

# SUCCESS

## A New Career

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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Lake County Workforce Development is dedicated to working with young people ages 18 to 24 as they enter the workforce. “The youth program and services remained mission-focused during the pandemic,” explained Jennifer Everett, Program Manager. “Young people need to be connected to careers regardless of environmental pressure. This is the start of their professional lives.”

Jodin graduated from high school in 2017 and worked a variety of labor jobs but was ready for a change and wanted to build a new career in business. His grandmother recommended that Jodin contact the Job Center of Lake County regarding career coaching and training. He participated in career awareness and job readiness activities including resume assistance, financial literacy, and leadership development. Ready to go to work, Jodin was a candidate for an internship/ work experience opportunity.

Jodin interviewed at the Lake County Treasurer’s Office and started a paid work experience there in June 2021. During his six-month internship, Jodin was exposed to different roles and responsibilities in the office while receiving on-the-job training, coaching, and mentoring. He stated that the position allowed him to improve his customer service and math skills and increased his attention to detail. He describes the Treasurer’s Office as “the best place I’ve worked so far.” Jodin’s supervisor said that he was initially reserved and kept to himself but grew in confidence throughout the internship.



Jodin (pictured center) with two supervisors at the Treasurer’s Office

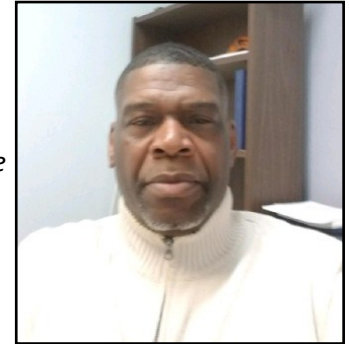
After successful completion of the internship and demonstrated job skill gains, Jodin was hired permanently as a **Real Estate Tax Information/ Collections Specialist** at the Lake County Treasurer’s office. He works on the front line of the busy office, interacting with property owners in Lake County. He resolves problems concerning accounts, analyzes statistical data, and prepares reports.

Jodin’s long term goal is to complete a college degree in business and gain financial stability to buy a house. In his current role, he is learning different rules and regulations for home ownership and says that he will have a better understanding about buying and keeping a home.

The paid work experience program is a successful solution subsidized by Workforce Development. Qualified job seekers are matched with paid internships and employers, allowing individuals to gain new skills that they can add to their resume or to establish contacts or credentials in a new career field. The two stories below illustrate the benefits of a work experience.

## Work Experience Benefits Job Seeker

**Norman** is a military veteran with extensive experience in counseling. He has worked with veterans, homeless individuals, and diverse populations. During the past 20 years, he has deliberately changed jobs frequently to gain experience with different types of counseling. When Norman lost his job during the pandemic, he found his job search to be challenging. Norman stated, *“Connecting with potential employers solely using Zoom or telephone made my job search feel impersonal.”* Norman also disliked the fact that he didn’t have a daily routine. He explained, *“I’ve been working since I was 12. I’m used to getting up and going to my place of employment first thing in the morning.”*



When Norman applied for unemployment insurance, the Illinois Department of Employment Services (IDES) referred him to the Job Center of Lake County. Ready to get back to work, Norman was interested in an internship/ work experience opportunity. Norman was matched with a work experience at Nicasa Behavioral Health Services. The work experience gave him exposure to areas of counseling that he had not explored. Because of his success in the program and his dedication to helping others, Norman was hired as a **full-time counselor**. Norman performs evaluations, facilitates intensive outpatient groups online, completes intakes, and creates reports. Norman is currently working on a Ph.D. in Criminal Justice and has no plans to slow down. He stated *“I want to be a positive influence in any way that I can. Someone helped me when I needed it. I feel responsible for giving back.”*

## An Internship Leads to a Fresh Start

A former resident of Lake County, **Patti** returned in 2021 after many years of living in another state. She found it was challenging to reestablish contact with employers and to identify positions aligned with her long-term career goals. She needed income while pursuing her goals and landed a position as a receptionist. While researching on the Job Centers website, Patti was able to access information about career and employment services. She was thrilled to discover that Workforce Development offered internships/ work experience opportunities and she applied for the program. Patti was contacted immediately and qualified to participate in the program. Patti stated, *“I was excited to get a call, and that the process started moving very quickly.”*



Because of her experience in office support and supervision, Patti was a good match to support the City of Waukegan’s Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) office. She was placed in a six-month work experience and, upon successful completion, Patti was hired permanently as an **Office Supervisor** with the City of Waukegan in March 2022. She stated, *“If I can do it, they can too at any age. People don’t know what’s out there, and that there are resources to help people. I am going where the Lord leads me. I am going to keep working, learning, growing, and traveling.”* Pleased with the services she received, Patti refers friends and neighbors to the Job Center and reports that a friend quickly landed a new position.

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](mailto:dharris@lakecountyil.gov) or 847-377-3423.