

# SUCCESS

## The Lake County Workforce Development Newsletter

Winter 2011/2012

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### Medical Trainee Becomes Phlebotomist

**Doreen** had just sold her last IRA in order to pay rent in August 2011 when she was hired as a [Phlebotomist](#) by Life Source. “*The timing couldn’t have been better.*” She had spent the past three years in what she calls “*employment uncertainty*”, trying to transition from manufacturing into the medical field.

She was laid off from an office position with a large pharmaceutical company in 2007. Following that she spent over a year caring for a relative with Parkinson’s disease. This experience reminded her how much she enjoyed caring for others. When she learned about the **Workforce Investment Act (WIA)** training grant, she decided to apply.

After meeting with a Career Specialist at the **Lake County Job Center**, Doreen decided to enroll in medical training at the

College of Lake County. When she graduated in May 2011, she had three certificates: Medical Assisting, Phlebotomy and Medical Office Assistant. She received a job alert about the opening at Life Source from the [SimplyHired](#) website. She went to the interview with a portfolio featuring her certificates and letters of recommendation from former employers and teachers. She was hired in September 2011 and receives a full benefits package. She is part of a mobile unit that visits organizations that are having blood drives throughout the county. She draws blood and processes donations. Every day on the job is different.

Doreen says the three years of career transition were worthwhile. “*When you love what you do, it’s not a problem to get where you’re going.*”



### Professional Resume Gets Results

**Raymond** stopped by the Job Center in December 2011 to update his resume after happily working for nearly two years as a *Mental Health Technician/ Counselor* at an agency that specializes in the treatment of substance abuse. He worked on his first resume with a Workforce Development staff member in 2009 and asked for the staff member again when he recently returned. In the interim, Raymond had been promoted once and completed training at the College of Lake County. He hopes to soon earn his CADC (*Certified Alcohol and Drug Counselor*). When asked why he keeps returning to the Job Center, Raymond said

that he appreciates the quality of service the staff members provide. “*I came in and we didn’t waste any time. I got what I was looking for—a professional looking resume.*”

For information about resume assistance and other workshops, view the schedule at [www.lakecountyjobcenter.com/calendar](http://www.lakecountyjobcenter.com/calendar) or call 847.377.3450.



## Workforce Investment Act (WIA) Training Reflections

Lake County Workforce Development administers an adult training grant through the **Workforce Investment Act (WIA)**. We can send qualified jobseekers to training to help them get a career with better pay and long-term growth. Here are some examples of people who attended training and found new jobs:

### WIA in action in Lake County

479 people were served by intensive training services between July 2010 and June 2011!

The Waukegan Job Center recorded 17,808 usages of the public computers during the same time period.

TRAINING COMPLETED	HIRE DATE	NEW JOB TITLE	SALARY
Accounting	12/2010	Director	\$120,000/yr
CIS Management	1/2011	Teacher	\$20/hr
Network Plus	10/2010	Counter Sales	\$18+/hr
Health and Wellness	9/2010	Massage Therapist	\$13/hr
IT Management	3/2011	IT Management	\$84,000/yr
Janitorial Services	1/2011	Janitor	\$10/hr
LPN Training	5/2011	LPN	\$19/hr
LPN Training	4/2011	Nurse	\$44,000/yr
Management Associate	3/2011	Customer Service	\$10/hr
Marketing Certificate	5/2011	Marketing Specialist	\$38,000/yr
Medical Assisting	5/2011	Medical Assistant	\$13/hr
Medical Assisting	8/2010	Production Assistant	\$21,000/yr
Microsoft Application	4/2011	Office Clerk	\$11/hr
Multi-Media	3/2011	Computer Representative	\$48,000/yr
Network Plus	10/2010	Counter Sales	\$18+/hr
Project Management	1/2011	Engineer Consultant	\$70,000/yr
Project Management	12/2010	Manager Process	\$126,000/yr
Project Management	10/2010	Project Manager	\$47,000/yr
Project Management	11/2010	Senior Data Analyst	\$75,000/yr
Project Management	2/2011	Software Engineer	\$95,000/yr
Quality Management	12/2010	Insurance Agent	\$24,000+/yr
Quality Management	3/2011	Team Assembler	\$11/hr
SAP	4/2011	SAP Analyst	\$54,000/yr
Teacher Certification	3/2011	Administrative Assistant	\$27,000/yr
Truck Driving CDL	4/2011	Truck Driver	\$14/hr
Truck Driving CDL	2/2011	Delivery Truck Driver	\$11/hr
Truck Driving CDL	5/2011	Truck Driver	\$18/hr
Web Page Design	5/2010	System Analyst	\$48,000/yr

## Workforce Investment Act Programs for High School Students

A number of programs for high school students are funded through the **Workforce Investment Act** and overseen by **Lake County Workforce Development**. One goal of these programs is to build long-term relationships between youth and employers while enhancing the educational skills of participants. A second goal is to promote post-secondary education or training. Participants currently in Lake County, these programs include:

- **Future First** at North Chicago High School
- **Shine** at Waukegan High School
- **Jobs for Bees** at Zion-Benton High School  
*“These students come from backgrounds where they’ve had challenges in their academic or career success,”* says Jennifer Everett, Program Director. *“We want to give them a broader vision, perhaps for the first time, of what they can do with their lives.”*

### Some typical activities for participants include:

- After-school tutoring
- Career awareness activities
- College visits & field trips
- Work experience/ internships
- Follow up and encouragement after graduation

### Determination Pays Off for Noah



One of fourteen children, **Noah** joined the **Jobs for Bees** program in the fall of 2010 while his parents were dealing with serious health issues. His father was out of work on a medical leave due to diabetes and his stay-at-home mother was dealing with breast cancer.

Noah was a Special Education Student and on the Federal Free Lunch Program at Zion-Benton High School. Noah’s first job internship through **Jobs for Bees** was at CVS Pharmacy in Beach Park, Illinois. Noah stated that he was going to save all the money he earned towards college.

In November 2010 Noah’s mother passed away from cancer. Noah used this tragedy as all the more reason he wanted to pursue his dreams of going to college. In January, his **Jobs for Bees** counselor helped Noah fill out the FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid) online. He graduated from high school in 2011 and started classes at Greenville College in the fall of 2011. He is studying Audio Engineering and looking forward to being the first in his family to graduate from college.

### Tanais Finds Opportunities

**Tanais** came to the United States from Mexico as a teenager. It is rare that a student enters the *English as a Second Language* program while in high school. Tanais, not only learned English, she enrolled in AP (advanced placement) and honors classes. As a senior in high school, Tanais became her mother’s caregiver after her mother had a stroke. Throughout this

difficult time, staff members of the **Shine** program encouraged Tanais to continue working toward college.

Through **Shine**, she completed an internship at Vista Medical Center during the summer of 2011 and was accepted at Lake Forest College with a \$33,750 yearly scholarship. Her **Shine** counselor says her resilience guarantees her success.



Alarm clocks,  
bosses, co-  
workers, and  
paydays!

It was a new  
reality for the  
young people in  
the Summer  
Youth  
Employment  
Program 2011!

## Crystal Gets Ahead by Doing Her Homework

**Crystal** struggled with issues at home her senior year of high school. She enrolled in the **Future First** program in October 2010, just months before she was supposed to graduate. When her counselor encouraged her to research colleges, she learned that most schools she was interested in required two years of foreign language.

Following graduation in December 2010, Crystal remained in school to make up foreign language classes. She also enrolled through **Future First** in an internship at a local nursing home. She applied to local colleges and waited for her opportunity.

Crystal was accepted to Bethune Cookman University in summer 2011.

Even after she entered college, staff members of **Lake County Workforce Development and Future First** continue to support her. When she struggled with her financial aid paperwork for her second semester, Workforce staff contacted her college to ensure that she could continue with her classes.



## Summer Youth Employment Program 2011

Alarm clocks, bosses, co-workers and pay days! These were the new realities for approximately **150 Lake County youth** that were employed through the **Summer Youth Employment Program for 2011**. The county funded program put 150 youth to work at approximately 35 work sites through out Lake County. While working in **camp counseling, outdoor maintenance and clerical support**, participants learned new skills and earned a valuable paycheck. Summer workers were paid \$8.25 for seven week assignments at various townships, park districts, cities, libraries and non-profit organizations in Lake County. According to Jennifer Everett, Youth Program Manager, *“It was a very successful program this summer. We had some challenges with the severe weather, but with the cooperation of our work sites and the flexibility of our young workers, we were able to adjust!”*

Eligible youth were chosen to participate through a new lottery system. Applications were available at area schools, the Lake County Job Center and online at [www.lakecountyjobcenter.com](http://www.lakecountyjobcenter.com) and were accepted during the month of February. Applicants were selected on a random basis from the 1,100 application received. The **Summer Youth Employment Program**, funded by Lake County, is designed to serve high school youth, ages 14 to 18 (or up to age 21 with an IEP), who meet federal eligibility guidelines. Information about the 2012 program will be available on our website in January!

## Local Business Puts the Job Center to Work

“It was great to utilize the services that Lake County Workforce Development center offers to organizations like us. The process was very smooth. From visiting us to present the variety of programs you offer, to helping us identify which one would fit our needs. The planning and implementing of the program was a great experience.

The recruitment event at your location was a success. The way it was organized and conducted was very professional . . .

Once again I would like to thank you and your Staff for a wonderful job supporting the local community and businesses organizations like us. “

— Paola Meinzer, H&R Block, December 2011

The Business Service Team can help you too with recruitment and training. Call 847.377.3450 or email [jobcenter@lakecountyil.gov](mailto:jobcenter@lakecountyil.gov) for more information.

**263 customers were surveyed about the two Lake County Job Center sites in December 2011.**

**83% described their overall satisfaction with the Job Center as “very happy” or “happy.”**

## Job Center Kept Hope Alive for Artist



**David** finds the term “starving artist” to be more than a cliché. From 2010 to 2011, he worked about four hours a week at a retail store while trying to make a living by painting. He became a regular face at workshops at the **Lake County Job Center** while he looked for a solution that would allow him to balance his life’s passion with everyday needs.

In November 2011, he found his own career solution. He became a full-time Picture Framer and Mat Cutter at an art gallery. The position allows

him to continue to work on and sell his own paintings.

David has one message for others. “*Listen to the staff at the Job Center.*” He said he would often come in to the Center “in a funk” but would walk out feeling positive. “*They always gave me hope.*”

Lake County  
Workforce Development

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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.

## Advancing in Transportation

**Ron** (Bulldog R.J.) loves his new jobs as an over-the-road trucker. He says that the only difference between a trucker and an astronaut is “they see space and we see road.” Since being hired in September 2011, he has been to over 10 different states and has a photo on his cell phone for each one of them.

Previously, Ron worked for years as a school bus driver. The position was only part-time and involved a lay-off every summer. When he received a letter inviting him to explore training under the **Workforce Investment Act (WIA)**, he jumped at the chance. Career Specialist Pat MacHolmes of **Lake County Workforce Development** asked him a crucial question. “What would you like to do that would make you better money?” Ron’s answer was simple. He completed training for a CDL-A license in August 2011 and found a full-time position within a month.

Ron wears his trademark cowboy hat on all of his trucking runs. He says he feels like “Indiana Jones” as he drives across the country. As an added bonus, the new position includes benefits and better wages than his previous position. “This new job is an adventure every day,” he reports with a grin.



*Ron with staff member Pat  
MacHolmes in front of his truck  
in December 2011*

Do you have a success story to share? Contact editor Eva Locke at 847.377.3456