighter future for her and her son.

Ms. A

A young lady, Ms. A enrolled in the WIA Summer Youth Program on May 11, 2009 in Sandoval County. Ms. A is 17 years old, just completing her junior year in high school. As a single mother and being basic skills deficient, she had many barriers to employment. Ms. A requested summer work experience to earn some money, gain experience and to support her and her child. Ms. A completed the BEST Training and was placed at the Town of Bernalillo- MVD, as a clerk/receptionist. Her duties included filing, answering phones, and customer service. Her supervisor said that she did an excellent job at accepting directions, and she made good progress on her performance throughout the summer program. Ms. A successfully completed her 200 hours of work experience, gaining valuable skills that will assist her in attaining and retaining employment in the future. Since completing the summer program, Ms. A completed her senior year at Independence High School and graduated in May 2010. In addition to attending school and graduating from high school, Ms. A maintained a part-time job. Ms. A now expresses an interest in joining the Navy and wants to eventually work for the FBI.

D.G.

A young man, D.G. enrolled in the 2009 WIA Summer Youth Employment Program at the age of 22-years-old in Torrance County. D.G. lived with his mom, stepdad and siblings and was burdened as the main caregiver for his family, as his mom was ill and could not work. D.G. requested work experience to earn money to help support his family and to gain job training to assist him with finding employment in the future. D.G. completed the BEST Training and was placed to work at the City of Moriarty, to assist their maintenance and repair crews. D.G. is basic skills deficient and was referred to tutoring with an online tutoring program to increase his basic skills. D.G. successfully completed his work experience, gaining good work skills. He is currently living in Albuquerque and working for Central New Mexico Rural Electric Cooperation (CNMEC) as a lineman. D.G. recently visited the WCCNM office to update staff on his successes and to thank the program for giving him the skills he needed to find employment to support himself and his family.

Ms. LMT

A young lady, Ms. LMT enrolled in the WIA Summer Program for services in May 2009 in Bernalillo County. She was 22-years-old, born and raised in Chihuahua Mexico. She became a permanent resident of the United States in December 2005 to help improve her future goals. She had minimal work experience but was eager to learn and establish her career, improve her skills and gain meaningful work experience. Ms. LMT completed the BEST training and was placed to work at Central New Mexico Housing as a receptionist. She received excellent training and acquired great work skills. She consistently worked 20 hours per week and was rated as "excellent" in every category on her evaluations throughout her work experience. Upon completion of her training, she was hired full time by Central New Mexico Housing and is doing extremely well. She is pursuing her GED through CNM and looks forward to accomplishing her goal of completing her education. Ms. LMT expressed to staff that she would not have had this opportunity in Mexico, and that she is grateful to WCCNM for the opportunities given to her throughout the summer program.

North Carolina

Tiera Williams

Tiera Williams was eager to work this summer, but had no idea how she would find employment. When the Scotland County Schools ARRA operator began accepting applications for enrollment into



their ARRA Summer Youth Employment Program, she immediately applied and was enrolled. She began working at a local nursing home.

Williams had a narrow view of nursing home facilities and was worried that there was nothing for her to gain by working there. After just a few days of connecting with patients and working with staff, her attitude completely changed. She realized that most of the patients were confined or immobile and were unable to make choices for themselves. On the other hand, she had the freedom to go wherever she wanted and the ability to make her own decisions. She learned that the patients greatly depended on the compassion

and care given by the staff.

Williams' experience at the nursing home changed her entire outlook on life. She has become more aware of her health, food intake and daily exercise. "My experience at Edwin Morgan Center taught me to sincerely value my life, my health, the ability to walk, talk, and most importantly, the ability to care for myself," said Williams. "What an awesome experience for a college student."

Because of Williams' outstanding job performance, her work experience was extended 4 additional weeks working at a partner facility. Not only did she gain self-awareness from this summer experience, but also gained work experience, which will help her when seeking future jobs. "Each day I become more sensitive and caring to other people due in part of the opportunity I was afforded through the program," said Williams.

Ohio

Jalon Cleveland



For 2009, Jalon Cleveland was one of two ARRA summer youth who interned at the Juice Radio Station (107.3) in Toledo (Area 9). Cleveland took broadcasting classes at her high school, which proved to be invaluable as she was able to take part in various aspects of radio production.

Working behind the scenes, she assisted staff in creating commercials and kept the radio station organized and running efficiently. Cleveland now looks forward to a possible career in broadcasting.

Jacob Anderson

In Program Year 2009, the Madison County Youth Works Program (Area 7) served 32 youth in paid summer work experiences. As a young adult, Jacob Anderson was fortunate to participate in the stimulus program. At the age of 24, Anderson had worked a variety of different jobs, but had found it very difficult to secure meaningful employment.

For his eight-week summer work experience, Anderson was placed at Buckeye Ford as a lot attendant. Within his first couple of weeks on the job, Anderson proved to his employer that he had the determination to do well and the skill set to match. His hard work paid off and he was offered a full-time position with Buckeye Ford.



Austin Blind

As part of the WIA Summer Youth Program, Austin Blind worked at Morris Hardware in McConnelsville (Area 15). Blind did a wonderful job. As a result, Morris Hardware hired Blind to work part-time while he continues his high school education.



In Program Year 2009, the state used \$20.7 million in ARRA WIA funds to support four new statewide initiatives designed to put Ohioans back to work.

Oklahoma

Ashley Avery

Ashley Avery was a young lady who participated in the TANF Summer Youth Employment Program working as an office assistant for Mayes County Court Clerk's Office. After working there for a short time she gained the confidence to take control of her life. She found permanent employment as a home health aide for the Department of Human Services in Mayes County. She has been able to get her own home, she is self sufficient for the first time, and she is attending classes to obtain her certification.

South Dakota

Tara Poncelet



Tara Poncelet, age 20, grew up on a horse farm. Deciding that postsecondary education was not a path for her to follow, she wanted to work in an office setting. However, with only seasonal/short-term experiences to outline on job applications, Tara Poncelet was finding that job hunting in the economic downturn offered only limited options. In order to maintain her housing, she was working out her rent by doing repairs on the rental house in rural South Dakota.

When the stimulus package offered an opportunity to earn a paycheck, it was good news. When she saw the stimulus package also meant work would include training in an area of interest, the news became great!

Her rural background was just what the Superintendent of Horse Shows for the South Dakota State Fair needed with the start of summer. Despite limited formal computer application knowledge, she seemed to inherently know how to create and track contestants, stall assignments, contests, required veterinary authorizations, etc.

Soon she was not only handling incoming calls for the horse division, but other animal divisions as well. As the summer progressed and others became more stressed with the fast-approaching start of the fair, Tara seemed to become even more confident, able to see what needed to be done and do it. She was recruited to the main office to help answer incoming calls and quickly learned how to use the software application for concert ticket sales as well. All the staff appreciated her communication skills and willingness to ask questions in order to do the job correctly.

Although the 2009 summer stimulus project was ending, state fair staff wanted to keep Tara. She likes working for the state fair office but knows even if there wasn't a job for her; she would have a much better work history and references for the next job search. Much to the relief of Tara and other staff at the fair, the State Fair Board was able to offer Tara a full-time secretarial position at \$9.29/hour with benefits.

Wisconsin

Stephanie B.

"The Summer Jobs for Youth 2009 Program was a great way to get work experience. As a Marketing Aide for the Workforce Development Center, I learned different rules that come with paid work. Also, in this hard economic time, jobs were scarce during the summer. I looked at websites for temporary work and there was nothing close to a graphic design job. Through the Summer Jobs for Youth 2009 Program, I was able to find a career related job just for the summer. Next summer, I am hoping to get co-op work, as a temporary/seasonal graphic designer. Because of this I could really use programs like the Summer Jobs for Youth 2009 Program in the future."

Eighteen year old Stephanie was diagnosed with autism when she was a baby that challenged social and academic skills. Through co-enrollment with vocational rehabilitation, Stephanie was able to get support and enroll at the Waukesha County Technical College (WCTC) in the Graphic Design program. Now that Stephanie is at WCTC, she strives to attain better oral communication skills so that she becomes more comfortable communicating with other students, teachers, family and friends. She plans on pursuing a Bachelor's degree, and continue volunteering at different non-profit organizations to gain friends and experiences.

"The Summer Jobs for Youth 2009 Program was a great way to get work experience."

John

John, age 18, has overcome great personal barriers to become successful with his summer youth employment experience. John was placed at A & D Machine, Inc., in Red Granite after he expressed an interest in machining. The six months John has been in the program have brought about noticeable changes such as an increased self-confidence and a more positive attitude. Currently John is attending Fox Valley Technical College for welding and working part time at A & D Machine, Inc. John has done exceptionally well at A & D, and is expected to be hired full-time.

Female

A 22-year-old single, homeless, mother was living in a group home prior to the program in Brown County. Her work site placement was at a TJ Maxx store as a customer service representative. Her performance on the job was so good while on her paid work experience that the employer hired her part-time after the program. She now works full-time at the store, and can afford to have her own apartment and raise her child.

Johanna

Johanna had a strong desire to become a dental hygienist. She trained as a dental assistant, and by the end of summer, was able to work along-side the doctor, staff, and dental clinic students, providing direct care to patients. With staff encouragement on her career goals, Johanna was

accepted by Ministry College full-time to complete her general degree requirements, and hired on a part-time basis at the end of her summer placement.

Edwin

Edwin is a 16-year-old participating in the summer employment program at Northwoods LP. He has never had a job before this opportunity. Edwin's employers appreciated his work and dedication to his job. They are supplementing his hours, allowing him to work 40 hours a week. Edwin is learning important job skills and work ethic while helping out his employer.

Jared

Jared is one individual that is facing many challenges and barriers to success. He comes from a low-income family and has recently taken on the responsibility of being a father. Jared has had encounters with the law and started out this summer by doing community service. He was enrolled into the Youth Employment Program when those hours were completed and started working at the Birchwood School alongside five other students. He soon became the "leader" of the student workers – delegating work and keeping everyone on task.

Andrew

Andrew is a young man, who after a period of trouble including interaction with the court system, has set himself on a good path. He has completed an associate's degree recently, but has struggled to find his niche in the world. He is very intelligent and powered through the Work Certified curriculum like it was routine - consistently scoring top marks in the class of students. During his eligibility for the summer youth program, the TABE test administrator commented she had never seen someone score like Andrew did: the highest marks possible in all three tests; 12.9+ GE. After acing the Work Certified final exam, Andrew was placed at a work site consistent with his WisCareers Interest Profiler: in a field related to technology. Andrew has an aptitude for computers and has spent time building PC systems from the ground up. Although at times challenging to draw out in conversation, Andrew literally lit up with questions when we began discussing the possibility of working at Shawano County Economic Progress, Inc. located in our new Shawano Chamber of Commerce building. Andrew's technological abilities are being put to work on the organization's database and he has been asked to also assist the Chamber of Commerce with project work and troubleshooting. Andrew couldn't be happier, and is gaining work experience with respected organizations that will greatly assist him in opening future employment doors. The employers are very happy with him, and have called to thank us again for sending them such a talented young man.

Melissa

Workforce Resource Summer Work Education and Training program participant Melissa is currently studying to be a dental hygienist at North Central Technical College. Melissa was placed at First City Dental in Abbotsford and describes her time there as "beneficial" to her studies and a positive experience. She gained valuable practical skills directly related to her course of study and demonstrated positive work-readiness skills that will serve her well when she seeks employment following graduation.

Emily

For 19-year-old Emily, giving up has never been an option. Born premature, and with ocular albinism, a genetic disorder that rendered her legally blind, Emily has been conquering insurmountable odds since the moment she was born. With no intention of quitting any time soon, she has found success through the Shades of Green Summer Youth Program with Workforce Connections, Inc. Emily was

placed with the UW-Extension office where she wrote and typed articles for newsletters and local newspapers, made publicity calls for the Energy Fair, assisted at the 4H Youth Camp, and lent a hand with the Juneau County and State Fair. Emily is also currently enrolled in the Western Technical College GOAL program where she is completing some preparatory work for entrance exams.

Carrie

Carrie, a Construction Supervisor with Operation Fresh Start (OFS), wasn't quite expecting the crew she was assigned during summer 2009. For the first time in OFS history, she was called on to lead an all-women conservation crew. The ten women on her team - very diverse in age, background, and work experience - were challenged with land conservation projects including invasive species removal, construction and maintenance of trails and boardwalks, and other restoration projects across nearly 500 acres of land in South Central Wisconsin. Carrie explains, "It was a very unique and rewarding experience for the girls and OFS. For most of my crew, it was their first job..."

Olivia

Olivia's life changed, and almost ended, on New Year's Day in 2005. A terrible automobile accident left her with a traumatic brain injury and unconscious for two weeks. After a month in the hospital, she had to relearn basic functions like walking, memory retention, and many other things people take for granted. Today she has made almost a full recovery. She spent the summer of 2009 working as a Surgery/Lab Administrative Assistant using her Certified Nursing Assistant skills to provide patient care and observe the role of a Registered Nurse (RN) in a hospital setting. "This program helped me gain confidence in myself and move forward and be successful," Olivia said. She will use her earnings to help pay for college which she starts this fall as she works toward her RN degree.

"This program helped me gain confidence in myself and move forward and be successful."

Austin and Seth

Both Austin and Seth know and appreciate the value of working at the historic Stonefield Site to receive job experience and skill-building, in addition to helping with their family's economic situations. With the money Austin made, he helped out his family with groceries and gas. His father is out of work due to a back injury he incurred while working at a cheese factory. While his funds helped with those necessities, he also set some aside to take his family camping for a week - a much-needed respite in difficult times. "I wanted to make sure they had some time to have fun this summer," he explained. This is Austin's first job experience, although he has done much volunteering. He said the summer job reinforced his desire to enter farming after high school because he likes to fix things and see a good job accomplished.

Seth's funds go to three main areas - helping his parents with gas money, paying the bills at home, and obtaining school clothing. The 17-year-old soon-to-be junior at Lancaster High School is considering three post-high school fields: culinary, butchering, or carpentry, with the latter having the inside track due to his experience this summer of repair jobs such as cutting fence posts to size. Seth really enjoys the work and doesn't want it to end after the eight-week period. He said, "I've tried to get a job, but they want someone who is older or more experienced." He thought the work would be harder, but realizes that if you enjoy something, it doesn't seem like work. He has used his newly-acquired work etiquette in his everyday life.

Leslie

Leslie was a 16-year-old young woman in the custody of the State of Wyoming due to child abuse/neglect. In addition, she had a new baby of her own. She was referred to WIA at the Cody Workforce Center by her caseworker. Leslie had a desire to make her life better. Youth workforce specialist, Jim Delozier, was able to place Leslie in an ARRA work experience at Yellowstone Behavioral Health as a receptionist. It was a complete success! She completed the work experience – even while recovering from a surgical procedure. Near the end of her senior year of high school, Leslie received more work experience; this time under traditional WIA, at the Park County Library restaurant, the Biblio Bistro, in Cody, as a Bistro Helper. Once again, Leslie performed her job in an outstanding manner. She also completed a CNA course and was accepted into the 3-year nursing program at Northwest College in Powell, with a demanding class load for a young, single mother. Leslie is definitely up to the challenge. She secured financial aid and currently lives with her son in campus housing. Jim is very confident she will become a Nurse; a profession that will suit her well. Leslie is a great example of someone with the odds stacked against her, who received really good support from caseworkers, foster parents, school, WIA, and other resources. The thing that made it all work for her was her own drive to succeed. Jim was very happy to play a small part in her success story. It was very refreshing to see a young person with her outlook and desire for success.



EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING ADMINISTRATION
UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF LABOR