

CORD

---Collaborative Organizations Responding to Dislocation

June 1, 2010

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Kristi Beyer

KRISTI BEYER TURNS HARDSHIPS INTO VICTORIES

Almost two years ago, Kristi Beyer's lifestyle was being challenged in a huge way. Six months after losing her job at Lear Corporation, her husband lost his from the same company. Her son was being deployed to Iraq (he just returned), and her mother, who was stricken by a stroke, moved in with them. "You can wallow in self-pity or decide to move forward—I decided on the latter," Kristi, a Janesville resident, explained.

And did she ever succeed! She just completed her Associate Degree in Criminal Justice from Blackhawk Technical College (BTC), graduating in mid-May, and just started a new career as a Corrections Officer for the Rock County Sheriff's Department on May 21. In fact, she had two job offers, the other being from Beloit Probation and Parole, where she interned. "Beloit Probation and Parole actually paid more but the Rock County Sheriff's Department had better benefits," she said.

Kristi graduated from high school in 1990 and worked a couple of different factory jobs until starting her career at Lear in 1995. After investing 13 years, she planned on working there her entire life, but the closure changed everything. "I thought about a career in the medical field (nursing or radiography), but there was a long wait to complete those programs. I wanted to get back into the workforce quickly," she said, adding she had always been interested in police work, so it seemed a natural choice.

Kristi had actually considered a career change during her early tenure at Lear, and had actually enrolled in a couple of BTC classes, but she was working so many hours at Lear she had to drop the classes. When her Lear job ended, she felt Criminal Justice was a good fit for her. "It was an interesting field with many opportunities, but I was also frightened," she explained. "I thought I'd be one of only a few women in the classes." Boy was she wrong—there were actually more females than males!

She utilized the Trade Adjustment Act (TAA) and Dislocated Worker funds available to her to complete her program in two years—and with a perfect 4.0 Grade Point Average (joining the Phi Theta Kappa honor society). She liked the fact you could center on several career paths and she chose corrections, because "it is a fascinating field, trying to determine and understand why people offend."

She doesn't plan on stopping at an Associate Degree either—she's already taken a Criminology class through Upper Iowa University and plans on earning her bachelor's degree. "It may take a while, but my instructors at BTC said it would be a natural, logical step for me," she said. She loves the career choice and wants to stay in this field.

KRISTI BEYER FINDS SUCCESS (Continued from Page 1)

Her husband is also taking advantage of the TAA and Dislocated Worker programs by attending BTC, having just completed his first year in the Heating, Ventilation and Air Conditioning (HVAC) program.

Her case managers at the job center could tell she would succeed because she was always up to date with the requirements of both the TAA and Dislocated Worker Programs. "It was a pleasure to help her (and all the dislocated workers) move ahead in their endeavors and to watch them succeed," said Jodi Olson. "It makes our jobs very rewarding."

Kristi said one of the biggest barriers she and other former auto-industry workers face when returning to school is a self-esteem issue. "Their (and my) initial perception is that other people believe 'factory workers' can't handle education and a career—but nothing can be further from the truth," she explained. "Once the instructors see that you're serious and have many qualities to contribute, they bend over backwards to help you. And the students generally are more mature and know that they're investing time and resources into bettering their future." She said the BTC instructors were wonderful and offered a huge support system.

BTC Criminal Justice instructor Kevin Purcell said, "In my 10 years at BTC, I have not seen a student as good as Kristi. From the first day I had her in class (in 2009), I have seen nothing but an incredible drive to succeed and true desire to learn," Purcell said. "She has been an inspiration not only to her fellow students but to me as an instructor. She re-set the bar!"

An area she felt was one of the most beneficial was the 'mock interviews' the instructors put them through. She also felt the internships were very important in landing a position. "I would tell anyone to take advantage of the schooling available to them," Kristi said. "Become involved in school and start applying for jobs early—well before you plan to graduate," she added.

It's advice that has certainly paid off for Kristi. And one other thing has paid off for her—a positive attitude with a drive to match it!

PERSONAL VALUES EMPLOYERS SEEK

In the last issue of the CORD Newsletter, we listed several skills most sought by employers. Following are the most important personal values employers seek:

- **Loyalty**—a strong devotion to the company, even when it isn't loyal to you.
- **Self-Confidence**—if you don't believe in your own skills, education, and abilities, why should a potential employer?
- **Honest/Integrity/Morality**—this may be the most important.
- **Dedication & Hard Work Ethic**—you need to demonstrate that you'll keep at it until the job is done—and done right.
- **Professionalism**—acting responsibly and fairly both personally and work-related.
- **Positive Attitude**—demonstrate enthusiasm through words and action.
- **Dependability/Reliability**—have good attendance and punctuality.
- **Adaptability, Self-Motivation and Willingness to Learn**—all extremely important!

"She has been an inspiration not only to her fellow students but to me as an instructor. She re-set the bar!"

*--Kevin Purcell, BTC
Criminal Justice instructor*

Seek ways to weave examples of personal characteristics into your resume and cover letters to show you possess the traits employers are seeking.

HOW TO PAY YOUR BILLS WHEN THERE'S NO PAYCHECK

When the paycheck stops, it is easy to panic. But there are some things that can be done to help alleviate the myriad problems that arise associated with the loss of that regular income. Following are some ideas to help.

Where do I start? First is to register for unemployment insurance through the Rock County Job Center.

Don't be timid or ashamed. The government requires employers to purchase unemployment insurance for their employees. This provides a financial cushion for those who lose their jobs. It's insurance, not a handout. Your employer paid for it—don't be embarrassed.

How much money will you receive? It depends upon how much you earned while working and how long you worked. But keep in mind, these benefits are a cushion—they'll not replace your full paycheck.

If you don't have enough money to make ends meet, you'll need to dip into your savings. If you don't have savings, you'll need to reduce your spending and live within your new means, find extra money to reduce your cash gap, ask your creditors to reduce your bills until you locate another job, or get help from a non-profit credit counselor, such as Consumer Credit Counseling Services.

There are a number of ways to reduce your spending—conserve energy, plan a weekly meal menu with reduced costs (eliminate restaurants), cut up your credit cards, trim entertainment costs, etc. There are also ways to find extra money such as turning unwanted things into cash (rummage sales, auctions, etc.), collecting on old debts, bartering with friends and neighbors for needs and services, etc. All of these involve a lifestyle change, but it can be done and in fact, can be turned into a positive.

Call your creditors to request to have your bills reduced. Call them before they call you—your chances will be enhanced. Be up front with them as to how much you can realistically afford to pay each week/month.

You can also ask a credit counselor for help. Remember, you don't have to be in debt to ask for help. The sooner the better. Credit counselors are good listeners and have a vast array of experience to draw on. They can help you create a plan that lets you live within your means, rebuild your reputation with your creditors, stop collection calls, reduce monthly payments, reduce interest rates and late fees, consolidate bills and even prevent bankruptcy. In fact, generally creditors prefer to work with a counselor. And by working with a credit counselor, it indicates you are serious about taking control of your bills, and that is good enough for many creditors. Call Consumer Credit Counseling Service at (608) 365-1244.



There are a number of ways to reduce your spending... including cutting up your credit cards (or at least the ones costing you the most money through interest and fees)

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, 741-3578, or Susan at 741-3447.

Resume 101	Tue., June 1, 10 a.m.-noon, Annex
WIA Pre-Assessment	Tue., June 1, 4:30-6:30 p.m., Rm. C
Job Srch. Us. jobcenterofwisconsin.com	Wed., June 2, 9-11 a.m., Annex
Choice, Change and Adjustment	Wed., June 2, 9-11:30 a.m., Rm. B
Interview 101	Wed., June 2, 1-3 p.m., Rm. B
Dislocated Worker Orientation	Thu., June 3, 1-3 p.m., Rm. K
Java & Jobs	Fri., June 4, 9:30-10:30 a.m., Annex
Success Skills Training I	Fri., June 4, 8:30 a.m.-noon, Rm. B
Career Assessment & Planning 201	Fri., June 4, 1-3:30 p.m., Rm. B
FutureTrac Workshop	Mon., June 7, 1-4 p.m., Rm. J
Interview 201	Mon., June 7, 9-11 a.m., Rm. C
Choice, Change and Adjustment 101	Mon., June 7, 1-3:30 p.m., Rm. B
Resume 101	Mon., June 7, 1-3 p.m., Rm. C
WIA/FutureTrac	Mon., June 7, 1-4 p.m., Rm. J
Interviewing 101	Tue., June 8, 2-4 p.m., Annex
Ability Profiler	Tue., June 8, 8:30 a.m.-noon, Rm. J
Wiscareers	Tue., June 8, 9 a.m.-1 p.m., Rm. A
Smart Shopping & Food Preparation	Tue., June 8, 10:30-11:30 am, Rm. B
Interview 101	Wed., June 9, 1-3 p.m., Rm. B
Java & Jobs	Fri., June 11, 9:30-10:30 am, Annex
Job Search Skills Day	Fri., June 11, starts 8:30 a.m.
Dislocated Worker Orientation	Mon., June 14, 10 a.m.-noon, Rm K
Resume 201	Mon., June 14, 9-11 a.m., Rm. C
Choice, Change and Adjustment 101	Mon., June 14, 9-11:30 a.m., Rm. B
Resume 101	Mon., June 14, 1-3 p.m., Rm. C
FutureTrac Workshop	Tue., June 15, 9 a.m.-noon, Rm. D
Resume 201	Tue., June 15, 1-3 p.m., Annex
WIA FutureTrac	Tue., June 15, 9 am-noon, Rm. D/E
Job Search Using Monster.com	Wed., June 16, 2-4 p.m., Annex
Interview 101	Wed., June 16, 1-3 p.m., Rm. B
Java & Jobs	Fri., June 18, 9:30-10:30 am, Annex
Success Skills Training III	Fri., June 18, 8:30 a.m.-noon, Rm. B
Things to Do When the Paycheck Stops	Mon., June 21, 2-4 p.m., Rm. H
Resume 201	Mon., June 21, 9-11 a.m., Rm. C
Choice, Change and Adjustment	Mon., June 21, 1-3:30 p.m., Rm. C
Interviewing 201	Tue., June 22, 9-11 a.m., Annex
Career Assessment & Planning 201	Tue., June 22, 1-3:30 p.m., Rm. B
Choice, Change & Adjustment	Wed., June 23, 9-11:30 a.m., Rm. B
Interview 101	Wed., June 23, 1-3 p.m., Rm. B
FutureTrac Workshop	Thu., June 24, 1-4 p.m., Rm. J
WIA/FutureTrac	Thu., June 24, 1-4 p.m., Rm. J
Java & Jobs	Fri., June 25, 9:30-10:30 am, Annex
Success Skills Training I	Fri., June 25, 8:30 a.m.-noon, Rm. B
Dislocated Worker Orientation	Mon., June 28, 9-11 a.m., Rm. K
Interview 101	Mon., June 28, 9-11 a.m., Rm. C
Resume 101	Mon., June 28, 1-3 p.m., Rm. C
Resume 101	Tue., June 29, 9-11 a.m., Annex
FutureTrac Workshop	Wed., June 30, 9 a.m.-noon, Rm. J
WIA FutureTrac	Wed., June 30, 9 a.m.-noon, Rm. J

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“Success is how high you bounce when you hit bottom.”

---George S. Patton

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