

MARYLAND WORKFORCE SYSTEM SUCCESS STORIES

MEET CHARLES...

Cumberland American Job Center *helps service-disabled veteran Charles achieve his educational and employment goals.*

Charles is a service-connected disabled Combat Infantry Army Soldier who was medically retired. He was referred to the Cumberland American Job Center by a U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs' Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment (VR&E) counselor. Through VR&E's Workstudy program, the American Job Center hired Charles to assist with the veteran services program. Hiring Charles through the work study program afforded him many opportunities. For example, he could help other veterans with employment need and hone his résumé-writing skills, while being able to pay his mortgage and other life expenses.

Although not easy, Charles attended college as a full-time student while working full-time at the American Job Center. Realizing Charles' priority was attaining his education, American Job Center management catered a work schedule around his classes. The American Job Center veteran services staff were thankful for the part they played in helping Charles achieve his educational and employment goals. After obtaining his cyber security degree, Charles was ultimately hired with the Department of Homeland Security in Harpers Ferry, West Virginia.

MEET TIFFANY...

Baltimore County Workforce Development Center at the Liberty Center *helps returning citizen Tiffany transition from homelessness to self-sufficiency.*

Tiffany was seeking full-time employment that would provide sustainable income to secure housing and cover living expenses. Although she has a master's degree, Tiffany believed her criminal record was a barrier to employment within her field. Baltimore County's Department of Social Service and the Community Assistance Network referred Tiffany, then a resident of a local homeless shelter, to Baltimore County's Mobile Career Center in 2013.

In addition to the services that she received in updating her résumé, honing her job search skills, and introducing her to the Maryland Workforce Exchange (Maryland's Job Bank, Tiffany also received referrals to the Baltimore County American Job Center Re-entry Information Session and the Johns Hopkins Project R.E.A.C.H. (Resources and Education for the Advancement of Careers at Hopkins) programs. Tiffany continued benefiting from the services while transitioning from the shelter into transitional housing in Baltimore City.

Although Tiffany secured seasonal/permanent employment with FedEx in October 2013 and worked in temporary administrative positions with a staffing firm, she felt as if she had not reached her full potential. She continued to pursue better employment opportunities. In mid-November 2015, Tiffany received and accepted an employment offer as a Coordinator with Americorp Vista-Higher Achievement – Baltimore.

MEET VERNON...**Mayor's Office of Employment Development**

With hard work and determination, returning citizen Vernon conquered employment barriers he faced.

As is the case with many returning citizens, Baltimore Native Vernon faced numerous barriers to employment because of his criminal background. He stated, "I was turned down for at least 50 or more jobs because of my record. I'd receive several calls telling me I have the job and they were just waiting for the background check to come back. But once that happened, I was denied."



Refusing to give up, Vernon worked hard to better himself and his life. He graduated from trade school and became a certified carpenter. For several years he worked dead-end jobs earning next to nothing. It wasn't enough to take care of his young son, much less get ahead.

In the fall of 2015, he enrolled in the energy retrofit installer training program at Civic Works' Baltimore Center for Green Careers that received funding through USDOL's grant, "One Baltimore for Jobs," distributed through Maryland Department of Labor to Baltimore City Mayor's Office of Employment Development. Vernon received comprehensive occupational and essential skills training in energy efficiency. He earned industry-recognized certifications, completed on-the-job training, and received case management support that included job placement services.

After completing the program in 19 weeks, Vernon began work as a salaried residential energy installation technician at a starting wage of \$17.30 per hour with a growing regional home performance company, Efficient Home LLC. Vernon happily reflected, "Once I was placed with my company, the heartache and pain went away. It was a dream come true."

Impressed with Vernon after only a few months on the job, Vernon's employer enrolled him in Civic Works' energy analyst incumbent worker training. This training afforded Vernon an additional certification that has opened up numerous opportunities for him to work independently on installation jobs and take on more responsibilities, resulting in a \$2,000 annual raise.

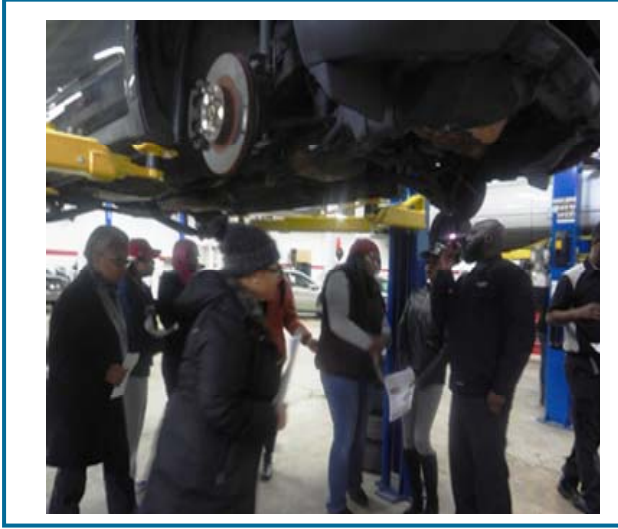
With the support of his Civic Works "family" and a company that believes in him, Vernon said he plans to continue furthering his career and being an example for his son and those around him. Vernon sums up his experience, "The sky is the limit. Life is beautiful. It's on you to choose your outcome."

MEET ANTOINE...**Correctional Education – Occupational Skills Training Center**

While in prison, Antoine achieves occupational skills training leading to successful re-entry.

Antoine went to prison at the age of 17. He was released at the age of 38, having spent more than half of his life behind prison walls. The father of a young man in his early twenties, Antoine knew that he wanted to make a change, so he "hit the ground running" upon release. What was his game plan? He wanted to learn to repair automobiles.

While in prison, Antoine took classes at the Occupational Skills Training Center. The classes were offered as a part of the Maryland Department of Labor's Correctional Education program. His teacher was quite impressed with Antoine and highly recommended him for the new re-entry program offered through the Maryland Department of Labor to provide him with an automotive internship at the Full Circle Service Center, Vehicles for Change's new auto repair shop.



Antoine was accepted into the new training program in September of 2015, making the journey from Baltimore Pre-Release Unit to Halethorpe, Maryland each day. One of the lead mechanics at Vehicles for Change quickly saw the potential that Antoine possessed and enlisted him to take on jobs with increasing complexity.

Recognizing the potential for advancement as an intern, Antoine took his work seriously and became a leader at Full Circle Service Center. Antoine thrived under the tutelage of the lead instructor at Vehicles for Change's lead automotive instructor. His successful training resulted in four ASE certifications. In early February 2016, Antoine was released on parole and was later offered a full-time job as a mechanic at MileOne in Catonsville, MD. Antoine has the special honor of being the first former inmate to be hired at a MileOne dealership.

MEET MOLLY...

Frederick County Workforce Services *provides more than enough qualified candidates to fulfill Country Meadows' hiring needs.*

As an Employment Specialist for Country Meadows, a Senior Living community, Molly reached out to Frederick County Workforce Services for assistance in identifying qualified candidates for the company's open positions. Locally, healthcare is a growing industry with high demand for reliable and experienced workers.

Country Meadows took advantage of several recruiting solutions offered by Frederick County Workforce Services, including participation in formal job fairs and onsite recruitment events as well as panel presentations and information sessions designed to generate interest in the field among prospective candidates. As a direct result of the partnership with Frederick County Workforce Services, Country Meadows has hired multiple candidates. According to Molly, one of these candidates was so impressive during the interview that the company hired him for a full-time position even though no current openings for that specific position were available at the time!

MEET SUPANEE...

WorkSource Montgomery *provides desperate jobseeker with assistance and placement at Wheaton location.*

Supanee was desperately looking for a job after being fired from the retail position she held for nineteen years at a local supermarket. She was understandably sad, upset, and frustrated, but her belief was strong that

she would find a new job one day if she prepared herself well. She visited the American Job Center in Wheaton and quickly learned of the many benefits afforded her.

She attended new customer orientation and participated in most of the workshops enabling her to learn and improve her skills. She came daily and utilized the services in the resource center, using the computer for her job search. Job Service Specialist Hirunvaranatee directed her to the Job Fair/Recruitments board in the American Job Center. That was where Supanee saw the notice for an Open House at Rockville Pike's Fresh Market Groceries. She felt very confident and thought that she had everything ready to apply for that position. She went there and submitted her résumé. After one week, she received a phone call from the hiring manager inviting her for an interview. Having attended the interviewing workshops at the American Job Center, she felt well prepared for the interview, even returning to the Center after her interview to share her experience with the staff.

A week later, the hiring manager called and offered her the job of Assistant Deli Manager at that location. She returned to the American Job Center and proudly displayed her new name tag. Supanee stated that she wanted to “thank the resource center team for all the support and assistance she received.” Now she is telling everyone she knows who needs help finding a job to come to the professionals at the Wheaton location to register and utilize the resources that will prepare them for a new job and new opportunities.

MEET MICHAEL...

Baltimore County Workforce Development Center at Hunt Valley *helps Michael transition from a seemingly hopeless and homeless situation to one of success and sustainability.*

Michael had not worked a regular job since 2013 and was recently experiencing homelessness. He is now staying with a friend temporarily. Michael wanted to build upon his background as an Installation Technician/Warehouse Worker by adding skills that were more technical. Michael earned \$12.35 per hour at his most recent formal employment.

Michael was approved for Workforce Innovation Opportunity Act (WIOA) funded Production Technician Cohort training in conjunction with Lockheed Martin and the Community College of Baltimore County (CCBC). He participated in a Bridge Class and Information Session as well as Production Technician training through CCBC. As part of this program, students visited Lockheed Martin as a potential employer and he was selected for an interview. Part of this cohort training also included job readiness skills.

Michael successfully completed the training and received positive feedback from CCBC staff. He earned three (3) Manufacturing Skill Standards Council (MSSC) credentials in Process & Production, Quality Practices & Measurement, and Production Technician Safety. He received a job offer from Lockheed Martin as an Assembler / Installer starting in June earning \$16 per hour -- full-time with benefits.

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