

SWWDB Update

A publication describing matters of interest regarding the services and programs of the Southwest Wisconsin Workforce Development Board



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ALAN FULLER OVERCOMES HUGE OBSTACLES WITH THE HELP OF MANY PROGRAMS

To most people, working in the food service field like the dietary and nutrition section at Mercy Hospital may not seem like much, but when you've come from where 55-year-old Alan Fuller has been, it is a huge step, considering what he has overcome to get there.

"My confidence had been beaten up. The support and help I received from many individuals and programs was critical in my recovery," he said. "I'm getting better all the time."

Alcohol had been a major factor in his downfall. He lost almost everything to the point where he became homeless and relied on the GIFTS men's shelter (see page 7) to provide housing and sustenance. They were so good to me," he said. "They were a life-saver."

In addition, Alan was assisted by WIOA and FSET, and quite a few staff members such as FSET Specialists Nancy Alseth and Rebecca (Krause) Granath, Career Specialist Trish DeLambo, and Job Developer Dana Melahn. "I'm so happy for his success and so glad I/we

were able to assist him," Rebecca said.

"I received a lot of help with how to present myself, interviewing skills, updating my resume, plus tuition assistance and bus passes to get to the places I needed to go like my CNC classes, among other things," Alan said. He also attended a number of Job Fairs.

Alan had held quite a few jobs for a number of years, but they weren't leading anywhere. Drinking had taken over his life. He had been seeing therapists for his depression. He also had lost more than his housing...he lost his driver's license about three years ago. When he made up his mind to turn his life around, one of the first things he had to do was earn his license back again. He will soon graduate from a court-ordered OWI treatment program and plans to get his license back in November, when he also plans to get a car. "AA has helped me tremendously," he said. "I try to stay busy."

His job at Mercy helps a lot in that regard. He



doesn't have a set schedule, and only knows about three or four days in advance when he'll be working, plus he also volunteers for extra hours. "I've done that in both the hands-on and supervisory types of jobs I've had over the last 25 years, so it's not new to me," he said.

His supervisors at Mercy are impressed with Alan. "He's a rock star," said Head Chef Peter Kraemer. His immediate supervisor Deb Adney says "Alan is always punctual, follows through on everything and is a real pleasure to have with us. He is an excellent employee."

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ANGELLEENA WEGEHAUPT UTILIZES WIOA, FSET TO GET AHEAD



Angelleena Wegehaupt and her daughter Sienna Coldiron on the day Angelleena dropped her daughter off at college.

Even after 34-year-old Angelleena Wegehaupt of Monticello earned her associate degree in Business Management at Blackhawk Technical College, she had self-doubts and didn't feel qualified for positions she was seeking. But after a lengthy period of time and through the FSET program, she has found a position that suits her well; selling and financing automobiles at a car dealership.

"I had a daughter at the age of 15. When I should've been doing things most 18-year-olds do, I was taking care of my daughter and missed out on many of the teenage-type of activities," the single mother said. "But I wouldn't trade any of that for my daughter. She's the joy of my life." Her daughter, Sienna Coldiron, is now attending UW-Eau Claire.

Angelleena utilized WIOA when she attended BTC. Many of her classes

were held at the Monroe Campus, but there were some that had to be taken at the Central Campus. "I would've utilized their bus service, but the times never jived with my schedule," she said. "So the gas vouchers I received through WIOA were extremely helpful."

Also very helpful was her Case Manager Mary Dietz. "She worked with me to look up possible jobs and gave me many more ideas than what I had on my own." Even with her degree, Angelleena didn't feel qualified due to the menial-types of jobs she had previously held. But her tasks and responsibilities have grown at the dealership.

In the future, Angelleena hopes to locate a job that pays more. However, for now, she's grateful to be earning an income to support her daughter and herself.

KATIE JOHNSON LANDS EXCELLENT JOB WITH CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL

It's a real positive when you can find a job even before your externship has been completed. For Katie Johnson of Ridgeway, that is exactly what happened, when she was hired in the dermatology department at One South Park in Madison prior to her graduation from Southwest Tech.

She was there for a short period of time when she had the opportunity to get into the American Family Children's Hospital urology department and she gratefully accepted the position. "That is a great place to work, and very difficult to get into," Katie said. "I love what I'm doing." Among her responsibilities are preparing patients by taking vitals, providing medication and similar duties prior to the doctor's arrival.

A 2014 Dodgeville High graduate, Katie has both education and experience belying her age of 20. She utilized both WIOA and

DVR funding to help her complete the Medical Assistant program at Southwest Tech, where she graduated in the spring of 2016. She was able to complete certificates in Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA) and Phlebotomy simultaneously.

While attending SWTC, she had a very part-time job as a CNA at a nursing and rehab facility in Dodgeville, every other weekend, so when her WIOA Case Manager Heather Ringberg helped her to secure partial funding along with gas vouchers to supplement her personal funds, it helped her a great deal.

"Katie was very determined to accomplish this goal of earning her Medical Assistant degree," Heather said. "She knew it would be a challenge with her learning disability, which had slowed her



down in high school. However, with the resources at SWTC, she was able to receive the assistance she needed to achieve her goal."

Heather said that Katie could've requested accommodations for the final test, but felt confident she could do it without, "plus the process was not worth the time it would've taken," Katie said. "She succeeded and I know American Children's Hospital has a great woman working for them," Heather added.

DENTAL FIELD IS A PERFECT FIT FOR BRITTANY MELLEME

Brittany Mellem had never planned on entering the dental assistance occupation, but now that she has, it appears she has found her niche. "I love this job and going to work every day," Brittany said.

When Brittany met with her FSET Specialist Mary Dietz, she had never even considered the dental field. She had done mainly factory work, much of it through temp agencies. "You'd work for them for almost 90 days and then they'd get rid of you so they didn't have to hire you permanently and pay benefits," Brittany said. "I wanted something more permanent, more of a career than just a job," she added.

She was able to utilize the benefits of FSET to go back to school at the weekend-only Distinctive Dentistry in Middleton. She had started in the Dental Assistant program at Rock Valley College, "but it would've taken too long," she said. She was able

to complete the Distinctive course on April 30 after a couple of months (10 weeks) of intensive training.

She is now working at Familia Dental in Madison from 8:45 a.m. to 5 p.m., although often she stays later to help serve the 5 p.m. patients and also to clean up and prepare for the next day. "The schedule works very well for me," she said. FSET funds helped cover her tuition and related expenses.

Brittany, who is 27-years-old and lives in Monticello, is now looking to move to Madison. She actually earned her Early Childhood Education associate degree from Blackhawk Tech, but did not really want to enter that field. Fortunately, she found the dental field and has been in love with it ever since.

"I don't know how to explain it, but I love teeth. I also love seeing the patients, especially those that have not had the funds to have dental care for many years, leave the office with a smile on their face," she explained.



She also extended her gratitude for Mary. "I wouldn't have been able to do this without her and FSET's help," Brittany said. "Mary was always there to help me. She was on top of everything and really followed through for me.

"I really enjoyed working with Brittany," Mary said. "She always wore a smile and was eager to do whatever it took to obtain the skills needed for a satisfying career. I wish her well as she has a lot to offer to any employer."

The end result is a happy and productive employee for Familia Dental. "I couldn't be happier," Brittany said.

WAGE\$ GRANT TO ENHANCE APPRENTICESHIP OPPORTUNITIES

A recent award of \$150,000 to the SWWDB will help to improve the region's and Wisconsin's already strong apprenticeship program and job opportunities.

Titled WAGE\$ (Wisconsin Apprenticeship Growth and Enhancement Strategies), the project is expected to help register new apprentices in 12 high-growth occupations in Advanced Manufacturing, Healthcare, and IT industries, expanding upon already-existing programs, many of them already offered through schools such as Blackhawk and Southwest Wisconsin Technical College.

"We have a nationally-recognized apprenticeship program, but to keep and improve upon this status, we need to ensure our talent

development continues to grow and expand," said Rhonda Suda, CEO of the SWWDB. "Apprenticeships are an outstanding way for individuals to enter and grow in high-wage careers."

It is anticipated that statewide up to 1,000 new apprentices and 542 additional incumbent workers will undergo training and skills development within a five-year period. The federal grant of \$5 million to the Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development (DWD) came from the U.S. Department of Labor. DWD's Bureau of Apprenticeship Standards (BAS) awarded the local grants.

DWD and the SWWDB will work in collaboration with the Wisconsin Technical College System

(WTCS) and the Wisconsin Workforce Development Association (WWDA) to develop a framework to help promote and deliver registered apprenticeship programs. Existing programs such as Veterans in Piping (VIP) provided by the United Association of Journeymen and Apprentices of the 18 Plumbing and Pipefitting Industry (UA), and the Chicago Women in Trades (CWIT) programs will be leveraged to provide entry points for specific underrepresented populations.

WAGE\$ is the latest step DWD is taking to modernize and position apprenticeship programs as a national model. Nationally DOL hopes to train and hire more than 34,000 new apprentices over the next five years.

**CULINARY ACADEMY
TRAINS PARTICIPANTS**

Seven culinary academy students who recently completed their eight-week culinary arts course were able to prepare a gourmet meal for and meet with restaurant owners and other hirers at Blackhawk Technical College's Central Campus on August 11. The course is part of a program that seeks to train clients who are on FSET and other assistance programs to become job-ready and independent. It is a cooperative program between the SWWDB and Blackhawk Tech.

Participants came from several different aid programs--- Foodshare Employment and Training (FSET), the Workforce Investment Act (WIOA) Adult Program, and W-2. It was patterned after previously successful SWWDB-sponsored 'boot camps' in machine shop and welding.

In addition to teaching hands-on skills such as meal preparation and kitchen equipment and terminology, the program taught 'soft skills' of punctuality, work ethics, cooperation, team building, and similar skills. Completers obtained a nationally-recognized ServSafe Certification as well as two BTC credits in Food Service Sanitation.

Of the 12 students that began the class, eight graduated. But one of those, Troy Rodriguez of Janesville, couldn't attend the final event. He couldn't get off from his orientation at his new job as Dietary Aide at the St. Elizabeth Home in Janesville.

CULINARY ACADEMY IS A SUCCESS



ABOVE—Owner of the Buckhorn Supper Club on Lake Koshkonong, Chico Pope, speaks with culinary academy graduate LaShandra Woods about what he is looking for in his staff. LaShandra set up a date and time for her to go to the Buckhorn to speak with Chico about working there.



LEFT---Culinary Academy graduate Aldonia Haynes talks about employment possibilities with owner of the Italian House, Edmund Halabi. Edmund was one of a number of restaurateurs present to speak with the graduates about employment opportunities.

(See next page and page 7 for more details, additional photos)

CULINARY ACADEMY IS A BIG SUCCESS

Following is a description of the backgrounds of the culinary academy graduates that prepared the meals on August 11.

- **La'Tasha Benton** of Janesville (WIOA) was hired by BTC to assist their full-time associate degree Culinary Arts program. She said cooking is her passion. "I like to make people happy," she said. "If I make their experience enjoyable, we all win."
- **Aldonia D. Haynes** of Janesville (WIOA), who pre-interviewed with four of the restaurateurs present at the dinner, said time was a valuable commodity. She worked from midnight to 9 a.m. at Homes for Independent Living in Fort Atkinson, then went to her classes and came home at about 4 p.m. to fix dinner for her family. She then tried to catch some sleep at about 6 p.m. before awakening for her 30 minute drive to work.
- **Atina Addleman** of Footville (Dislocated Worker Program) spoke with five restaurateurs, seeking part-time employment, as she is still working on her GED at BTC. Being home schooled, she said social studies is the most difficult subject for her. "I really like the culinary class," she said. "There was a lot of information to absorb."
- For **LaShandra Woods** of Beloit (WIOA & W-2), it certified her already-extensive food prep background. She had worked at White Castle, Wendy's, Burger King, and had cooked at churches and with her grandmother when she was little. She has lined up several Interviews as a result of the boot camp.
- **Robert C. Kincy** of Janesville (WIOA & FSET), whose background was more in manual labor as a line worker, product handler and lawn care and carpentry worker, has chosen to continue on at BTC in their Culinary Arts program. "If those classes are enjoyable as this program was, I'm going to love school," Robert said.
- **Lynette Matson** of Beloit (WIOA & FSET) wasn't so sure she was going to enjoy going back to school. But at 47 years old, her job searches were becoming tedious. "Dana pushed me and asked me three times if I wanted to enroll, but I wasn't sure," she said. "But when I did make up my mind, I didn't want to waste the program's money. I went in fully committed." She was the only student with 100% attendance and got a 92 of 100 on her final exam, second highest in the class. "I really enjoyed it," she said. The only negative was she had to cut back on her volunteer time at Grinnell Senior Center in Beloit from three days a week to two.
- **Natasha Taylor** of Beloit (WIOA) had worked almost every type of factory job. However, she had also worked in food service and had several certifications. She was enrolled in the FSET program but was looking to find something to replace her 3rd shift job, which was wearing her down. "I was looking for another job or training for something I really love...I chose the education path," she said.



La'Tasha Benton serves Chico Pope while waiting to sample the fare is BTC's President Tracy Pierner.

Edmund Halabi, owner of the Italian House Restaurant, Janesville, was very pleased and excited about the class (*see photo on page 4*). "Our business is transitioning. We're expanding into a banquet room, catering and even wholesale groceries, so we have opportunities for hiring new employees," he said. "I connected with Dana [Melahn, SWWDB Job Developer and organizer of the academy] and she encouraged me to come to this event. It is a very impressive venture. Janesville couldn't be any luckier than to have something like this," he said. "It is a wonderful 'filter' for me. It allows me to talk to qualified candidates, so I don't have to waste time with unqualified job-seekers. It's like you struck a gold mine!"

HAROLD LUTHER, WISE PROGRAM RECEIVE VETERAN'S AWARD

Harold Luther, Employment Services Coordinator for the Wisconsin Senior Employment Program (WISE), has earned the Wisconsin Office of Veterans' Services Incentive Award, presented to a person or agency that has provided exemplary service to local veterans. The WISE program operates under the auspices of the Southwest Wisconsin Workforce Development Board (SWWDB).



Over the past three years, over 60 veterans have entered his training program, providing valuable experience and wages for veterans over the age of 55 that are trying to re-join the workforce. To date, over 25 have been placed in permanent jobs.

"Harold provides priority service to veterans, placing them high on his action list," said Ed Schroeder, Disabled Veterans' Outreach

Program (DVOP) Coordinator. "He provides positive work experiences for them after most have been out of work for long periods of time and he makes them feel appreciated. He helps to get them back on track," he added.

"I'm very honored to receive this award, especially given the number of candidates and credentials of the nominees," Harold said. "I take great pride in aligning the veterans with appropriate and positive job opportunities, helping them to be successful and to grow."

Selection criteria includes candidates' helping and serving of vets and working with partner agencies and offices. Harold has worked for the SWWDB since April, 2009. The WISE program serves clients (not just veterans) 55 and older to improve and build upon the existing skills an individual has.

"His positive attitude and 'heart of gold' assistance to participants helps them achieve their goals," said Rhonda Suda, SWWDB CEO. "He gets to know people on a personal basis to better assist them in their careers. Highly motivated and dedicated, Harold brings out the best in every individual through relationships built on objectivity and trust."

Congratulations, Harold, on a well-deserved award!

DARREN STIBB OVERCOMES TREMENDOUS OBSTACLES

Darren Stibb could've kept living in a hole without ever climbing out. But he decided that wasn't going to define him. With the help of a number of programs, such as GIFTS, WIOA and FSET, he has not only climbed from the hole and filled it in, but he is building his life upwards toward the sky.

"Those programs literally changed my life," Darren said. An abuser of alcohol who also served time in prison, Darren was contemplating suicide. "When I met Rebecca (Granath, FSET Specialist with the SWWDB), she convinced me my life was well worth saving and that I could make something of myself," he said. "She also convinced me to go back to school, and that worked out very well."

He graduated from Blackhawk Tech's welding program in May, 2016 and is now working at the Morgan Corporation. WIOA and FSET funds helped to cover the costs

for his for his tuition, books, tools and bus passes. Due to his prior transgressions, Darren lost his driver's license and his car, but he has now earned them back, and is in the process of buying a car.

While he is still in the GIFTS program (*see article at right*), Darren is now working at getting his own place "which should come shortly," he said. He is looking at welding as a career, not just a job. "My life is ballooning right now," he smiled.

"I am so proud of him," Rebecca said. "He has come a long way, and it's only the start. His determination and ability to overcome tremendous adversity is something that should be celebrated," she said.

REBECCA GRANATH, FSET ACTIVELY RECRUIT AT GIFTS

It would seem that the GIFTS (God Is Faithful Temporary Men's Shelter), a homeless shelter that rotates from church to church in Rock County, would be a great place for SWWDB's FSET program to recruit those in need of assistance. That is exactly why the leaders of GIFTS have asked FSET staff, mainly Rebecca (Krause) Granath, to speak to those participati

Rebecca meets with those men once a week, depending upon her and others' schedules. She actually started doing this when she was with the WIOA program, and when she moved over to FSET the GIFTS staff tracked her down to see if she might continue to offer those workshops and presentations. Rebecca gladly accepted.



Rebecca Krause Granath

Being a familiar face, participants feel safe confiding in Rebecca, especially since it is often at their location. She used to meet them at the Resource Center at the Rock County Job Center, however, their internet connection compatibility with her computer didn't work so well, so Rebecca 'took it to the people.'

The GIFTS program is seeking to find a location or even build a center in Janesville to service their clients so the men won't have to travel every week. Once they are in a new location, they will have an office with internet access that Rebecca can work from every Wednesday.

Participants do have to be receiving FoodShare benefits and ask for a referral to participate in FSET.

KELLY PULCINE UTILIZES WIOA, FSET TO BUILD CONFIDENCE, SKILLS

"Where do you go after leaving your ex-husband after 25 years of marriage," Kelly Pulcine of Oregon, WI asked? "I was really lacking in confidence."

Fortunately for her, Kelly was assisted by two professional, compassionate SWWDB staff members...Mary Dietz, FSET Specialist in Monroe, and Dana

Melahn, Job Developer in Janesville. "Dana was very professional and Mary was relentless. It was a win-win for me," Kelly said.

Kelly, who is originally from Monroe but then lived in Edgerton for 25 years, now works at the Great Wolf Lodge in Madison in inventory

matching, an accounting-type of position. She was assisted by FSET funds to return to school at Blackhawk Technical College in Monroe to hone her skills in business, math and computers. "It's the best job I've ever had," she said, "with good hours and a

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LONG-TIME SWWDB BOARD MEMBERS RETIRE



Three long-term SWWDB Board members who are retiring after many years of service were recognized at the September 14, 2016 Board meeting held at the Edelweiss Chalet Country Club near New Glarus.

Shown above, left to right, are Kevin Monahan, Orchid International, who has served for five years, Tom Schraeder, Hodan Community Services, who has served for 29 years, and far right Gary Albrecht, Cooperative Education Services Agency (CESA) #2, who has served for 17 years. Between Gary Albrecht and Tom Schraeder is SWWDB CEO Rhonda Suda.

KELLY PULCINE BUILDS JOB SKILLS, CONFIDENCE (Continued)

(Continued from Page 7)

decent wage.” Which is important for a 45-year-old mother supporting two girls, ages 12 and 14.

Mary and Dana helped Kelly to understand that she had excellent skills, but that it needed to be reflected on her resume. When I listed all of the things I had done, it was amazing,” Kelly said. Among her skills was running the office and accounting needs for her ex-husband’s business. “That, along with the other odd jobs gave me the experience which could be shown on my resume,” she said.



Kelly couldn’t find work in Monroe, so she moved to Oregon, where she located her present job within one week.

Kelly reiterated that Mary’s and Dana’s assistance transcended just the job preparation and location aspects...they gave her the confidence she was lacking before. “I was totally blessed to find this (WIOA/FSET),” Kelly said.

ALAN FULLER FINDS SUCCESS

(Continued from Page 1)

FSET helped Alan to attend and complete the CNC 'Boot Camp' training. After completion, he tried to get a job in that field, "but everyone was looking for three to five years of experience, which of course, I didn't have," he said.

In his job at Mercy, where he's been at for about five months now, Alan helps in preparing meals, working the steam tables, delivering meals, and similar duties as needed. "It was nice of them to give me a start," he said. He wants to re-pay them by giving them a solid year or more before he looks to get into the

CNC field or auto trim and re-upholstery work, in which he had a background.

Additionally, about a year-and-a-half ago Alan was able to secure his own apartment through the help of Community Action's Pathways Transitional Living program, but he still goes back to visit the GIFTS sites. "It's fun and uplifting to celebrate recoveries and anniversary dates," he explained.

Janesville native Alan Fuller has come a long way on his path to recovery. He received a lot of help, but he did it himself. And he's still not exactly where he eventually wants to be, but he's keeping himself busy and focused on success!

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We're on the Web!

See us at:
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About the SWWDB...

The Southwest Wisconsin Workforce Development Board (SWWDB) serves a six-county area in the Southwest corner of Wisconsin. We are a dynamic collaboration of private and public leaders working together

to promote innovation and quality in local workforce development activities.

The Board meets on a quarterly schedule to address workforce development issues and provide

oversight to the eight Southwest Job Center offices located in the area. Committee members meet on an as-needed basis to provide guidance and direction on topical issues.

CULINARY ACADEMY GRADUATES INTRODUCED



Instructor Joe Wollinger (left) introduces the Culinary Academy graduates to the restaurateurs and attendees. Left to right are: Aldonia D. Haynes, Lynette Mattson, Robert C. Kincy, Atina Addleman, Natasha Taylor, La'Shandra Woods, and La' Tasha Benton. Following the students' introductions, they were able to meet with prospective employers to discuss employment possibilities.