

SUCCESS

Newsletter for Lake County Workforce Development **vol. 8 ed. 2**

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Lake County Workforce Development is a partner in the Job Center of Lake County. Workforce Development receives grants from the U.S. Department of Labor including Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) and Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) grants to fund programs designed to cultivate and connect employers and the workforce.

Workforce Development coordinated several **Work Earn and Learn (WEL)** programs with local employers in 2018. WEL programs are an opportunity for individuals to receive exposure to a high demand occupation/industry and be trained by industry professionals in an actual workplace setting. Workforce Development partners with employers to identify occupations, develop a curriculum and training plan that leads to a credential, and to provide a paid work experience for the right candidate.

Wondrell made a commitment to start looking for a career and not just his next job and applied for the **Work Earn Learn (WEL)** program delivered by Workforce Development. Wondrell was enrolled in the WEL program at the Lake County Division of Transportation (LCDOT). The WEL program at LCDOT offered him an opportunity to gain new skills in the transportation field while earning a paycheck and learning new skills in a demand occupation. Wondrell was enrolled in a six-month work experience at LCDOT where he followed a comprehensive training plan that was led and supervised by industry professionals. Wondrell successfully completed the program and earned a Commercial Driver's License (CDL) class B as well as additional industry-recognized credentials including: flagger, forklift, CPR, and First Aid certificates.



As Wondrell was completing the WEL Program, he began working with the business service team at the Job Center of Lake County and applying for jobs with various transportation companies. Shortly after Wondrell submitted his resume and application to TKG, Environmental Services Group, LLC, an environmental waste hauling and recycling company that serves Northeast Illinois and Southeast Wisconsin, he was contacted for an interview and was offered the job of **Sweeper** in June 2018. Wondrell operates a vehicle and equipment that cleans construction, parking, street and municipal sites. The position with TKG offers Wondrell career growth and behind-the-wheel experience.

Workforce Development qualifies individual jobseekers for Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) training funds. The goal is to help unemployed and underemployed individuals gain skills necessary to compete in the current market.

John had years of experience in the publishing industry and was working for a startup company when the company closed and he found himself unemployed. John wanted to transfer to a high-growth industry but found this particularly challenging because his network was all in publishing. John decided to pursue a universally-recognized certification in Salesforce to update his skills and be more competitive in his job search. John contacted the **Job Center of Lake County** for assistance, qualified for WIOA training funds and enrolled at the **Computer Training Institute of Chicago**. John completed the coursework in Salesforce Administration 201 and passed the certification exam in July 2017.



Even with the certification, John found the market was challenging without related work experience. John accessed online tutorials to gain more Salesforce experience, and he volunteered with several community agencies where he put his Salesforce training to use. The volunteer experience increased his confidence and ultimately led to several job offers.

John was hired in February 2018 as a **CRM Business Administrator** at **United States Gypsum**. He advises other job seekers to stay active in their job search. “Networking is crucial; you have to go to events even when you don’t feel like it.”

Workforce Development also administers Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA)—a federal program that provides a path for employment growth and opportunity through aid to workers who have lost their jobs as a result of foreign trade.

Shawnel was laid off in 2016 after 17 years as a Sourcing Specialist when her job was sent overseas. A former supervisor had told her that a lack of a college degree was holding her back from better pay and opportunities.

When Shawnel learned that she qualified for educational funding through the TAA program, she enrolled in classes at Carthage College. Shawnel completed a **Bachelor’s degree** with a double major in Business and Marketing in May 2018. She was hired as a **Procurement Supervisor** at **Reynolds Consumer Products** just two months later. Her new job represents a 24% salary increase.



CLC's Adult Education and ESL Division is a partner in the Job Center of Lake County. It offers a Step Up transition program to help students begin a career. The Step Up program uses the Integrated Career and Academic Preparation System (ICAPS) approach in providing academic and wrap-around student services to adult education completers who enroll in a college certificate program.

The College of Lake County (CLC) and the Job Center of Lake County united forces in early 2018 to launch a young man into his first job. **Joshua** completed his high school equivalency diploma at CLC in early 2017. He enrolled in medical training during the fall semester and passed the state Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA) licensure exam in December 2017.



With his educational goal successfully completed, Joshua began his job search and worked with the Job Center staff to prepare his resume and practice his interviewing skills. Joshua was ready to meet with employers at the first annual Lake County Healthcare Job Fair in February 2018. The Healthcare Job Fair was a collaborative effort between the Job Center and the Lake County Health Department to bring together healthcare professionals, newly trained healthcare job seekers, and more than 20 healthcare employers.

Joshua met with success at the job fair. The Grove at the Lake called him in for an interview the following week, and he immediately began working as a CNA at their senior-living facility in Zion. Joshua says that he loves the fact that the medical field allows for growth.

Workforce Development helps businesses by funding training to allow current employees to increase their skills, retain employment and progress in their careers.

As part of the business outreach and engagement strategy, Workforce Development met with Payson Casters, Inc. to better understand the company's workforce needs. Payson was interested in learning how Workforce Development can assist with the training and development of current employees. Vice President J. Katherine Kuroski identified an employee, Lynn Daniels, who had been working at the company as a building maintenance specialist for four years and had not had formal training or an industry certification. The Workforce Development team proposed a workforce solution to address the employee's skills gap—utilizing WIOA grant funds for training within the Mechanical Engineering Technology program at the College of Lake County. Lynn is currently enrolled in this work-related training course. With proper training and certification, it is a win-win for Payson and its employee.



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The Job Center of Lake County is an equal opportunity employer/program. Auxiliary aids and services are available upon request to individuals with disabilities. All voice telephone numbers may be reached by persons using TTY/TDD equipment by calling TTY 800-526-0844 or 711. To request accommodations, contact dharris@lakecountyil.gov or 847.377.3423.

Lake County Workforce Development has broken down the job search into five defined steps and delivers a series of workshops called “5 Steps to Your Next Job.” Attendees receive the most up-to-date job search techniques and an invaluable opportunity to network with other job seekers and workforce professionals.

When **Connie** decided to return to work after 20 years as a stay-at-home mom and volunteer, she realized that her approach to finding a job was very outdated. She connected with Workforce Development and attended “5 Steps to Your Next Job” in January 2018.

Connie said that she found the series to be “incredibly helpful.” Workforce staff helped her articulate the value of her time at home and as a volunteer in addition to her 14 years of experience working at the Federal Reserve Bank of Chicago. “I was feeling very overwhelmed because finding a job in today’s world is quite different from when I started working.”

Workforce Development team members sourced Connie’s resume to several local employers and encouraged her to not give up. In September 2018, she was hired as a Deputy Clerk in the Appeals Division of the Office of the Clerk of the Circuit Court in Lake County.

Erin Cartwright Weinstein, Clerk of the Circuit Court, noted that her department’s interview process involves multiple personnel and can be intimidating for new candidates. However, she found that Connie was very well prepared. Erin reports that Connie “is amazing...a hard worker who learns quickly and is very reliable. We really appreciate her.”

