

Rappahannock Goodwill Industries
Adult/Dislocated Worker Success Story – George Washington

AA was referred to the WIOA program from another region. He was relocating to the area after being incarcerated for over five years.

He was extremely nervous to reach out for services due to his background, but staff worked patiently with him to get him information on employment after incarceration. Staff connected him to local agencies for re-entry citizens and referred him to the Federal Fidelity bonding program. This program provides bonding to an employer who hires qualified individuals who are usually denied coverage by other commercial carriers because of a record of arrest, conviction or imprisonment. This bond can cover a period of six months—at no cost to the employer. AA was diligent with working with WIOA staff to complete all steps for eligibility and was deemed eligible for WIOA services as an Adult. He wished to pursue his CDL-Class A. Staff and AA had many discussions about his background and how it could impact employment. Staff were open and honest with AA about job search being difficult and how he would have to be extremely conscientious and open with potential employers.

AA began his training in mid-March 2020, and a few days later the Covid-19 pandemic shut down his training facility. He maintained contact with staff and made sure to keep in contact with his training provider during the shutdown. He sought out ways to keep learning and took it upon himself to study for his CDL learners and use various online tools to help with training in the meantime.

Unfortunately, during the shutdown AA's health took a turn for the worse and he was hospitalized a handful of times. He thought that he had overcome his illness, but when his class started back up in late July 2020, his attendance suffered due to health. Staff advocated on his behalf and was able to work with him and his training provider to make sure that AA could return to finish his class.

AA was able to return on a modified schedule that allowed for rest and time to attend doctor's appointment. He graduated his course in January 2021.

AA's job search proved to be difficult, but he worked with staff to identify positions and he applied for numerous jobs. He had a few promising leads, but his background proved to be difficult to securing employment. AA continued to work on navigating his background with employers with staff assistance and coaching.

AA secured a part time Driver position with a food distribution company and is doing very well. He hopes that once his employer sees his work ethic and diligence, he can rise beyond the stigma of his background. He is really pleased with his new job and working hard with a goal to potentially move into a full-time position and building upon his skills and experience.

***Rappahannock Community College
Adult/Dislocated Worker Success Story - Northern Neck***

In September, 2020, 20-year-old G. and 21-year-old A., cousins, came into RCC and applied to WIOA. They had been to a technical school for HVAC training but were unable to secure employment in this field. Past experience with HVAC companies has shown that employers want their technicians to have 5 years of experience. They decided they would like to get their CDL licenses, go over the road and see the world. I determined that both men met the priority of service guidelines, and I enrolled them in WIOA. They began training on October 12, 2020, completed their training, and both were employed by year end. Both men are employed by the same company and doing well. They have been a pleasure to work with. They always express appreciation for all we have done for them. I wish them much success!

***Rappahannock Community College
Adult/Dislocated Worker Success Story – Middle Peninsula***

SJ came to the Virginia Career Works office seeking guidance in career exploration and training. SJ was last employed for a period of 6 months as a concrete finisher and was laid off. SJ is 44 years old and has a high school diploma. SJ decided on a career as a Heavy-Duty Truck Driver and was enrolled in CDL training through WIOA funding.

SJ expressed genuine gratitude several times as he went through his training program for the opportunity to learn a new career and receive funding. SJ had difficulty passing his exam on his first attempt and received additional training and coaching enabling him to pass his exam on his second attempt and obtain his CDL license.

SJ has placed his resume with several companies and feels confident that he will soon be employed as a tractor trailer driver with a regional haul transportation company, NFI, as he has interviewed. SJ stated his CDL training is going to provide him a steady career and he hopes to buy his own truck one day. SJ stated his experience with the Virginia Career Works Center and WIOA program was life changing for him.

***Eastern Shore Community College
Adult/Dislocated Worker Success Stories – Eastern Shore***

Story #1

NN is an Adult who enrolled in the WIOA program in Fall of 2019. NN was continuing her LPN program and needed help with the last year to complete the training. NN already had a certificate in Medical Assistant but wanted more and a better career and being an LPN was her dream. Before COVID-19, NN displayed wonderful grades and received high praise from the instructors. When things shut down due to COVID-19, the LPN program didn't and NN continued to work through challenges just like others. NN has graduated from the LPN program and recently passed her NCLEX exam and is now a Licensed Practical Nurse. NN is currently at Tyson's Food in the medical department and has been promoted from Medical Assistant to LPN. The increase in pay was significant.

Story #2

CC is a Dislocated Worker who recently completed his Business Management Associates degree. CC became a Dislocated Worker back in 2018 when the company he worked for shut down. CC enrolled in his degree for the fall semester and then relocated to Alabama to work at a job that lasted 10 months to earn income and gain some more work experience. While working, CC remained enrolled in the business management training online, taking two classes at a time. After his job in Alabama ended, CC moved back to the Eastern Shore and continued his training. He successfully completed the training and earned an associate degree in business management. CC will do great things with the degree and is working on a business plan. We are excited about the possibilities this credential will afford CC.

SkillSource Group Youth Success Story – George Washington

CD was age 22 when she came into the Career Works in April 2019. CD was with her boyfriend, who was enrolled in the Adult WIOA Program at the time; both job searching. She had been working as a cashier/food stocker at a local 4-year university, but recently resigned.

The WIOA Young Adult Case Manager was informed by the Resource Room technician that CD' background and current unemployment may be a good fit for the Young Adult Program. The Case Manager discovered that CD's resignation was due to a case of sexual harassment while on her job. She was not sure where to turn for employment.

Additionally, CD was born with a malformation of her right arm and hand. Six out of her 9 siblings also had the genetic disease, all in different physical locations. Fortunately, CD was able to work in most work environments, and was interested in seeking an office position. She enrolled in the SkillSource Career Focus Initiative the same week.

Within 3 months of enrolling, CD and the WIOA Youth Case Manager revised her resume, and CD successfully completed the WIOA Youth Leadership activities. She also attended the Savings, Debt, Budget, and Credit Workshops facilitated by United Way, receiving certificates. CD completed the free computer training classes offered by Rappahannock United Way on Internet search, Word, and Excel. In 2020, CD engaged in a Workforce Experience (WEX) at the Virginia Career Works Fredericksburg Center, working as an administrative assistant. She welcomed those entering the Career Works Center, worked on small computer projects for various center employees, and helped at Job Fairs in the Center.

CD made the decision to move in with her boyfriend's family to acquire some independence. Due to the number of siblings, her parents had little time to help, and her mother did not consider a license, or driving, very important, thus not encouraging her to obtain it. She began to work on obtaining her driver's permit with the support of the WIOA Youth Program. She practices driving with friends, trying to get the hours needed to take the Driver's test.

While working in the Center, CD and her Case Manager continually applied for full-time jobs that would put her into a business environment. After the WEX was completed, and when Covid-

19 began, CD became homebound. She continued to apply for jobs virtually with the help of her Case Manager. In January 2021 she was hired by a company to work in a food service production line. After 3 months, her employer noted that with the skills in the production line and knowledge she had gained in the past year with the program, she had what it took to move to the next step, Quality Assurance. She began her new position recently, with a raise and will receive benefits in 90 days.

CD is very excited, and although she is still taking the FredBus to work every day, she is hopeful to be able to get her driver's license sometime this spring. Her mother recently told CD that she is proud of her and realizes now how important it is that she had goals and persevered to obtain them.

***Rappahannock Community College
Youth Success Story – Northern Neck***

MB is a youth who has not completed high school. He had been working, but do to the Covid-19 pandemic he lost his job. MB came to the WIOA Youth program seeking training and help with completing a GED credential. He was referred to the Adult Education program and is in the process of enrolling in classes. After some career exploration, MB decided he would like to take welding classes. He is currently enrolled and his instructor reports that he is an excellent student, showing great potential in welding. Transportation has been an issue for MB. At first, he had to rely on family for a ride to class. His family helped him acquire a used car to get back and forth to class. He has had mechanical issues with this car, but has always called his case manager and/or instructor to alert them of car troubles. He has not missed a class, but has been late a few times. MB worked with his instructor to come to class early several times to make up for the days he arrived late to class.

MB has several more welding classes in the progression to complete the welding program, but has already had a job offer as a welder once he completes. MB has the work ethic and desire to become successfully employed once his training is complete.

***Rappahannock Community College
Youth Success Story – Middle Peninsula***

Our success story for this quarter includes 3 welding students. TB inquired about in the WIOA Youth first and found the guidance he received so helpful that he recruited two of his neighbors, BG and KR, to join the program also. These young men all have an interest in welding as a career and have enrolled in the welding program. Covid-19 shut downs during the spring and summer of 2020 caused their training to come to an abrupt halt. These three stayed persistent and patiently waited for training to start back. In late summer of 2020 they resumed training, but due to limited class sizes they have had to wait a session between each class. The length of their training program has almost doubled due to Covid-19. The tenacity of these three young men is to be commended; they could have easily given up and moved on to something else, but they have stuck with their commitment and desire to pursue a welding career. As things look now (barring any other Covid-19 restrictions) they will be completed with their program by the fall of 2021.

*Eastern Shore Community College
Youth Success Stories – Eastern Shore*

Story #1

DD is off to a great start her senior year! She enrolled into the WIOA program her junior year of high school after overcoming some challenges in 10th grade. After successfully completing her junior year, she decided she would like to research going to college. She found a university that offered a program in child advocacy, a career that she discovered she was interested in after working with her Career Coach and WIOA Case Manager. DD completed the admissions application and was accepted! She is working with her Career Coach to complete the enrollment process and apply for local jobs to start earning money. She plans to start college in fall 2021.

Story #2

SS is an OSY who is currently in training in the Medical Assistant program. SS achieved her CNA license and worked as a CNA for a local private duty company, but wanted more. SS was a great student in CNA program and felt that she could obtain more with the support of the WIOA program and the encouragement from her instructors. While working as a CNA, SS had a baby girl and wanted to get another certificate to obtain more money and a better life for her baby girl. SS is doing well in the Medical Assistant training and looks to have her credential by the end of the summer semester.