

CORD

---Collaborative Organizations Responding to Dislocation

February 1, 2012

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"I stayed the course, as those helping me were honest, sincere, and supportive, so that I didn't feel alone."

---Dave Pullara

HE EXPANDS HIS SKILLS TO LAND EXCELLENT JOB

Like many construction workers, when the economy soured in 2008 David Pullara found himself looking for work. Supporting two teens and having purchased a house he was in danger of losing, being 354th on a list of about 360 to be called for work wasn't an ideal situation.

"They were still calling me occasionally for jobs, but it was sporadic and usually at the last minute. I knew it wasn't going to work out," he said. David decided to change the course of his life. Utilizing the services at the Rock County Job Center, his Case Worker Kristine Case and WIA Dislocated Worker funds, he enrolled in the Truck Driver's Training school at Rock Valley College. While that didn't lead to direct employment, David is sure it had a major impact on his landing a job at Bluescope in Evansville, where he is now a member of the steelworkers' union in a job that can support him and his two children.

While much of his job involves loading and unloading trucks, he is also performing other job-related duties, such as welding, overhead crane operation and other skills, which could lead to job promotions in the near future. "I'm sure my completion of the CDL-A certificate plus the certifications I earned at the Job Center really helped," David said. "I never thought I'd end up in college, but it was one of the best experiences of my life and I'm proud of my accomplishments," he added. That is pretty impressive for someone who almost threw-up the first time he entered a semi's cab (he had never been in one before).

REALIZES HE LACKED AN OCCUPATIONAL PLAN

The 46-year-old Madison LaFollette graduate had worked in construction for about four years before the economy took a toll on the industry and his job. He followed that with sporadic factory work but realized he lacked a plan for his future. "Like many others, I applied for dozens of jobs and searched high and low, but the interviews were extremely sparse," he said. For some reason, his application, one of about 250 at Bluescope, stood out. "The help I received from Kris and the Job Center staff prepared me well for the application process and subsequent interviews, and I was fortunate to be the one hired," he explained.

Dave Pullara's experience reinsured him that he could do what he set his mind to accomplish. "I had a lot of help and backing, and I bought into the process, and it worked out for me," he said. "I stayed the course, as those helping me were honest, sincere, and supportive, so that I didn't feel alone. That personal contact behind me really helped." Dave Pullara is well on his way, not only supporting his family as he had hoped and planned, but learning new, applicable skills for the future.

MICKELSON MAKES SUCCESSFUL JOB TRANSITION LATER IN CAREER

For many, after working 34 years at a company, a layoff would be devastating. For 57-year-old Darlene Mickelson of rural Soldiers Grove, it was extremely challenging, but not impossible. She has successfully navigated the gauntlet and landed on her feet with an excellent job as the Executive Secretary of the Grant County Economic Development Corporation in Fennimore.

But it wasn't easy. "I don't know how some people can work and go to school at the same time," she said. "For me, school was very difficult—the older you get, the harder it is to learn," she said. She noted that the younger students didn't seem to pay attention or multi-tasked and did well, whereas she had to be there all the time and pay close attention to grasp the concepts. However, those younger students couldn't have done any better than Darlene—she finished her Associate Degree in Accounting at Southwest Wisconsin Technical College (SWTC) with a perfect 4.0 GPA in May, 2011.

She must have instilled the same work ethic in her daughter, Jessie Clason, who also returned to school after being laid off, as both finished SWTC on the Dean's Honor List while attending together in accounting.

For Darlene, working with numbers has always been of interest to her. She had taken a night accounting class at Western Wisconsin Tech in the early '90s, but had not continued her education until the Advance Transformer layoff in early 2008. "I had always intended to take classes when I started at Advance, but it wasn't that easy so I didn't take any more until the plant closed," she explained.

Darlene enrolled in the WIA Dislocated Worker program in September, 2008, and dually was assisted by the TAA (Trade Adjustment Act), which covered a majority of her training and support costs.

FRIDAY THE 13TH IS LUCKY FOR DARLENE

The day she interviewed for her current job, Friday, May 13th, turned out to be lucky for her. She was hired and started two days after her graduation. She uses some of the skills she learned in her accounting classes such as payroll taxes, journal entries, and more, but she also handles many more duties like taking notes and minutes, preparing agendas, and even tourism aspects.

"I really have gotten some strange calls, but I've been able to assist those making the inquiries," she said. They have included a person from Texas asking what the rules are for being an electrician in Boscobel (not necessarily strange but truly not a subject for the Economic Development office), or a person seeking to find the burial location for an infant who died in 1887.

Despite about a 40-minute drive (34 miles) to get to work, Darlene loves her new job. "The people I work with are the best," she said. Her organization consists of a Board of Directors from communities in Grant County and the reps from the Grant County Board. "The people I interact with within the organization are some of the nicest, friendliest people I've ever met," she said, indicating many of them have their own businesses or hold offices in their respective communities. The goal of the organization is to promote economic growth in Grant County. "I'm very proud to be working for and with them," she added.

She also lauded the staff at SWTC and the Job Center staff..."they're true professionals and really care and work to help you," she said.

It hasn't been easy making the career transition for Darlene, but the results have been extraordinary!



Darlene Mickelson at her desk.

"I don't know how some people can work and go to school at the same time."

--Darlene Mickelson

LOOKING AT NEAR-FUTURE JOBS

By 2020, an additional 21 million jobs will be needed for the U.S. to return to full-employment—and we know these jobs will be radically different from those of years past. Health care, business services, leisure and hospitality, construction, manufacturing, and retail account for 66% of today's employment. By the end of the decade, those industries will account for 85%, according to a June, 2011 report from the McKinsey Global Institute (MGI). Those fields may sound familiar, but the nature of work is changing. According to Susan Lund, director of research at MGI, jobs are becoming more specialized, more task-oriented, and more virtual and part-time. But what will those jobs actually look like?

- **Manufacturing/Precision Tool Making:** This will no longer consist of the traditional views of long lines of unskilled assembly workers tediously placing materials in place. Instead, the demand will be for advanced manufacturing—having a narrow focus and high skill-level. The good news is that oftentimes an associate degree will fit the bill. Areas such as specialty chemicals and precision tool making are examples of what is projected to be growth opportunities.
- **Elder Care Worker:** By 2029, all Baby Boomers will be at least 65 years old—a total of 70 million! The increase in life expectancy is not only growing—it is becoming a crisis! According to Eldercare Workforce Alliance, within 20 years, one in five Americans will be over 65 and 95% will have chronic conditions. The current health care system cannot handle this overload, thus elder care is predicted to be the fastest-growing employment sector within the health care system. Providing opportunities for everyone from in-home caregivers to geriatric doctors. It is a virtual recession-proof occupational field.
- **Cyber-Security Specialist:** Lulzsec, Anonymous and other hackers have wreaked havoc on numerous businesses and agencies. A November 2010 report from the Center for Strategic and International Studies reveals the lack of cyber-defense is due to the shortage of computer security specialists. Reports estimate there are currently only 1,000 people in the U.S. who have specialized security skills to be able to operate in cyberspace. It also shows there will be a need for 10,000-20,000 specialists to meet the security needs of governmental and large business organizations.
- **Statistician:** There is a plethora of data out there—but there is also a lack of knowledge on how to use that data. *The New York Times* reported the demand for statisticians is a by-product of the explosion of digital data. These workers look for meaningful patterns so data can be used to reach or enhance customer bases. This field is expected to grow 13% from 2008 to 2018, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics.
- **Welder (Underwater) and Other 'Blue-Collar' Jobs:** We've seen it in the immediate area and it is a national trend. The lack of welders has created problems for some businesses in filling critical orders. Partly due to the push for every American to earn a college degree, the positives of highly-skilled, blue-collar work had been largely overlooked. It's not only viable—it's lucrative. One larger company, due to a shortage of qualified workers, was offering \$150,000 to welders to work on underwater pipelines. Since this may not be for everyone, other in-demand blue collar jobs that pay higher-than-average wages include building inspectors, electricians, elevator installers and repairers, manufacturing technicians, and aircraft mechanics.
- **Other More Specialized Fields:** These include vertical farming (especially for larger cities), genetic counseling, patent lawyer, and sustainability professional.



Note: Much of this information comes from Time/Moneyland, and was gleaned by Kayla Webley and Susan Lund, director of research at MGI.

CHECK OUT THESE OPPORTUNITIES

There are many **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: (608) 741-3462, 741-3447 to register, or call 741-3578.

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

Java & Jobs	Fri., Feb. 3, 9:30 a.m.-noon, Rm. C
Resume	Mon., Feb. 6, 9-10:30 a.m., Rm. C
Interviewing	Mon., Feb. 6, 10:30 a.m.-noon, Rm. C
Literacy Council Logon & Learn	Tue., Feb. 7, 9 a.m.-noon, Rm. B
Change, Choice & Adjustment	Wed., Feb. 8, 1-3:30 p.m., Rm. B
Java & Jobs	Fri., Feb. 10, 9:30 a.m.-noon, Rm. C
Resume	Mon., Feb. 13, 9-10:30 a.m., Rm. C
Choice, Change & Adjustment	Mon., Feb. 13, 9-11:30 a.m., Rm. B
Interviewing	Mon., Feb. 13, 10:30 am-noon, Rm. C
Literacy Council Logon & Learn	Tue., Feb. 14, 9 a.m.-noon, Rm. B
Ability Profiler	Tue., Feb. 14, 12:30-4 p.m., Rm. B
Java & Jobs	Fri., Feb. 17, 9:30 a.m.-noon, Rm. C
Resume	Mon., Feb. 20, 9-10:30 a.m., Rm. C
Change, Choice & Adjustment	Mon., Feb. 20, 9-11:30 a.m., Rm. B
Interviewing	Mon., Feb. 20, 10:30 am-noon, Rm. C
Literacy Council Logon & Learn	Tue., Feb. 21, 9 a.m.-noon, Rm. B
Java & Jobs	Fri., Feb. 24, 9:30 a.m.-noon, Rm. C
Resume	Mon., Feb. 27, 9-10:30 a.m., Rm. C
Change, Choice & Adjustment	Mon., Feb. 27, 9-11:30 a.m., Rm. B
Interviewing	Mon., Feb. 27, 10:30 am-noon, Rm. C
Literacy Council Logon & Learn	Tue., Feb. 28, 9 a.m.-noon, Rm. B
Ability Profiler	Tue., Feb. 28, 12:30-4 p.m., Rm. B

ARROWHEAD LIBRARY SYSTEM CLASSES (Feb. 1-15 only)

Introduction to Computers	Wed., Feb. 1, 10 a.m.-noon, MPL
Word Processing Basics Word 2007	Wed., Feb. 1, 1-3 p.m., MPL
Individual Instruction (1 Hr. Sessions)	Wed., Feb. 1, 3:30-7:30 p.m., MPL
Facebook	Mon., Feb. 6, 9:15-10:45 a.m., HPL
Introduction to Computers	Mon., Feb. 6, 11:15 a-12:45 pm, HPL
Spreadsheet Basics Excel 2007	Mon., Feb. 6, 3:30-5:30 p.m., BPL
Introduction to Computers	Mon., Feb. 6, 6-8 p.m., BPL
Word Processing Basics Word 2007	Tue., Feb. 7, 10:30 a.m.-noon, HPL
Spreadsheet II Excel 2007	Tue., Feb. 7, 3:30-5:30 p.m., BPL
Job Seekers Open Lab	Tue., Feb. 7, 4-7 p.m., HPL
Word Processing Basics Word 2007	Tue., Feb. 7, 6-8 p.m., BPL
E-Mail Basics	Wed., Feb. 8, 10 a.m.-noon, EPL
Spreadsheet Basics	Wed., Feb. 8, 1-3 p.m., EPL
Using RockCat OverDrive	Wed., Feb. 8, 4-6 p.m., EPL
Individual instruction (1 Hr. Sessions)	Mon., Feb. 13, 9 a.m.-2:30 p.m., CPL
PowerPoint Basics	Mon., Feb. 13, 3:30-5:30 p.m., BPL
Internet Basics	Mon., Feb. 13, 6-8 p.m., BPL
Using New RockCat	Tue., Feb. 14, 1-2:30 p.m., HPL
Job Searching & Resumes	Tue., Feb. 14, 3:30-5:30 p.m., BPL
E-Mail Basics	Tue., Feb. 14, 6-8 p.m., BPL
Individual Instruction (1 Hr. Sessions)	Wed., Feb. 15, 10 a.m.-3:30 pm, MPL
E-Mail Basics & Setup	Wed., Feb. 15, 1:30-3:30 p.m., HPL

Key-- (PL=Public Library)—BPL-Beloit, 364-2905; CPL-Clinton-676-5569; EPL-Edgerton, 884-4511; HPL-Hedberg-758-6588; MPL-Milton-868-7462

FEBRUARY 2012

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QUOTE OF THE DAY

"In the absence of clearly defined goals, we become strangely loyal to performing daily trivia until ultimately we become enslaved by it."

---Robert Heinlein

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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or call (608) 741-3463