



Meet Martha Castaneda

MIS/Intake Specialist

Workforce Development, Inc. - Faribault/Rice County Office



Tell me a little about yourself and your career with WDI.

I'm a mother of three children; two boys (Jose 11 yrs. and Joseph 5 yrs.) and one girl (Joselyn 1 yrs.). I started at WDI doing a work experience in the Faribault office for 3 months, through an agency called MET, Inc. I really liked working at the front desk and wanted to stay, but there wasn't any funding to hire me. Two months later, I received a call from Brian Coleman (WDI manager at the time). He said, "Are you interested on a job?" I answered, "YES!" The intake person from the Owatonna office decided to retire. I started working as a temp at the Owatonna office first and then 2 months later, I was offered a full-time position. I have been here since then. ☺

Briefly, what duties or tasks do intake/data specialists perform?

- Organize and maintain extensive filing system and client case files – Retain confidentiality and data privacy.
- Record supportive services, program eligibility and activity, training funds, voucher programs.
- Reconcile vendor invoices and vouchers - create check requests, submit for timely payment.
- Verify that documents are accurate and complete. Make adjustments if needed. Maintain records of payments.
- Process applications for services. Prepare reports, flyers and other documents. Mail and supply ordering.
- Assist universal customers with applications and more...

Why did you decide to apply for the WDI registered data specialist apprenticeship program?

Because I thought this was an important and valuable career opportunity that was going help me develop more skills to use within the organization. Also, gaining a recognized qualification and more essentials skills to do my job better and be a better asset to this organization.

Since a data specialist position requires such specific skills, was most of the training done hands-on or by classroom instruction?

We did a little bit of both. We were doing hands-on on our daily work basis. But also our classroom training involved hands-on by doing file reviews.

How long did the apprenticeship program take to complete?

18 long months.

Looking back on the program, what was/were your greatest accomplishment(s)?

I've been able to learn and understand each programs, and their requirements. It gave me the opportunity to shared such important information with co-workers, and create a solid foundation on our daily work.

What advice would you give someone who is considering applying for the WDI registered data specialist apprenticeship program?

I would say it is a great career opportunity that can help develop more skills to use within the organization. It can also provide more advancement opportunities within the organization.