Workforce In Action

Located across from the Government Center at 500 Russel Court in Woodstock, IL, **McHenry County Workforce Network** has a variety of programs and services for employers and job seekers needing assistance in meeting the challenges of today's job market.

We are an affiliate of Illinois workNet, which is a consolidated effort to provide a one-stop system for employment related services in McHenry County and part of a nation-wide, grant-funded system.

JUNE 2022

McHENRY COUNTY Workforce Network

ILLINOIS workNet® Partner

A proud partner of the AmericanJobCenter network

500 Russel Ct., Woodstock, IL 60098
www.mchenrycountyworkforce.com

McHenry County Workforce Network

These are but a small sample of the successes our Workforce Program Participants who have taken advantage of the workshops, career advising, resume reviews, training opportunities and the many other tools available through the McHenry County Workforce Center.

See more of our workforce program customer stories at **www.mchenrycountyworkforce.com**

STEP Forward Reentry Work Readiness

Step Forward Graduates April 2022

Center photo back row (l to r): **Thom Faber, Judge Charles Weech (Ret), Monica Whitney, Pat Kallaus, Catherine Jones, Charles Sprague, Olivia Surprenant, Pete Hall; Front (l to r) Natalie Wilson, Justin Knapp, Marjorie Fuller, Krista Robson, and Nicholas Maroupolous.**

The STEP Forward work readiness workshop for ex-offenders concluded with a presentation of Certificates endorsed by McHenry County Workforce, McHenry County College and Stateline SHRM. Judge Weech (Ret) is shown in the accompanying photos presenting the certificates. The participants expressed their sincere gratitude.

Our businesses still need workers. We are confident that employers in the county will be fortunate to add any one of these job seekers to their workforce. Two of the 6 participants started a new job the day before our last workshop. The other four are planning to start occupational training at MCC while joining the workforce. They were all encouraged to think bigger and they have started writing their own success story.

For more information contact Thomas Faber - TAFABER@mchenrycountyil.govor 815-334-2798

Job Fairs Connect Job Seekers and Local Employers

McHenry County Workforce Network, McHenry County College, Illinois Department of Employment Security, and Division of Rehabilitation Services staff partnered in the planning of a Disability Job Fair held at the MCC Shah Center in McHenry on April 27. The job fair connected 64 local job seekers with 13 employers. The job fair was held in the morning, allowing youth with disabilities from local schools to also participate. In addition to the 13 participating employers, community providers in attendance included Pioneer Center, Thresholds, Project Search, Clearbrook, and PACE Suburban Bus, MCC Disability Access, and AID, addressing individual questions about available services in McHenry County.

Project SEARCH Graduating Class of 2022

Project SEARCH is an internship-based program held at Northwestern Medicine Woodstock Hospital. Young adults with disabilities between the ages of 18-24 participate in three internships at the hospital with the end goal of employment in the community. They make the program a success through funding and constant collaboration with Career Planners, Jake Rohn and Elizabeth Del Rio.

By learning transferable skills through 3 internships, this year's class were all employed by graduation. The graduates are employed throughout McHenry County at various locations including Kelco Industries in Woodstock, Zip Specialties Inc. in Crystal Lake, Jewel in Algonquin, Northwestern Medicine Huntley Hospital in Huntley and Northwestern Medicine Woodstock Hospital in Woodstock.

To learn more about Project SEARCH visit: https://www.parents-alliance.org/page/woodstock-hospital

Program Participant Successes

Joan R. (zip code 60098)

Joan joined the workforce program with Welding as his career pathway. Together with the support of the McHenry County Workforce Network Career Planners, Joan was able to create a welding career plan for the next several months, after his enrollment in the MCWN young adult program. Joan completed his resume while he actively participated in additional skill testing and career searches.

Joan was able to start a work-based learning program at a local manufacturer in Woodstock. His strong work ethic, dependability, and artistic skills assisted him in his work experience. After completing a six-week internship, Joan was offered full-time employment at his work site. With ongoing support from his direct supervisor, and now welding mentor, Joan continues to build upon his welding knowledge.

While working, Joan attended Welding classes at McHenry County College. Joan may not have known what steps to take when he came to the MCWN, but in a few short months he earned a college scholarship, received paid training, and is now at the start of his career. Joan has a strong dedication to improving his future and does what it takes to get to the next step. Because of that determination Joan continues to do an excellent job with his employer and in school. We are proud of Joan and, as always, keep up the great work.

A Second Chance Success Story

Scott H (zip code 60051)

Scott made the best use of the time he had to serve for his mistake. He took CNC classes from Gateway Technical College during his time. Upon release, he got a job as a janitor. His parole officer recognized that he had much more potential, and connected Scott with McHenry County Workforce Network for career guidance. Scott decided on manufacturing and continued with CNC.

After many disappointing application rejections, he finally got a chance as an intern to experience what he learned in class while incarcerated. It took patience and faith to not return to anything available but to continue the search and preparation and let it play out in time.

Vo-Tech Inc., a 2nd Chance Champion, gave Scott experience in an internship, followed by On-The-Job training as a direct hire , and then a CNC apprenticeship. Scott is currently a shift supervisor at Vo-Tech.

Scott has given back to the community, sharing his story with other ex-offenders speaking at the STEP Forward Work Readiness workshops, and with the McHenry County Workforce Board.

Scott recently commented that a second chance may also require a first chance. An employer may also need to be willing to give someone with potential but no experience a first chance to develop their skills and into an employee of value. Vo-Tech commented that it is rewarding to watch Scott as he grows in the position and into the professional and person he wants to be. It is a work in progress as it is with anyone.

David B (zip code 60051)

David was eligible for WIOA services with the barrier of being an ex-offender. He was interested in starting a career in the manufacturing industry. David received WIOA funding to participate in an online manufacturing program and obtained his Certified Manufacturing Associate credential. Catching the attention of a local manufacturer, he was hired permanently by the company and started with a period of On-the-Job Training (OJT) funded by Workforce Network. David successfully completed the OJT period and is continuing to grow in his new career field.

Janice "Nadine" Q (zip code 60156)

Nadine was eligible for WIOA assistance after being dislocated from her previous position as a bus driver. She participated in CDL training with Eagle Training Services to obtain her CDL-A and qualify for a truck driving role where she could grow and earn a self- sufficient wage. Nadine is now working full time as a truck driver and is grateful for the opportunity to advance in her new career field.

George Y (zip code 60050)

When George was laid off from his job as a Senior Engineer, he lacked the industry-recognized credentials needed to be more competitive in the job market. George wanted to pursue training for a related occupation and obtain the appropriate credentials for that occupation. He enrolled in a two-month intensive training program through COMNet Group Inc., successfully completing the IT Management Plus Two Electives training which included credentials for the following: Agile Project Management with Scrum (CSM), Microsoft Project, Lean Six Sigma Green Belt (LSSGB), and Project Management Professional. While in the process of completing his training, George was hired full time as Project Manager for a machinery equipment wholesaler in Addison.

Where are they now?

Mitchell P. (zip code 60050)

Mitchell was a past success story, and recently we connected with Mitchell to see how his new career is going. Mitchell is still employed with the Woodstock manufacturer as a CNC operator, and he has used his CNC knowledge to help reduce time at his job. This picture, from his employer, recognizes this achievement. His employer has also seen great promise in Mitchell and has sent him for training in CNC programming, allowing him to continue to grow within the CNC career field.

You can see more stories at www.mchenrycountyworkforce.com or stop in and meet the staff: