

SUCCESS

Newsletter for Lake County Workforce Development 2015 vol.5 ed. 1

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Lake County Workforce Development works with job seekers to assess their skills, research career options and to plan a road map to get them to their next job . Sometimes that path involves a paid work experience to help the job seeker gain new credentials and validate their newly acquired skills.

Read the stories of a few recent work experience participants on the next two pages.

This program is made available by the Workforce Investment Act funding provided by the Illinois Department of Commerce & Economic Opportunity.

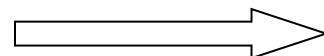
IT Training + Work Experience = Success

When **Patrice** was laid off after more than 15 years working for a large cellular company, she wanted to freshen up her management and IT skills. She completed over 500 hours in business analysis, project management and Agile software at *Directions Training Center*. When she finished training, though, she wanted to add a new type of employment to her portfolio. Workforce Development staff coordinated a three-month work experience for her at the Lake County Regional Planning and Development office where she worked on a project revamping their complex fee structure.



In September 2014, Patrice was hired permanently as an **IT Solutions Manager** for Devry Education Group where she oversees technology content within their virtual lab. She is now responsible for advancing, managing and delivering various types of applications and technologies to service the needs of the student base. She says her job requires close collaboration across various functional teams.

We recently caught up with four other work experience participants.



Work Experience Participants: Where are they now?



Charles was laid off after 15 years as a Telecommunications Technician for a large media corporation. Workforce Development funded him for CISCO training, then sent him on to a three-month work experience in the Lake County IT department. He was hired permanently in November 2014 as a **PC/Telecommunication Technician**.



Yolanda was hit hard during the economic downturn. She was let go from an accounting position in 2009 and held temporary tax preparation positions in the following years but needed steady employment. The layoff convinced her that she needed a degree and she enrolled in courses at the College of Lake County. Yolanda graduated with an Associate Degree in 2013 and is currently completing additional certification in accounting. Workforce Development funded her for a three-month work experience at the Department of Transportation in 2014. She was hired as an **Office Associate** at the financial aid office of a local college in January 2015.



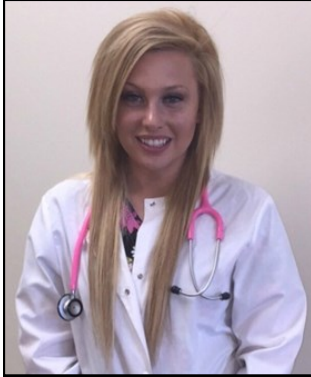
Chris was laid off from an IT position with a global safety science company after 22 years. He looked for work for almost year before connecting with Workforce Development. He decided that PMP (project management) certification would enhance his marketability. Following training, he was offered a work experience with the Lake County IT department. Shortly thereafter, he secured a position as an **IT Consultant** with a company that specializes in technology-based products for the government sector. He says his work experience with Lake County made this an easy transition.



Yamilia was a lawyer in Cuba but could only secure a temporary job as a line worker when she moved to the United States. When she was laid off, Workforce Development funded Yamilia to receive a certificate in Human Resources. She completed a three-month work experience for the Lake County Health Department and also began volunteering at the Job Center of Lake County. She assisted individuals with resumes and job search. In January 2015, she was hired in a temp-to-perm position as a **Human Resource Coordinator** with a large electronics manufacturing company.

Medical Careers

STARTING OUT



Ashley just turned 21 a few months ago but she is rapidly building a career for herself in the medical field. Like many young people, she worked in the retail field for a few years after high school but says she didn't have an opportunity for advancement in the field. When she talked to Workforce staff members about her dilemma, she was funded for two months of training in medical office assisting at *First Institute*. The certificate from that program helped her to land her first job as a **Receptionist** at a medical office. She didn't stop there, though.

While working full time, Ashley attended classes at *Computer Systems Institute* and completed training to become a **Certified Phlebotomist** and **Medical Assistant**. She continues to work at the same medical office where she started two years ago but has received multiple raises as she adds to her credentials and experience.

CONTINUING UP THE LADDER



Anthony stopped by the Job Center in February 2015 to use a computer to print, sign and send his current employer confirmation papers regarding his recent promotion. Anthony worked with staff members from the Job Center six years ago during a time of transition. He had relocated to Lake County and lived first in transitional housing with the Salvation Army, then the Oxford House. Job Center staff taught him to set up a resume and to conduct an online job search. He was soon hired for a food service position with a contractor at a hospital. He has worked at the hospital ever since, even though the food service contractor has changed twice.

Anthony's new job title in 2015 is **Patient Transporter**. He moved into his own apartment four years ago and just received a raise with increased benefits. Best of all, his employer has a 'back to school' program that will help him to pay for additional medical training. He plans to become a Patient Care Technician. What is Anthony's key to long-term stability in his job? *"Once you get in, hold your position. Stay away from gossip and remember what you're there for."*

TRANSITIONING FIELDS



Since she started working at 15, **Deedee** was never unemployed until the day she was laid off from her job of 12 years in an accounts payable department. She looked for work for several months on her own but potential employers told her she needed a college degree to be hired. Staff members from Workforce Development met with Deedee to discuss her career goals; she was approved for funding under the Workforce Investment Act and started coursework at the *College of Lake County* in 2013. Deedee graduated with an Associate Degree in Medical Assisting in July 2014 and found a job within just 2 weeks. She is currently employed as a **Medical Assistant** in the urology department of a local hospital. *"Getting my degree was the key to getting this job,"* she explained.

Trainees

TRAINED IN PROJECT MANAGEMENT



When **Gerardo** was laid off in 2014, he spent 6 months looking for work without success. Although he had extensive management experience in the IT (information technology) field, he found employers were looking for up-to-date credentials within the field. He qualified for funding through Workforce Development and completed four months of advanced courses at *MicroTrain Technologies* in project management and computer systems (ITIL, CCNA & SharePoint). During this time, he filled out 10-25 applications and contacted 5-10 recruiters weekly. He saw a position with a large financial services company listed on LinkedIn. After multiple interviews and assessment testing, he was offered the position. He started as a **Production Support Manager** in January 2015. Gerardo says that jobseekers need to be tenacious and strategic in their job search. *"Have a powerful resume posted on job sites along with a strong LinkedIn profile. Make yourself visible to hiring companies and search firms."*

TRAINED IN TRUCK DRIVING



Shahram had experience as a lawn technician but wanted a better job that was not just seasonal. After looking for 5 months, he contacted Workforce Development and was approved for truck driver training at the *College of Lake County*. He attended training from February to May 2014 and was hired almost immediately for a position as a long haul truck driver. He kept looking for opportunities that were closer to home. In early 2015, he was hired as a **Tow Truck Driver** for a local company. He is planning to open up his own tow truck company by next year. He tells other jobseekers to research aggressively and talk to everyone when looking for work.

Lake County Workforce Development can pay for qualified jobseekers to receive short-term training. Training opportunities target sectors designated as high demand by Lake County businesses.

Ask the WIB

All Lake County Workforce Development programs operate under the oversight and strategic guidance of the Lake County Workforce Investment Board (WIB). Recently, we asked WIB member Michael Stevens about the economic landscape in Lake County and the new High Priority Occupation List, which is available on the Job Center website (www.lakecountyjobcenter.com).

1. What should job seekers understand about Lake County's economy in order to be successful?

Lake County's economic outlook is bright, but as a job seeker, there are definitely certain industries that are poised to do better than others in the coming years. Understanding that economic growth for the County won't necessarily be distributed evenly across all industry sectors can help job seekers identify what career pathways they want to explore further. Lake County is well positioned to excel in these target industry sectors:

- **medical instruments**
- **health care**
- **bio pharma**
- **arts/entertainment/culture**
- **professional/technology services**

2. What is the High Priority Occupation List and how should job seekers use it?

The High Priority Occupation List identifies occupations within targeted industry sectors that are growing, pay a livable wage, and are on a career pathway. Based on economic and labor market statistics, the list can help a job seeker find not just a job, but a career in an industry where they could advance along a pathway—all while earning competitive wages. Job seekers can use the list, in addition to information about their own aptitudes and skills, to make a career plan, not just find a job. In order to maximize our investment in job training, the Workforce Investment Board has adopted a new policy to focus funding for training programs primarily on occupations on the list.

3. What does the High Priority Occupation List have to do with economic development?

When I'm out talking with businesses about what they need in order to be successful, they tell me all the time that finding the right talent is critical to their decisions about all kinds of investments. From where to open a new factory to how quickly to grow their operations, the decision is often driven by whether or not the business can find the workforce they need. Aligning our workforce training funding with our economic development planning through the High Priority Occupation list will put Lake County in the best position for growth. This alignment and growth can have a powerful impact, both on our overall economy and for individual workers and their households.



As President and CEO, Michael Stevens leads Lake County Partners, a 501 (c) 3 economic development corporation that works to maintain economic vitality and quality of life in Lake County. Michael is responsible for leading efforts to attract and retain jobs, stimulate capital investment, and pursue economic diversity. Michael is a proud graduate of The Ohio State University where he received degrees from the Fisher College of Business and the John Glenn School of Public Affairs.

Lakecountypartners.com

5 Steps to Your Next Job

Lake County Workforce Development offers a one-week workshop series called '5 Steps to Your Next Job' once a month at various locations in Lake County. Individuals who participate in the 10-hour series learn the latest job search techniques and receive a certificate at the end of the week. Read below to see where some '5 Steps' participants are now.



Hazel attended '5 Steps' in July 2014. After completing the workshop series, she continued working with staff who helped her reformat her resume and enroll in computer software training. She secured a retail job for a month but was determined to use her new computer skills. After a determined search, Hazel was hired in March 2015 in a temp-to-perm position as a **Purchasing/Administrative Assistant** at a healthcare supply company. She learned about the opening in an email that she received from the Job Center. *"I'm happy," she said, "This is exactly the position that I wanted."*

Jarrett was once a semi-pro football player but, most recently, he has held a variety of short-term jobs. *"I knew I was talented and had skills," he says, "but I didn't consider myself a hard worker."* Recently, he decided to make a change but he says he felt like he was missing something as he applied for job after job. A felony on his record from an incident as a teenager didn't help either. Jarrett attended '5 Steps' in February 2015. He says he learned to really research companies and careers and to use the terminology or keywords of his desired field. In March 2015, he secured a job as a **Business Coordinator** for a business development firm. He had previous telemarketing experience which helped him to excel during training at the company. Jarrett says that the difference between this position and his previous jobs is that he walked in with a thorough understanding of the company and job. He posted a chart at his desk to remind him of his daily and long-term goals. During his orientation, he learned a saying that resonated with him. *"Hard work beats talent when talent stops working hard."*



RESEARCH

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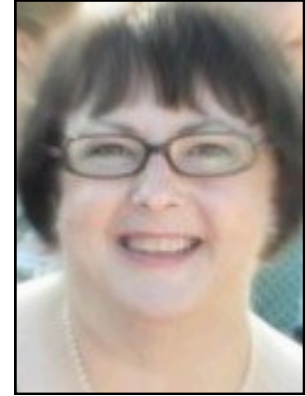
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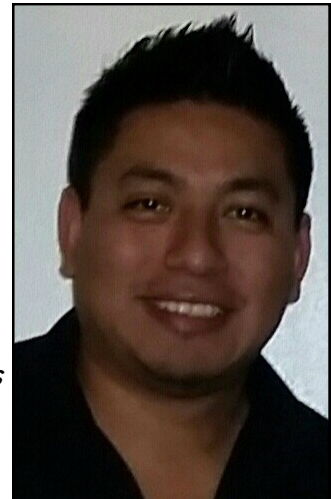
5 Steps to Your Next Job

When **Mary Beth** was laid off from her position as an office manager at an orthodontic office in July 2014, she saw it as an opportunity to spread her wings. She wanted to find a way to transition into the corporate world but felt she needed to know more about current job search techniques. She completed '5 Steps' in October 2014. She says the workshop series opened her eyes to how involved the job search process is. She filled a few brief temporary positions which, she says, gave her confidence and a feeling for working in a corporate environment.



In December 2014, she interviewed with a placement agency for a direct hire position as a **Receptionist** with a property management firm. She was hired permanently for the position and says she loves the variety of her job. Although she earns less than she did at her previous job of 23 years, she negotiated to receive health insurance as a part of her job.

Juan had over a decade of experience in the social service field but was looking for a career change when he stopped at the Job Center to file for unemployment insurance online. He was confused because his resume didn't net any results; a staff member told him that the '5 Steps to Your Next Job' series would be perfect for him. He attended in October 2014. He says he likes that the workshop series was spread out over a week. *"It covered everything from labor market information to interviewing and elevator speeches. It really opened up my eyes that I had skills that could help me transfer into a new field."*



A staff member sat down with Juan to revamp his resume and his job search took off. In December he landed a full-time position as an **Inside Territory Sales Representative** for an industrial supply company. *"I am very grateful for the '5 Steps' series and staff who taught it. They made this transition possible."*

RESEARCH

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Job Center of Lake County

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TRAINING • CONNECTING • DEVELOPING ILLINOIS' WORKFORCE

An equal opportunity program/ employer. Auxiliary aids and services are available upon request to persons with disabilities.

Attention employers! Take advantage of the no-cost recruitment and training solutions provided by Lake County Workforce Development. Call 847.377.3450 today and ask for a business-service representative.

Business Services



Lisa and Brian from Challenge Unlimited staffed a table at the Job Center in February 2015 to inform the public about job opportunities through their organization at Great Lakes Naval Base. Challenge Unlimited is a non-profit organization dedicated to providing work opportunities to individuals with disabilities.



During the winter holidays, Ty Taylor of Kelly Services was busy recruiting for positions with a large pharmaceutical company. However, her office was being renovated and she needed a space to interview and assess candidates. Workforce Development provided space for her at the Job Center. Over 20 individuals secured employment in December 2014 through that partnership.

"We always have a good turnout at our scheduled onsite recruitments . . . I value our partnership with the Lake County Job Center and I look forward to continuing our progress with putting qualified candidates back to work."

Ty Taylor, Kelly Services