

CORD

---Collaborative Organizations Responding to Dislocation

January 1, 2012

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"The Job Center was extremely supportive—I couldn't have done it without them."

---Andrew Wiersma

Note: Some specific job details and locations in this article have been generalized due to security and confidentiality issues and concerns.

ANDREW WIERSMA FINDS HIS NICHE IN CRIMINAL JUSTICE

When he was a child, travelling with his folks to their cabin, Andrew Wiersma always passed one of Wisconsin's correctional facilities. "I said to myself 'I'm gonna work there some day'," he said. "Well, it came true."

It may have taken a while, but Andrew finally found what he believes is the ideal job. "It's not an easy job and it can be stressful, but I truly enjoy what I'm doing," he said. The 37-year-old 1991 Edgerton High grad worked for IKI, a pest-elimination service, shortly after high school graduation for about a year-and-a-half. That was followed by a short stint at McDonald's while attending Blackhawk Technical College's marketing program. "After one semester, I knew marketing wasn't for me," he explained. He then landed a good job at Stoughton Trailer, but there were periodic layoffs and finally a permanent one in 2008.

"I really started thinking hard at that time about my future," Andrew said. He had been searching for about a year when a friend told him of the Job Center services. Using their assistance, he decided to return to school at BTC, graduating from the Criminal Justice program in 2011. "I couldn't have done it without the Dislocated Worker program assistance," he said. They also helped him prepare his resume and workshops helped him to be ready for the intensive job application and interview with the state's Department of Corrections (DOC).

"For the longest time, DOC's web site said they weren't hiring," Andrew said. "Then in May they indicated they were, and I applied right away." He heard back immediately, was called in for a pre-test and after passing, went through an intensive interview. He was offered the job very quickly, but had to pass a physical agility test. That wasn't too difficult for a 5th degree black belt who is teaching classes in Edgerton.

Andrew, who is single, started judo training at age 10 and has been honing those skills for 29 years, but has now had to turn over the teaching duties due to his new schedule. He also enjoys drawing.

He started the DOC training program in September, and after seven weeks, graduated as a Certified Correctional Officer and was placed immediately.

"The Job Center was extremely supportive—I couldn't have done it without them," he said, noting not only the financial help but the assistance with resumes, interview preparation and similar services. He is hopeful that in the future he may be able to work up to a position as lieutenant, captain or maybe even warden. And given Andrew's drive and success, don't bet it won't happen!

GAIL NASTALI IS PERFECT FIT AT STAPLES CENTER

Staples Fulfillment Center, Beloit, was looking for someone to fit into their corporate culture—someone who was punctual, gregarious, a hard worker, and detail-oriented. Gail Nastali was the perfect fit. "They were looking for a certain person they felt would fit their company's philosophy," Gail said.

Losing her 10-year job after Norwood Promotions had left Janesville when BIC Pen bought them out, Gail utilized the WIA Job Search component, updated her resume and developed a work search plan utilizing Case Worker Nancy Alseth's expertise. "Gail was willing to try a variety of jobs—she just wanted to work," Nancy said.

The 60-year-old Elroy, WI native, who along with her husband has resided in Janesville for about 40 years, had worked a variety of jobs prior to Norwood, many for about 10 years, such as at Prent Corp. She hopes to work at Staples for maybe 10 more years, but she's thankful that after she's worked for about 5-7 years, they have a plan where employees can go part-time.

SHE'S TRAINED AS A 'PICKER'

"I really enjoy my job-it has decent pay, you keep very busy (which makes the time pass quickly), and it keeps me out of trouble," Gail beamed. With her enthusiasm and extroversion, Gail was a perfect fit for Staples. While she is just completing her probationary period, her first review went very well. She has been trained as a 'picker,' having to locate items for shipping in a quick period of time. "Everything is automated, so you can find items in the least amount of time and at the exact location," she explained. She is also cross-trained to tackle other jobs if necessary, such as using a 'wrist rocket' for locating certain items for shipping.

So busy is their department that they average preparing 349 boxes per hour, and on December 12 they prepared 16,000 boxes on their line alone and 33,000 for the whole building.

In a real ironic twist, one of the items shipped from Staples are BIC pens. "Like at Norwood, at Staples you're cross trained for jobs," Gail said. But unlike Norwood, at Staples everything is automated and modernized. "I've had to learn many new skills and be able to utilize modern equipment both in my job search and now at Staples," Gail added. "It is challenging but also very enjoyable."

While Nancy Alseth and the Job Center staff helped Gail immensely, it was one bit of advice that Nancy gave Gail that made the difference. "She told me to call the HR Director in-person after my first application," Gail said. "I found out they didn't have it...it may have been shipped to a processing center," Gail said. The HR Director asked Gail to complete an application right then and e-mail it to her. That, along with the fact that Gail's enthusiasm and positive attitude came though on the phone, helped her to get an interview and simulated 'order pick.' She was hired.

"Perseverance pays off. Nancy instilled that in me," she said. Gail averaged sending out about 10 applications per week while searching, always being sure to update her resume. "Job hunting has changed dramatically, and I had to change too."

Although the oldest worker on her line, Gail and her co-workers work well together. "We all help each other and get along very well," she said. How could you not get along with a person who is as positive as Gail Nastali?!!

"Gail was willing to try a variety of jobs—she just wanted to work!"

--Nancy Alseth



*Nancy Alseth, left,
Gail Nastali, right*

"She told me to call the HR Director in-person after my first application..I found out they didn't have it!"

---Gail Nastali

ED, PATTI MURPHY WORK TOGETHER TO FIND NEW EMPLOYMENT

Ed Murphy had worked about eight years as a custodian at Edgerton Hospital when, in April, 2011, his job was eliminated. Fortunately for him, with the help of the Rock County Job Center and an excellent networking system, he was able to find a job about five months later.

Now working in a custodial position at the Edgerton Care Center, Ed, who is 59, utilized all of the resources he could to locate his new position. "Nancy [Alseth, Ed's Case Worker] was a great help to me," Ed said. "She was always looking for related jobs for me, and sent me out on several interviews. The one at Edgerton Care Center was the one that really fit well," he said.

Ed's wife, Patti, also assisted. "She really helped me a lot," Ed said. "I was basically computer-illiterate at the start of my job search...both Nancy and Patti helped me to learn a great deal." In fact, Ed passed three various ACT National Career Certification tests. "I achieved the gold standard on two of them. On the other, I missed gold by only a point or two. I'm going to go back for a re-test to reach that level," Ed explained.

Patti, who graduated from Blackhawk Technical College in May, 2011 as a lab tech assistant and then earned her phlebotomy certificate, not only helped Ed with his computer skills, but she had many community contacts. That, along with the fact Ed had many contacts, including conducting some work for Edgerton Hospital at the Edgerton Care Center, allowed them to know people who might help Ed find a job. He also used the web site quite extensively.

"In my new job, I'm doing more maintenance work, not just janitorial," Ed said, which is much to his liking. "It really helps make the day go faster." Also making the days fly by is the fact he and Patti take care of their grandchildren several days a week. Ed's working the second shift from 2-10:30 p.m. allows that.

"The services I received from Nancy and the Job Center along with my wife were extremely beneficial," Ed said. "I was very fortunate to land a job quickly."



Ed and Patti Murphy

"I achieved the gold standard on two of them (ACT National Certification Tests). On the other I missed by only a point or two. I'm going back for a re-test..."

---Ed Murphy

DON'T FORGET ABOUT FOODSHARE

Consider applying for Foodshare benefits. Call Rachael Sheets at the Rock County Job Center at **(608) 216-7227** or **(608) 630-1181**. Foodshare is a tax-funded food assistance program that can be used either temporarily or long-term as needed. Find out if you qualify—call Rachael today!



WIA WORKSHOPS OFFERED

Sign up for the following workshops offered at the dates/times listed:

- **WIA Orientation**—Mondays from 1-2:30 p.m. on January 9 & 23
- **WIA FutureTrac Workshops**—Thursdays from 10 a.m.-12:30 p.m., on January 5 & 15
- **Resume Workshops**—Mondays from 9-10:30 a.m. on January 9, 16, 23 & 30
- **Interviewing Workshops**—Mondays from 10:30 a.m.-noon on January 9, 16, 23 & 30

For more details, call Nancy Alseth at (608) 741-3512 or e-mail n.aseth@jobcenter.org

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.

Ability Profiler	Tue., Jan. 2, 12:30-4:30 p.m., Rm. B
Educacion para el Consumidor (in Span.)	Tue., Jan. 3, 6-8 p.m., Rm. D/E
Change, Choice & Adjustment	Wed., Jan. 4, 1-3 p.m.
Consumer Rights Workshop	Wed., Jan. 4, 1-3 p.m., Rm. D/E
Java & Jobs	Fri., Jan. 6, 9:30 a.m.-noon, Rm. C
Resume	Mon., Jan. 9, 9-10:30 a.m., Rm. C
Change, Choice & Adjustment	Mon., Jan. 9, 9-11:30 a.m., Rm. B
Interviewing	Mon., Jan. 9, 10:30 a.m.-noon, Rm. C
Literacy Council Logon & Learn	Tue., Jan. 10, 9 a.m.-noon, Rm. B
Ability Profiler	Tue., Jan. 10, 12:30-4:30 p.m., Rm. B
Change, Choice & Adjustment	Wed., Jan. 11, 1-3:30 p.m., Rm. B
Java & Jobs	Fri., Jan. 13, 9:30 a.m.-noon, Rm. C
Literacy Council Logon & Learn	Tue., Jan. 17, 9 a.m.-noon, Rm. B
Change, Choice & Adjustment	Wed., Jan. 18, 1-3:30 p.m., Rm. B
Java & Jobs	Fri., Jan. 20, 9:30 a.m.-noon, Rm. C
Resume	Mon., Jan. 23, 9-10:30 a.m., Rm. C
Change, Choice & Adjustment	Mon., Jan. 23, 9-11:30 a.m., Rm. B
Interviewing	Mon., Jan. 23, 10:30 a.m.-noon, Rm. C
Literacy Council Logon & Learn	Tue., Jan. 24, 9 a.m.-noon, Rm. B
Ability Profiler	Tue., Jan. 24, 12:30-4:30 p.m., Rm. B
Java & Jobs	Fri., Jan. 27, 9:30 a.m.-noon, Rm. C
Resume	Mon., Jan. 30, 9-10:30 a.m., Rm. C
Interviewing	Mon., Jan. 30, 10:30 a.m.-noon, Rm. C
Literacy Council Logon & Learn	Tue., Jan. 31, 9 a.m.-noon, Rm. B

ARROWHEAD LIBRARY SYSTEM COMPUTER CLASSES (Jan. 1-18)

Individual Instruction (1 Hr. Sessions)	Tue., Jan. 3, 10 a.m.-5:30 p.m., MPL
eBay Buying & Selling	Tue., Jan. 3, 6-7:45 p.m., MPL
Individual Instruction (1 Hr. Sessions)	Wed., Jan. 4, 9:30 a.m.-5 p.m., BPL
Introduction to Computers	Wed., Jan. 4, 1:30-3 p.m., HPL
Job Searching & Resumes	Wed., Jan. 4, 6-8 p.m., BPL
Word Processing Basics Word 2007	Thu., Jan. 5, 9:15-10:45 a.m., HPL
Individual Instruction (1 Hr. Sessions)	Thu., Jan. 5, noon-7 p.m., OPL
PowerPoint Basics	Mon., Jan. 9, 2-3:30 p.m., HPL
Job Seekers Open Lab	Mon., Jan. 9, 4-7 p.m., HPL
Individual Instruction (1 Hr. Sessions)	Tue., Jan. 10, 9:30 a.m.-3 p.m., EFPL
Internet Basics & Online Forms	Tue., Jan. 10, 10:30 a.m.-noon, HPL
Introduction to Computers	Tue., Jan. 10, 4:30-6:30 p.m., CPL
E-Mail Basics & E-Mail Account Setup	Wed., Jan. 11, 9:30-11:30 a.m., HPL
Introduction to Computers Windows 7	Wed., Jan. 11, 10 a.m.-noon, EPL
Word Processing Basics Word 2010	Wed., Jan. 11, 1-3 p.m., EPL
Using Overdrive	Thu., Jan. 12, 3:30-5 p.m., HPL
Introduction to Computers	Mon., Jan. 16, 9:15-10:45 a.m., HPL
Introduction to Computers-Vista	Mon., Jan. 16, 10 a.m.-noon, BPL
Word Processing Basics Word 2007	Mon., Jan. 16, 1-3 p.m., BPL
Spreadsheet Basics Excel 2007	Mon., Jan. 16, 5:30-7:30 p.m., MPL
Internet Basics	Tue., Jan. 17, 10 a.m.-noon, BPL
Word Processing II Excel Word 2007	Tue., Jan. 17, 1-3 p.m., BPL
Spreadsheet Basics Excel 2007	Tue., Jan. 17, 2-3:30 p.m., HPL
Spreadsheet II Excel 2007	Tue., Jan. 17, 5:30-7:30 p.m., MPL
Searching the Internet	Wed., Jan. 18, 10 a.m.-noon, BPL
Word Review & Application	Wed., Jan. 18, 1-3 p.m., BPL
Word Processing Basics Word 2007	Wed., Jan. 18, 1-2:30 p.m., HPL
Using Overdrive & RockCat	Wed., Jan. 18, 5:30-7:30 p.m., MPL

JANUARY 2012						
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FEBRUARY 2011						
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QUOTE OF THE DAY

“A man who wants to lead the orchestra must turn his back on the crowd.”
---Max Lucado

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

Contact the editor:
Gregg Bosak, SWWDB,
Rock County Job Center,
g.bosak@swwdb.org
or call (608) 741-3463

Abbreviations/Phone Nos. at Left [PL=Public Library]:

BPL-Beloit PL, 364-2905; CPL-Clinton PL, 676-5569; EFPL-Eager Free PL, 882-2260; EPL-Edgerton PL, 884-4511; HPL-Hedberg PL, 758-6588; MPL-Milton PL-868-7462; OPL-Orfordville PL-879-9229