

CORD

---Collaborative Organizations Responding to Dislocation

August 1, 2011

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"Trucking is really an excellent occupational future."

---Mike Webb

JOB LOSS HELPS MIKE WEBB CONTINUE FAMILY TRUCKING TRADITION

It wasn't the way he had planned it, but when GM closed its Janesville plant, 41-year-old Mike Webb eventually carried on a family tradition. He is now the third generation truck driver in his family, but it came about in a rather circuitous manner.

"When GM left Janesville, I waited for a period of time, hoping they might start up again or allow me to transfer. When that didn't work out, I spent a year searching for a job, and then decided to go back to school," he explained. He said when he was looking for a job, there just weren't that many openings, and for those that were available, dozens and even hundreds were seeking the same jobs. "It was a very frustrating time," he added.

When Mike's unemployment expired, and there was no income to support his wife and two sons, he knew he had to make a quick decision. Assisted by Case Worker Steve Ranum, he decided on attending the month-long training at Eagle Training Services, Rockford. WIA reimbursed \$3,500 of the \$3,800 cost to attend the school. "They have an excellent record, with almost 97 percent of their students hired before they have even completed their program," Mike said. "I'm so grateful for the help. There's no way I could've attended those classes without WIA support," he said.

IT'S SOMETHING MIKE HAD ALWAYS WANTED TO DO

In actuality, trucking was always something Mike had wanted to do, but it took the layoff to get him there. "Trucking is really an excellent occupational future. It pays well, and will always be needed," he added. The only down side thus far has been being away from home during his 270-hour training period with Werner, based out of Omaha. He hasn't been able to get home on the weekend, but when his training is done, he will have his own dedicated route out of Tomah for Wal-Mart, which will allow him to be home more often.

It may have taken a while and difficult circumstances, but Mike Webb is now carrying on a family trucking tradition!

JACKIE NARVAEZ HAS LAST LAUGH ON HER CHILDREN

When Jackie Narvaez decided to return to school to further her occupational prospects, her children needed her a bit. But when it was over, she asked them, "Did you make the Honors List all four semesters?" They did not have a positive response. She even helped her children with some of their homework. "I don't think they took my going back to school seriously—but now they know how much it meant to my advancement," she explained. Her children are now 24, 21, and 18.

*"I had the experience---
I just needed the
education."*

---Jackie Narvaez

For Jackie, now 40, returning to school led to an excellent position with Spectrum Brands-Rayovac in Fennimore. It took a layoff from Philips Corporation-Advance Transformer in Boscobel, where she had worked for 12 years, to get her moving in the educational direction. Philips closed its Boscobel facility, moving production to its three Mexico plants in November, 2008. "I'd never been laid off—this was a totally new experience," Jackie explained. "I waited until after the holidays to start looking for work," when she landed a third-shift job that paid a pittance. "It wasn't what I was looking for, so I decided to return to school," she said. She seriously considered nursing, but the program was filled so she combined her prior supervisory experience at Philips with the Supervisory Management program at Southwest Wisconsin Technical College. "I had the experience—I just needed the education," she said.

In her accelerated program, a number of her classes were online, which, when combined with the fact almost half of her classmates were much younger than her, could've created some problems. But Jackie had the right attitude and drive for success. "I learned a lot from the diversity of the students," she said. "It helped me to prepare for locating employment."

She also was assisted by the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) Dislocated Worker Program along with the TAA program, which provided assistance with books, tuition, and transportation costs.

LANDS JOB EVEN BEFORE COMPLETING HER DEGREE

Jackie had completed three of the four semesters and decided she would apply for a job, even though she hadn't yet earned her associate degree. "It all happened so quickly," she said. "I applied on a weekend and by mid-week was hired as a third shift machine operator by Rayovac in January," she said. She didn't want to wait until May (graduation) when she'd be competing with many other recent graduates.

Although initially her employer suggested she apply for a supervisory position at the completion of her program, her supervisor approached her after about three weeks on the job and asked if she'd be interested in a third shift supervisory position. She accepted yet still completed her degree on time in May, 2010.

"I'm sure my lead position at Philips helped me to land this supervisory job, but the education sealed it," Jackie said. She already has a bachelor's degree in her sights. "Once you go back to school, you realize the value of education. I would recommend to anyone considering it to give it a try—I think you'll see how much it can help you," she said, adding that her case workers and counselors were invaluable aids. "I didn't realize all of the resources available. Those in similar situations should definitely check it out," she added.

One thing is for sure. Her children know that their mother can and has succeeded, and that education's value cannot be overestimated.

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JOB CLUBS (LIKE JAVA & JOBS) CAN HELP

Employment networks (often called 'Job Clubs' like our area's *Java & Jobs*), where small groups of like-minded individuals meet to help each others' employment search, can be of tremendous benefit to its participants. All members tend to share the same goal—locating employment, but the activities mutually benefit all, including networking, sharing information, coaching, assisting and training.

Among the assistance a group like *Java & Jobs* can provide include:

- Encouraging members, which helps to build self-confidence, optimism, and tends to make participants more marketable and proactive.
- Providing emotional support when the effort is taking longer or is more difficult than anticipated
- A means to share information or hear from others on topics such as job trends, company cultures, searching strategies, job leads, etc.
- Learning from successes and failures of others.
- Providing a sense of purpose and accountability, which helps one to focus on the tasks at hand.

To make the sessions more meaningful and productive, members should have a good idea of what type of job they want. They should know which employers or types of businesses they want to approach. The group can even conduct mock sessions such as interviews, assessment exercises, job search efforts, etc. to hone skills while assisting its members.

However, be careful that the job club is not slipping into something that might turn out to be counter-productive. For example, negativity might override the positives—you don't want the club to merely be a 'bitch session.' Also the group should be smaller and manageable (never over 25-30 persons). If there needs to be two or three separate groups, so be it. Also, as participants locate employment, move or otherwise drop out of the group, the network often shrinks and/or becomes less useful. Steps must be taken to ensure continuity and leadership to provide for refreshing the group so it doesn't fall into 'the doldrums.'

The job club model has been very successful around the country, so much so in fact, that the U.S. government has sanctioned 'job finding clubs' or 'job search workshops' as a permissible form of Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) for U.S. workers displaced as a result of foreign trade [see 19 USCS Sec. 2319 (17C)].

Check out the classes and activities offered on the last page (page 4) of this newsletter to see when the *Java & Jobs* sessions are offered. Plan to attend a session and see what it is all about. You have everything to gain and nothing to lose!

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CHECK OUT THESE OPPORTUNITIES

There are several **Dislocated Worker** workshops that may be of interest to you (even if you are not in the WIA program—these are open to all). Call the Rock County Job Center for information or to schedule a session—Julie Funk at (608) 741-3462 or 741-3447 to register. Or you can also call (608) 741-3578 to register.

All Classes listed here are at the Rock County Job Center as listed.

Interviewing	Mon., Aug. 1, 8:30-10 a.m., Rm. C
Resume	Mon., Aug. 1, 10 a.m.-noon, Rm. C
Ability Profiler	Tue., Aug. 2, 12:30-4:30 p.m., Rm. B
FutureTrac	Wed., Aug. 3, 1-4 p.m., Rm. K
Job Club	Wed., Aug. 3, 1:30-3 p.m., Rm. C
Change, Choice & Adjustment	Wed., Aug. 3, 1-3:30 p.m., Rm. D/E
Dislocated Worker Orientation	Thu., Aug. 4, 9 a.m.-noon, Rm. C
Job Center Orientation	Thu., Aug. 4, 10 a.m.-noon, Rm. C
Java & Jobs	Fri., Aug. 5, 9:30 am-noon, Rm. D/E
FutureTrac	Mon., Aug. 8, 1-4 p.m., Rm. J
Interviewing	Mon., Aug. 8, 8:30-10 a.m., Rm. C
Resume	Mon., Aug. 8, 10 a.m.-noon, Rm. C
Ability Profiler	Tue., Aug. 9, 12:30-4:30 p.m., Rm. B
Change, Choice & Adjustment	Wed., Aug. 10, 9-11:30 a.m., Rm. H
Java & Jobs	Wed., Aug. 10, 1-3:30 p.m., Rm. C
Dislocated Worker Orientation	Thu., Aug. 11, 9 a.m.-noon, Rm. C
Job Center Orientation	Thu., Aug. 11, 10 a.m.-noon, Rm. C
Success Skills Training I	Fri., Aug. 12, 8:30 a.m.-noon, Rm. J
Java & Jobs	Fri., Aug. 12, 9:30 am-noon, R. D/E
Interviewing	Mon., Aug. 15, 8:30-10 a.m., Rm. C
Resume	Mon., Aug. 15, 10 am-noon, Rm. C
Choice, Change & Adjustment	Mon., Aug. 15, 1-3:30 p.m., Rm. C
FutureTrac	Wed., Aug. 17, 1-4 p.m., Rm. K
Choice, Change & Adjustment	Wed., Aug. 17, 9-11:30 a.m., Rm. H
Java & Jobs	Wed., Aug. 17, 1-3:30 p.m., Rm. C
Dislocated Worker Orientation	Thu., Aug. 18, 9 a.m.-noon, Rm. C
Job Center Orientation	Thu., Aug. 18, 10 a.m.-noon, Rm. C
Java & Jobs	Fri., Aug. 19, 9:30 a.m.-noon, Rm. K
Success Skills Training II	Fri., Aug. 19, 8:30 a.m.-noon, Rm. J
Interviewing	Mon., Aug. 22, 8:30-10 a.m., Rm. C
Resume	Mon., Aug. 22, 10 am-noon, Rm. C
FutureTrac	Tue., Aug. 23, 1-4 p.m., Rm. J
Ability Profiler	Tue., Aug. 23, 12:30-4:30 pm, Rm. B
Change, Choice & Adjustment	Wed., Aug. 24, 9-11:30 a.m., Rm. H
Java & Jobs	Wed., Aug. 24, 1-3:30 p.m., Rm. C
Dislocated Worker Orientation	Thu., Aug. 25, 9 a.m.-noon, Rm. C
Job Center Orientation	Thu., Aug. 25, 10 a.m.-noon, Rm. C
Java & Jobs	Fri., Aug. 26, 9:30 am-noon, R. D/E
Success Skills Training III	Fri., Aug. 26, 8:30 am-noon, R. D/E
Interviewing	Mon., Aug. 29, 8:30-10 a.m., Rm. C
Resume	Mon., Aug. 29, 10 am-noon, Rm. C
FutureTrac	Wed., Aug. 31, 1-4 p.m., Rm. K
Java & Jobs	Wed., Aug. 31, 1-3:30 p.m., Rm. C

DON'T FORGET ABOUT FOODSHARE

Remember, **Foodshare** can help you make ends meet. It is a tax-funded food assistance program that can be used temporarily or long-term, as you need it. See if you qualify—contact Rachael Sheets at (608) 216-7227 or (608) 630-1181, or visit her on Wednesdays at the Rock County Job Center (please call to make an appointment).

AUGUST 2011

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SEPTEMBER 2011

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QUOTE OF THE DAY

"The difference between a successful person and others is not a lack of strength, not a lack of knowledge, but rather in a lack of will."

---Vince Lombardi

The CORD Newsletter is designed to provide helpful information and tips to area dislocated workers. Have comments or ideas for stories?

Contact the editor:

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