

LOCAL WORKFORCE INVESTMENT AREA 23

NEW CAREER PATHS TO SUCCESS



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Illinois Eastern Community Colleges



C.E.F.S Economic Opportunity Corp.

From July 1, 2009 through April 30, 2010, Local Workforce Investment Area 23 has served over 2600 customers. As a result of the Workforce Board's focus and C.E.F.S. case management support, many customers have been able to pursue their dreams and goals. Please join us in recognizing a few of those that have attained their personal career goals despite significant obstacles.



Charles "Nolan" Atteberry

Flat Rock, Illinois

Case Manager: Denise Brinkley

After losing his job of twenty years, Nolan seized the opportunity to train in the Welding program at Lincoln Trail College. He was excited to be among the first welding students to receive welding training at Lincoln Trail College. Qualifying for TAA assistance and receiving supportive services from the WIA Dislocated Worker Program, Nolan began his journey with a positive attitude. He finds the silver lining of each course that he takes and finds ways to relate them to his life. Nolan will graduate this spring with his welding certificate. He is confident that he will find a good job with his new skills.

Laura Coblentz
Camargo, Illinois
Case Manager: Erma Tison



Laura Coblentz dropped out of school at the age of 17 to take care of her special needs child. She got her GED a few years later. Laura became a stay at home mother of seven, operated a home based business and home schooled her children. When her husband was injured and no longer able to work, Laura decided that she needed to train in a vocation that would support her family. She enrolled in the WIA Title 1A – Adult program. Laura’s field of interest was nursing and after talking with her WIA case manager, she decided to attend training at Parkland College in the Nursing Program. With her family’s support, she worked hard on receiving excellent grades. Any grade below an “A” was difficult for her to accept. Laura not only strived for personal excellence but became a part of Parkland College. She received an invitation with the International Scholar Laureate Program that is bestowed on the top 1 percent of students in the nation. She represented the U.S. in a nursing delegation to South Africa to study HIV/AIDS. She was Parkland College’s All-USA academic team nominee and All Illinois academic team member. Graduating with a 4.0 GPA in Parkland’s Nursing program, Laura earned the Norma DeVore Scholastic Achievement Award for having the highest grade point average. She was on the National Dean’s list, Honors Program and Phi Theta Kappa International Honor Society. Laura is currently employed as a Registered Nurse at St. Mary’s Hospital in Decatur but she is not finished yet. Laura has set a new goal and is working towards an advanced degree as a nurse practitioner.



Janet Dukeman

Tuscola, Illinois

Case Manager: Erma Tison

Janet Dukeman, a single mother with three children still at home, found herself homeless after leaving an abusive marriage. With local support she received assistance from HUD that funded a Homeless Program thru the Embarrass River Basin Agency. It was during this time that she was referred to the WIA program. Building a new future for herself and her children, Janet was enrolled into the WIA Title 1A – Adult program in August 2008. Her goal was to become a Registered Nurse. She completed her pre-requisites and received news that she was accepted into the Advanced Degree in Nursing Program at Parkland College. Besides attending classes that were demanding of her time and energy, she managed to provide for her family on a limited income. She lost her oldest son, 31 years of age, four weeks before her training ended. Through it all, Janet continues to move forward towards the future. She is a positive influence for her children and those around her. Janet has passed her State Boards and graduated with her Nursing Degree from Parkland College in May 2010.

Terry Ewing

Flora, IL

Case Manager: Pat Cooper



Terry received her Certificate in Massage Therapy from Olney Central College in May 2010. Terry was laid off from a qualifying Trade event. “Taking lemons and making lemonade”, Terry enrolled with WIA as a Dislocated Worker and qualified for TAA assistance. She had held many types of employment to-date but this opportunity offered her the chance to train in an occupation that was enjoyable and satisfying. Always striving for perfection, Terry tackles problems head-on. Experiencing difficulty in Medical Terminology and Anatomy classes, she requested a tutor and worked hard on her grades. She received straight A’s for the semester. She appeared on the Chief Executive Officer’s Honor Roll list. After graduation, Terry will continue completing her clinicals while waiting to take her State Board exam. Terry’s desire to help others not only shows her interest in the health care field but in her willingness to assist fellow students when needed. Her ability to relate to others will go far as she enters into employment. She is hoping to open her own business in a couple of years. Terry is married and has two sons.



Rita Hart

Robinson, Illinois

Case Manager: Maureen Hays

After losing her husband, Rita Hart wanted to be closer to family. So she packed up and moved from Tennessee to Robinson, Illinois. Rita's daughter, who was currently enrolled in the CEFS program, training to become a nurse, referred her to CEFS for employment assistance. Enrolling in Title 1A – Adult program, Rita with the aid of her WIA case manager, began the process of seeking employment. Rita's prior employment was with car dealerships. Unfortunately this market had been hit hard by the economy and was losing employees not adding them. Working with her WIA case manager they put together resumes, cover letters and practiced interviewing techniques. They identified her transferable skills and in doing so were able to find potential employment in other types of businesses in the area. Rita's positive attitude and persistence won her several job interviews and eventually a permanent position with an area employer. Rita's journey to employment took 35 days. Her commitment of time and energy and winning attitude is a testament to her job seeking. She never gave up and met the challenge head on. Even though Rita's journey began on a tragic note she has embraced change and made it part of her life. Rita is enjoying her new job and the best part is being close to family.

Jennifer Michel
St. Peter, Illinois
Case Manager: Charlene Nelson



The words “perseverance and determination” come to mind when describing Jennifer’s quest to become a nurse. Jennifer was enrolled in WIA training in the Title 1A – Adult program. Jennifer’s journey was not an easy one as she overcame obstacles along the way. It was Jennifer’s support team, her husband, three children and her CEFS/WIA case manager that enabled her to endure these hardships to achieve her goal. Spending several hours of driving daily and putting in hours of study time each evening, Jennifer reached her goal, receiving a Bachelor of Science in Nursing from Lakeview College of Nursing/EIU. It was with “perseverance and determination” that Jennifer is now employed in a full time position in the Oncology Department at St. Johns Hospital in Springfield.



Billie Osmon

Sumner, Illinois

Case Manager: Judy Seitzinger

Billie Osmon's dreams of becoming a Teacher's Aide became possible when she was laid off from ATS. Qualifying for TAA assistance and receiving supportive services from WIA as a Dislocated Worker, she set off to earn her degree in Early Childhood Education at Wabash Valley College. Setting her goals high, Billie worked hard to achieve them. Spring semester 2010, Billie began her internship at Pace Community Action Agency in Vincennes, Indiana as a Head Start Teacher's Assistant. Billie was such a good fit for their organization that they decided to employ her as a full time Teacher's assistant. With support from her husband and five year old son, Billie has been able to concentrate on her new job while completing her school work. Billie completed her training in Early Childhood Education with an Associate degree in May 2010. She is looking forward to working with children and being a part of shaping their lives in positive ways.



Krystal Pruden

Salem, Illinois

Case Manager: Rosemary Gordon-Young

Krystal was steadily working towards her degree in Respiratory Therapy at Kaskaskia College when she was finally accepted into the CEFS Title 1A – Adult program. Limited funding in WIA had restricted putting additional people into school. She was denied twice because of lack of funding. Krystal had three semesters left to attend when she was accepted into the WIA program. Working a part time job and attending classes, Krystal remained focused. Income appeared to be a major obstacle. Struggling to make ends meet, she was forced to ask for assistance from local agencies to make it through some hard times. Some close to her rallied around and encouraged her and others wanted her to quit. However, Krystal's goal was straight ahead of her and she was going for it. She was able to realize some relief with the help of the WIA program. Child care, travel expenses, uniform assistance, licensing and exams and other costs were provided through WIA. Krystal received her degree in Respiratory Therapy from Kaskaskia College in May 2008 and completed her licensing in December 2008. Krystal has a husband and two children that have taken this journey with her. She was recently employed full time as a Respiratory Technician at Belleville Memorial Hospital.



James Daniel Slover

Cisne, Illinois

Case Manager: Donna Duncan-McCormack

Having had a difficult experience in grade school and high school, “Dan” was hesitant in returning to school. He had worked in factories since graduating high school. However, after being laid off from Hella, Dan found himself without work and needing marketable skills for the area. With the support of his wife and three children, Dan began the Collision Repair Technology program at Olney Central College with TAA assistance. By the end of his first semester Dan had a GPA of 4.0 and was on the Chief Executive Officer’s list. With one semester under his belt and a positive experience, Dan was set to continue working towards his goal. If asked, he is very glad about returning to school. He is looking forward to completing the Collision Repair Technology program and returning to the workforce.

Ryan Swain

Bridgeport, Illinois

Case Manager: Judy Seitzinger



With weekly hours being cut by his employer and struggling to support his three children and himself, Ryan contacted WIA for assistance in finding sustainable employment. Working with his WIA case manager, they explored available employment in the area to no avail. Ryan already had a Mechanic certificate but felt that he needed a degree to make him employable. He began his education at Wabash Valley College seeking an Associate Degree in Diesel Equipment Technology. Many of his past classes transferred over to the new degree reducing the amount of time he would need to achieve his goal. He knew he needed to get back into the workforce quickly. As a result he took overloads of classes each semester. His determination to succeed made him an excellent student. He was able to turn his internship into a full time position at the end of his training. Ryan graduated in December 2009 with an Associate Degree in Diesel Equipment Technology. He works on oil field equipment on a full time basis and now has extra time to spend with his children. Ryan has worked hard to get where he is today and expects no less from others. He is certainly a role model for his children and is currently mentoring another Diesel Technology student.



Sammy Tyner

Kansas, Illinois

Case Manager: Debra Schumacher

Sammy Tyner entered the WIA program as a Dislocated Worker. He was laid off from his employment because of lack of work. Prior to his last employment, he was an ex-offender. Sammy's goal was obtaining a degree in Human Services from Lake Land College. He wanted to assist those that "fell through the cracks" of the system. Sammy took his mission very seriously. He began taking classes summer semester of 2007. During his time as a student at Lake Land College, he was a TRIO Ambassador for two years, 2008-2009 President of Common Corners, a 2009 Lake Land College Laureate nominee for personal achievement and success, was listed on 2009 Who's Who in American Students, Honors List, Dean's List and President's List. He is a mentor for ex-offenders and an ERBA volunteer explaining ERBA's programs to ex-offenders as well as a community volunteer with a church food bank. Staying the course, Sammy graduated from Lake Land College at the end of December 2009 with an AAS in Human Services. He is currently working towards a BA in General Studies at Eastern Illinois University. He would like to continue working with ex-offenders reintegrating into society.

Jennifer Williams
Brownstown, Illinois
Case Manager: Melody Lilly



Jennifer enrolled in the WIA Dislocated Worker Services program after being laid off from Dawn Foods in St. Peter, Illinois. With her current skills, Jennifer knew it would be difficult to find employment in the area. She decided to train in an occupation that was marketable and that would lead to self-sufficiency. Upon exploring options, she decided on the Massage Therapy program offered at Lake Land College. With this goal in mind, Jennifer was driven to succeed. Her desire to work for area hospitals or clinics was dashed when research showed that most Massage Therapists were self-employed and referrals were generally made by the hospitals or clinics. Keeping this in mind, Jennifer decided that starting her own business would allow her to use her training and would best serve her needs. Jennifer worked hard to achieve her goal as a Massage Therapist. She is now an entrepreneur and her business continues to thrive.

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Workforce Investment Area 23 Board



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