

Rappahannock Goodwill Industries Success Story – George Washington

Shapell came to the American Job Center/Virginia Career Works Fredericksburg Center to inquire about the WIOA Adult program. Upon entering the program, Shapell was homeless and working full time as a Personal Care Attendant. Shapell requested the assistance of the WIOA program to obtain a Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA) license to increase her income and advance in the health care industry. Shapell completed her training at Career Nursing Academy and obtained her CNA license on August 6, 2024. After obtaining the CNA license, Shapell's current employer, Surpassion Health Care, increased her wage from \$15 per hour to \$16.50 per hour. Shapell continues to work with WIOA staff to submit applications to achieve her goal of obtaining employment in a hospital setting.

Rappahannock Community College Success Story - Northern Neck

James came to RCC in May 2022 to inquire about services. He was a recently-released offender after 20 years of incarceration. He thought he might like to take welding classes. James realized that his career options were limited, but he was determined to make the right choices with this new beginning. He had enrolled in a re-entry program with the Department of Corrections. However, they had not considered his Selective Services registration. He contacted Selective Services and was assisted by a great representative who quickly sent him his status information letter. He soon completed all paperwork and was enrolled in WIOA. He started his first class in June 2022. He earned credentials in SMAW and GMAW welding. Then, unfortunately, the welding lab was closed down for a ventilation upgrade. Finally, in July 2023, he was able to resume welding classes. He completed 2 more classes and earned a total of 5 credentials. James is working as a welder. He is doing well professionally and personally. His accomplishments allow him to support his family, which now includes a 9-month-old son. Congratulations and best of luck, James!

Rappahannock Community College Success Story – Middle Peninsula

In August 2023, Wanda applied to WIOA and was determined eligible as an Adult. She had been a chef/cook for 17 years and, more recently, a PCA. However, as a single mother, Wanda needed to be able to support herself and her daughter. She was interested in pursuing healthcare. She was enrolled in the medication aide program in August 2023, completed her training in September 2023 and earned her license in February 2024. Meanwhile, Wanda began training in the PCT (Patient Care Technician) program in October 2023. She completed that training in February 2024 and earned 2 credentials. In March 2024, she passed her clinical medical assistant exam, and in June, she passed her nurse aide exam. She applied for jobs and recently started working as a PCT. She recently told me that she probably loves her job too much! She works so many hours and enjoys every minute. In addition to loving her job, she is earning significant income and benefits. I encourage her to pursue other healthcare options that are available to her. Congratulations, Wanda!

Eastern Shore Community College Success Stories – Eastern Shore

Story #1

Letisha was struggling to make tuition payments for her RN training program at ECPI. With only two classes to go before completion, Letisha recognized that she would not be able to come up with the tuition money. Her money was covering household expenses and no matter how hard she tried to rearrange her budget, she could not afford the classes. Letisha worked full-time while going to school full-time and was determined to put her daughter through college as well. Letisha did not want to give up, but she felt herself getting anxious that the training would go on, but she would not be a part of it. That's until someone told Letisha about the WIOA program at Eastern Shore Community College. Letisha called to inquire and an appointment was scheduled. Letisha met with WIOA Adult eligibility case manager

Towannia. Letisha provided all the verification documentation needed to complete her application. Letisha was approved for training and participated in ECPI's RN pinning ceremony on September 29, 2024. Letisha was so thankful for her case manager's assistance and support. Letisha is currently working as an LPN at a mental health facility. She anticipates taking her state boards soon. Letisha stated she will receive a promotion and a bonus when she passes the RN state board examination. Letisha's goal is to become a RN supervisor at her current workplace, and to continue to do what she loves best, caring for others. Letisha is a hard worker and a WIOA winner!

Story #2

Cornell was laid off from Bayshore Concrete where he worked as a broiler technician in the maintenance department. Having worked at the site for the majority of his adult life, Cornell had no idea how he would make it financially as his skills were specialized to that industry. After hearing the information presented at a Rapid response meeting, he decided to check out the workforce program. He came to Eastern Shore Community College and enrolled in HVAC training. Cornell earned all the HVAC certifications offered in the class. A week or so after completing training he read a newspaper article stating Bayshore Concrete had restructured and reapplied for his former position. This time, with an HVAC certification card in hand. He was rehired immediately and his HVAC certification placed him at a much higher hourly pay rate. Without the pressure of not having enough income to sustain his financial obligations behind him, Cornell managed well, and was content as well as fulfilled. His family was thankful for the hard work and diligence he demonstrated while in training. Today, Cornell is retired after working for Bayshore Concrete 32.5 years. He still uses the skills he learned in HVAC training to help family and friends when they need him. He is thankful for his time at Eastern Shore Community College's workforce program that helped turn a dark time in his life into a bright future.

Rappahannock Goodwill Industries Youth Success Story – George Washington

Amanda entered the WIOA Youth program with a goal to obtain employment in the childcare industry after she received her high school diploma. Amanda had no previous paid Work Experience (WEX) and she wanted to participate in a WEX. Prior to starting her WEX, Amanda completed the GCF Job Success and Money Basics work readiness skills training. Afterwards, Amanda participated in a WEX at the RGI Goodwill store to further enhance her work skills. Amanda received her high school diploma in May 2024. On August 19, 2024, Amanda then went on to secure a part time Teacher Aide position at Learning Paths Academy earning \$14 an hour.

Rappahannock Community College Youth Success Story – Northern Neck

21-year-old Jim expressed interest in learning computer repair. He was determined eligible as a youth student and was enrolled in WIOA, with a referral from DARS. It was decided that the best place to start training was with a work experience. One of the local computer repair businesses agreed to a work experience, starting with soft skills and gradually learning repairs. The business owner was very pleased with Jim's progress and, after a few months, recommended that Jim get certified and take CompTIA training, which he did. However, this was probably not the best recommendation. Jim attended the classes but had difficulty with the exam. He decided he would start a business of his own, not realizing what is actually involved in owning a business. Months went by and reality hit again. He met with DARS and chose to attend Wilson Training Center in September 2023 for a vocational evaluation. He did not test well enough in IT but did very well with auto mechanic. In August 2024, Jim requested to go back to Wilson Training Center for additional evaluations. His DARS case manager suggested that he attend the job readiness program. They can likely assist with getting his driver's license, as well. Is success always measured with certificates and credentials? No. Success comes in other forms, such as turning failures into successes. One way to turn failures into successes is to seek feedback and support. In doing so, this can help improve performance, gain new perspectives and find new solutions. Jim has done this. He is

dedicated and determined and is “figuring it out”. He realizes he needs to engage in training more suited to other interests and talents. In turning negatives to positives, Jim is on the right track to a new beginning. Best of luck!

Rappahannock Community College Youth Success Story – Middle Peninsula

Jennifer was a 2023 high school graduate and a new mother. She worked in a daycare center but wanted to gain skills to transition to the medical field. Her best option was to enroll in the PCT (Patient Care Technician) program. This program offers 2 credentials, including nurse aide certification and clinical medical assistant certification. At that time, PCT was a pilot program, and funding was provided through a designated grant that had been awarded to the college. However, Jennifer needed supportive services, such as uniforms, to assist her in training. She was enrolled in WIOA and in the PCT program in October 2023 and successfully completed the program in February 2024. She passed her nurse aide exam in May 2024 and plans to take her clinical medical assistant exam in October. Her goal is to enroll in the LPN program at RCC. In the meantime, Jennifer has expressed interest in participating in the Champs (Career Help and Mentoring for Parenting Students) program. This program will offer support and interaction with other parenting students. She will have access to great resources, career coaching and social connection. Congratulations, Jennifer, on your success and best of luck as you continue your journey!

Eastern Shore Community College Youth Success Stories – Eastern Shore

Ruth is a WIOA out-of-school youth participant. Ruth loves the beauty industry! She began her journey at Eastern Shore Community College in the hair braiding and weaving class and earned her certification. From there she was accepted as a cosmetology student at the Eastern Shore Academy of Cosmetology (ESAC). While there, Ruth earned certifications in brow lamination, eye lash extensions, make-up application, nail technician, hair cutting, and hair coloring. Ruth graduated from ESAC and in addition to all the aforementioned certifications, she is a state licensed cosmetologist certified to provide services in hair, skin, and nails. Ruth works as a cosmetologist with a wall filled with beauty industry certifications that afford her the opportunity to provide any array of services to customers seeking to change up their style. It’s never another boring day at work for Ruth. Ruth works full-time at Verve by Hannah Lynn Hair on Chincoteague Island. If you are in the area, check her out, but be sure to schedule an appointment first because Ruth has clients standing in line waiting to be transformed. Ruth’s chair is never empty and that’s what we call an in-demand career, and a career pathways success. Don’t you love it? We sure do, and we celebrate Ruth’s accomplishments!