

# CORD

---Collaborative Organizations Responding to Dislocation

October 1, 2010

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## LIFE-CHANGING CHOICE NOT EASY FOR TED TREINEN, FAMILY

Ted Treinen was a laid-off GM employee who had just successfully completed the first year of the Airframe and Powerplant Mechanics (A & P) program at Blackhawk Technical College, including being selected to receive the prestigious Kevin Wixom Memorial Scholarship Award to help with his second year expenses. Things were falling into place in his life. But then he received a fateful FedEx letter this past spring (2010). He was recalled to GM, but in Lordstown, Ohio. If he did not return, all of the benefits he had built over his 24 years at the Janesville plant would be lost. What should he do?

"My wife [Julie] and I discussed it over and over and agonized with the decision," Ted said. He was really enjoying his education at BTC and looked forward to working in the aviation field after completing his second year. But with a 16-year-old son [Ben] and 12-year-old daughter [Carly], his wife holding a good job at Grainger/LSS (Lab Safety Supply) along with a fairly new house being built just west of Janesville, do you 'uproot' your family and move, decide to continue on at BTC, or 'commute' to Lordstown? They decided the latter would be the best decision.

Ted rents a small apartment in Austintown (near Lordstown) and returns to Janesville whenever he can. Most of the time he drives but on occasion will fly. Ridesharing is difficult because there were not as many locals transferred to Lordstown as the other locations and there are two separate plants, and several shifts and various timelines, which makes communicating with co-workers difficult.

### AVIATION FIELD WOULD GIVE HIM JOB WITH A PURPOSE

Ted, who just turned 45, is putting in his time until he can retire on his terms. "The work isn't really satisfying," he explained. "I'm putting in my time until I can achieve my full retirement benefits, which is six years away." He said he'd rather be working in the aviation field, but the GM job helps pay the bills and has excellent benefits. "It's not a bad job or anything like that, but working in the aviation field would give me a purpose and end reward."

Ted isn't alone, as others who worked at the Janesville plant have had to make similar decisions. What made it so difficult for Ted was his enthusiasm and success in his education and future plans. "Everything was in place and was working out," he explained. Because he was a GM line-job absentee relief worker, he knew quite a few of the various jobs on the line at GM, which made him a valuable employee to retain. He also served as an alternate benefits specialist for those who had lost their jobs, so he worked longer than most of those laid off, through August of 2009, which left him little time to prepare for the BTC program.



**Ted Treinen**

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## TED TREINEN MAKES DIFFICULT DECISION *(continued)*

In fact, because the A & P program must adhere to FAA regulations, all students must meet time requirements in their training, and Ted wasn't able to start when classes began in late August. "The instructors and Bo (Dean Bo Plank) at BTC were great—they allowed me to make up the time I missed at the start of classes over a period of weeks," Ted said. He worked two extra hours each day over the period of a month to get caught up.

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*"It was hard to concentrate, knowing this life altering decision I/we had to make."*

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I was really enjoying school," he said. "It was tough at first, after having been away for so long. I especially dreaded physics, but I got through it." When the recall letter came, he felt like the rug was pulled out from under him. "I had a hundred thoughts going through my mind as to what I should do," he explained. His transfer notice came in May, just as he was preparing for his final exams. "It was very hard to concentrate, knowing this life-altering decision I/we had to make," he said. "If this had happened earlier in my life, my decision might have been different."

The Dislocated Worker program helped to partially pay for Ted's tuition, books, tools and other expenses. "My Case Worker (Steve Ranum along with Stephanie Luebke) helped me to complete an assessment, and to no surprise to me, it showed that the aviation field was a perfect match for me," Ted said.

### **DO YOU TAKE THAT CHANCE, IN THIS ECONOMY?**

Everything was timed perfectly for Ted. His Dislocated Worker benefits would run out just as he was completing his A & P program, and he had established excellent contacts with local aviation businesses and Fixed-Base Operators (FBOs) for excellent job potential. "But do you take that chance, in this economy, when you have a sure thing with GM employment?" Ted queried.

Ted found his small Austintown apartment over the internet. He never even had a chance to physically examine it before moving there. "It's like starting all over," he said. "I have a nice house in Janesville with the amenities, and now it's like going back to my first place without anything I've grown accustomed to."

He's checked out the educational opportunities in the Pittsburgh area for continuing in the aviation field, but there isn't much available, especially given his time constraints. "And this field is not something you can take over the internet," he added.

*"There's not a doubt this is by far the most difficult decision I've had to make in my life."*

**---Ted Treinen**

Ted feels that he let the Wixom family down by not taking advantage of the scholarship, but he had a chance to talk to Dick and Joan Wixom [Kevin's parents] to explain the situation, and he thinks they understand the hard choice he had to make. "There's not a doubt this is by far the most difficult decision I've had to make in my life," Ted emphasized.

He hopes that eventually there may be some type of 'attrition' benefits package that will allow him to return to Janesville and back to the aviation program. Even if it doesn't, he's hopeful he can eventually complete his degree. "Life is made up of so many factors and elements which cause you to make certain choices. I just hope that this is the right one for me and my family," he said.

## INTERNET JOB SEARCH TIPS

While personal networking and contacting companies directly have their places in a job search, be sure to utilize the internet to its fullest capacities to open potential job opportunities.

It can expand your search from a one-dimensional to a multi-faceted approach. And more and more companies use this method in their hiring process. You really cannot afford to skip this method.

The best way to get involved is by logging onto a site such as Monster.com. Type in your occupation field and hit search. When the results appear, apply for that job. Be sure to post your resume. A cover letter also may help. Be sure you have your resume, cover letter and other documentation in place before you begin your internet search.

With the internet, you'll be a part of a database that other companies will search. Be sure to list all your pertinent skills and experience...those key words may bring your name to the forefront and consideration for the position.

But be sure to only apply for jobs that you are qualified for, and include key words in your application...abilities, systems, tools, duties, skills, etc. Follow the employers' instructions to the letter, and provide them exactly what they ask for (this also shows you can follow directions).

### INTERNET SEARCH SHOWS YOU ARE 'TECH SAAVY'

Using the internet also shows that you have current skills. The internet also allows you to take your search past traditional geographic boundaries, and allows you to utilize the technology any time you want. You may even locate smaller local companies you were not aware of, or discover jobs or occupations that you had not even considered before.

While personal networking is valuable, also don't be afraid to use online social networking sites (LinkedIn, Facebook, etc.). Look at quality, rather than quantity. You can be flustered trying to use all the possible sources out there. Focus on sites that target your skills, industry, location, etc. Also target employers through research, i.e., 'qualify' them, and don't be afraid to contact them even if they're not, to your knowledge, currently hiring if you think you can help them (this is often referred to as 'cold calling').

Be sure to manage your online time...it is easy to get off-track or caught up in extraneous information that does not assist your search or even delays it. Be sure not to overlook the other means of job searching either. A good 'rule of thumb' is that your online search should be about one-quarter of the total time spent on the process.

Other helpful tips include having a 'regular' name for your e-mail address. An address such as [headcase@ABC.com](mailto:headcase@ABC.com) will likely cause rejection by a potential employer. If necessary, obtain a temporary email address. Eliminate any questionable message board materials, and if your telephone answering machine isn't appropriate and friendly, replace it.

Internet job searching should not be your only means...but it is certainly a critical one that can pay off when you may least expect it!



*Internet job searching isn't easy, but can be quite effective. Just remember that no single site, service or resource will contain everything you need for a fully-effective online job search.*

## 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, Carol Kohl at (608) 741-3418 or Jenn Coppernoll at 741-3511. Or call (608) 741-3578. [Also there are a number of special BTC Adult Basic Education classes offered—check those out at (608) 741-3566.]

<b>Java &amp; Jobs</b>	Fri., Oct. 1, 9:30-10:30 a.m., Annex
<b>Success Skills Training III</b>	Fri., Oct. 1, 8:30 a.m.-noon, Rm. J
<b>Resume 101</b>	Mon., Oct. 4, 9-11 a.m., Rm. C
<b>Resume 201</b>	Tue., Oct. 5, 9-11 a.m., Annex
<b>Dislocated Worker Orientation</b>	Tue., Oct. 5, 10-11 a.m., Rm. K
<b>FutureTrac Workshop</b>	Wed., Oct. 6, 9 a.m.-noon, Rm. J
<b>Change, Choice &amp; Adjustment</b>	Wed., Oct. 6, 9-11:30 a.m., Rm. J
<b>Success Skills Training I</b>	Fri., Oct. 8, 8:30 a.m.-noon, Rm. J
<b>Java &amp; Jobs</b>	Fri., Oct. 8, 9:30-10:30 a.m., Annex
<b>Job Srch Us. Jobcenterofwisconsin.com</b>	Mon., Oct. 11, 10 a.m.-noon, Annx
<b>FutureTrac Workshop</b>	Tue., Oct. 12, 1-2:30 p.m., Rm. J
<b>Good Eating on a Budget</b>	Tue., Oct. 12, 10:30-11:30 am, Rm J
<b>Dislocated Worker Orientation</b>	Wed., Oct. 13, 2-4 p.m., Rm. K
<b>Java &amp; Jobs</b>	Fri., Oct. 15, 9:30-10:30 a.m., Annex
<b>Success Skills Training II</b>	Fri., Oct. 15, 8:30 a.m.-noon, Rm. J
<b>FutureTrac Workshop</b>	Mon., Oct. 18, 1-4 p.m., Rm. J
<b>Interviewing 101</b>	Mon., Oct. 18, 9-11 a.m., Rm. C
<b>Choice, Change &amp; Adjustment</b>	Mon., Oct. 18, 1-3:30 p.m., Rm. J
<b>Interviewing 201</b>	Tue., Oct. 19, 10 a.m.-noon, Annex
<b>Choice, Change &amp; Adjustment 101</b>	Wed., Oct. 20, 9-11:30 a.m., Rm. J
<b>Educational Options</b>	Wed., Oct. 20, 2-3 p.m., Rm. J
<b>Dislocated Worker Orientation</b>	Thu., Oct. 21, 10-11:30 a.m., Rm. J
<b>Computer Basics</b>	Thu., Oct. 21, 5-7 p.m., Rm. TBA
<b>Success Skills Training III</b>	Fri., Oct. 22, 8:30 a.m.-noon, Rm. J
<b>Java &amp; Jobs</b>	Fri., Oct. 22, 9:30-10:30 a.m., Annex
<b>Resume 101</b>	Mon., Oct. 25, 9-11 a.m., Rm. C
<b>Choice, Change &amp; Adjustment</b>	Mon., Oct. 25, 9-11:30 a.m., Rm. J
<b>Dislocated Worker Orientation</b>	Tue., Oct. 26, 10 a.m.-noon, Rm. K
<b>Resume 101</b>	Tue., Oct. 26, 1-3 p.m., Annex
<b>Job Search using Monster.com</b>	Wed., Oct. 27, 2-4 p.m., Annex
<b>Choice, Change &amp; Adjustment</b>	Wed., Oct. 27, 9-11:30 a.m., Rm. J
<b>Java &amp; Jobs</b>	Fri., Oct. 29, 9:30-10:30 a.m., Annex
<b>FutureTrac Workshop</b>	Fri., Oct. 29, 10-11:30 a.m., Rm. K

**Note:** Helena Robinson and Brian Kitelinger will be hosting two FutureTrac workshops at Southwest Tech in room 492, Fri., Oct. 15, 9-11:30 a.m. and Wed., Oct. 20, 5-7:30 p.m. Phone 1-800-362-3322, Ext. 2416 or e-mail [hrobinson@swtc.edu](mailto:hrobinson@swtc.edu) for info/to register.

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“The purpose of life is a life of purpose.”  
---Robert Byrne

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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