

# SUCCESS

Lake County Workforce Development is a partner of the Job Center of Lake County. Workforce Development receives grants from the US 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.

## Lake County Workforce Development

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## Healthcare Career Pathway Training

**Lake County Workforce Development qualifies individual jobseekers for Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) training grants available through the U.S. Department of Labor.**

**Ronny** was working as a Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA) at an assisted living facility with a career dream of becoming a Registered Nurse (RN). Ronny knew there were steps involved to achieve that dream and contacted the Job Center to learn more about the steps and apply to Workforce Development for WIOA grant assistance with schooling.

Ronny qualified for training grant funding under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) and started coursework to become a Licensed Practical Nurse (LPN) at State Career College, Waukegan, IL. As a dual parent working family, Ronny and her husband balanced their work and school schedules with childcare for their young son. These challenges continued when COVID-19 started and classes were moved to an online



format. Since Ronny continued her part-time CNA job, she often found herself studying until midnight. Ronny successfully finished the program in October 2020 and became the first student in her class to pass the National Council Licensure Examination (NCLEX-PN).

In less than a month Ronny began working as an **LPN** earning over \$25 per hour at two work sites: Zee's Healthcare, LLC and Village at Victory Lakes. Ronny's not done on her career pathway and plans to obtain her Bachelor of Science in Nursing. When asked what advice she would give to other job seekers, Ronny stated *"Never give up if you want something good in life. You must work hard, be patient and be determined no matter what. Grab the opportunities afforded to you!"*



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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.

## Work Experience Boosted Her Skills

**The Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessment (RESEA) delivered by the Illinois Department of Employment Security (IDES) targets unemployment insurance (UI) claimants who are assessed as likely to exhaust benefits. IDES collaborates with Workforce Development to serve and assist the individuals in transitioning to their next job.**



**Michelle** loves to work with data and numbers. She had commuted into Chicago for almost 20 years to work as a bookkeeper and fundraiser. When she was laid off in November 2019, she wanted to stay in her field but work closer to home. Since she had not worked in Lake County in several decades, though, she did not know what was available to her in the area.

After she filed for unemployment insurance, Michelle was contacted by an Employment Service Program Representative from the Illinois Department of Employment Security to discuss her employment options and goals. She was referred to the WIOA program administered by Lake County Workforce Development and applied for a paid work experience. Within a week, she had two interviews with potential work sites and started a work experience at the Lake County Assessor's office in February 2020. Unfortunately, the work experience ended after four weeks due to the pandemic.

After a few months, Workforce personnel connected her with another paid work experience at the Lake County Health Department. Her first assignment there was quite different from her previous experience, as she started out by processing rabies certificates for the animal control department. When she

demonstrated organizational skills with this project, Michelle's supervisor gave her additional assignments at the Health Department. When a position was advertised for a **Senior Account Specialist** at the Health Department, Michelle's supervisor encouraged her to apply. She interviewed and was hired in January 2021. Michelle explained, "I've had this extensive background of coming in every day and asking my employer where I'm needed." She believes that this flexibility, along with help from IDES and Workforce Development, helped secure her a permanent job in a rough market. She describes her new job as a good lifestyle fit. The position challenges her daily while allowing her to work close to home.

## Landing a Job Through Virtual Training and Resources

**The Workforce Development Department converted many services to a virtual format during the pandemic. Starting in April 2020, individuals interested in WIOA Training could learn about services and apply online. Many training providers simultaneously converted to a remote learning experience.**

When **Brian** was laid off from a position as a Practice Manager for a private radiology group, he looked for work for almost 7 months. He applied online for WIOA training through the Virtual Information Session in May 2020, expressing a desire to enhance his skills in business analytics and Microsoft products. He soon started a remote course offered by IT Career Lab to complete a certificate as a Microsoft Certified Solutions Associate (MCSA). He completed training in Excel, Access, Power Query and PowerBI. Brian said that his Career Specialist remained engaged with him throughout his training and supplied him with additional learning resources through LinkedIn Learning to help him enhance his professional profile.

Brian dedicated 2 hours daily to job search, using online job search engines, networking, following up on emails from job recruiters and practicing his job search technique. He landed a position as an **Instructional Data Analyst** at the North Chicago School District 187 in January 2021.

