

Workforce Board Honored Business and Clients at Virtual Annual Meeting

On September 25, 2020 the [Grow Southwest Indiana Workforce Development Board](#) recognized one area business and three clients at its virtual annual meeting for their accomplishments through the help of WorkOne Southwest services. WorkOne helps clients find a new or better job, choose a career, access training, or get the information needed to succeed in today's ever-evolving workplace. Services are also offered to businesses needing to recruit needed members for their workforce.

Client participants in three programs were honored for accessing all programs and services, demonstrating the willingness to persist and overcome particular difficulties, and gaining employment in an in-demand occupation.

Award recipients:

Adult Services - Jason Cooper came to the Jasper WorkOne Southwest office seeking assistance with unemployment and job search assistance. A single parent, 33-years-old, a baby on the way, he identified as a veteran with disabilities. With the desire to learn new skills for a long-term job, Jason searched for a wage increase to better support his family. After reviewing WorkOne services and a referral to a Disabled Veterans Opportunity Program (DVOP), Jason worked with his case manager and learned of a position with Englert's Home Center for a Heating Ventilation and Air Conditioner (HVAC) helper. Englert's was willing to training the right candidate. Jason successfully interviewed and began training for a long-term commitment. WorkOne was able to assist with tools needed for the job. A case manager and OJT Specialist maintained contact with Jason and employer with reports of good progress. At the completion of the OJT, Jason received a wage increase. He welcomed a new baby girl, is better able to support his family, and is an asset to the company.

Dislocated Worker Services - Lauren Fields is a single mother who started school in 2014. At that time, she struggled in her schoolwork and dropped out of school. Lauren worked as a customer service representative in a local call center for approximately nine months before she lost the position due to job outsourcing. Seventy-five others lost their job in the small community with a limited number of customer service positions. Even though the commute was 95 miles round-trip several times a week, she never missed class or the required externship hours. "The program helped me achieve my goal and do something that I once tried to do and failed. When I quit the first time, I felt defeated. I went from the Honor Society to failing grades. With this second chance, I excelled and was elected the President of Student Medical Assistance Reaching Out Together Organization. I increased my GPA, became a part of the Honor Society again, and made the Dean's List. I went from a high school drop out to having a degree. I do not just have a job now, but I have a career. I have something to be proud of."

Youth Services - Courtney Conder originally came into the office to obtain her High School Equivalency diploma. Struggling as a single mom, she enrolled in Out-of-School Youth services. She was working full-time with odd hours and experienced scheduling issues for work with the instructor to prepare for the TASC test. When she was able to take the TASC test, she failed a portion of it and gave up. She worked up her courage and tried the TASC test again. She passed. She was not interested in training at the time. She came back the following year to become a CMA. She was re-enrolled in 2019 where she participated in a WEX at Tulip Tree Health Services for career exploration. Completing the WEX, she was offered a part-time position at Tulip Tree in June of 2019 in the office. She completed requirements to begin training in September 2019 and completed that training in December 2019 when she was offered a full-time position at Tulip Tree Health Services to begin January 6, 2020. In addition, she has purchased a home for herself and her son. She is very happy with her life.

GROW SOUTHWEST INDIANA WORKFORCE

The “Business of the Year” award is to recognize a company in Economic Growth Region 11 that has best utilized WorkOne Business Services. This year the award will be presented to PGP International (PGP). PGP develops, produces, and markets rice flours and blends. The company offers soy, rice, and pea protein crisps, rice and grain coatings, rice bran and meals, grain flours and blends, and glutinous rice and flours. PGP serves customers in the United States and will be expanding their location in Evansville. In the short time PGP has been located in Evansville, they have developed a strong relationship with WorkOne Southwest and the business team. PGP participates in business seminars, job fairs, hiring events and NextLevel Jobs. PGP continually seeks out ways to hire and retain a skilled workforce. This past year they had five positions profiled for WorkKeys Assessments. WorkKeys has assisted PGP with recruitment in hiring qualified talent and increasing its retention rate. PGP participates in WorkOne community initiatives that focus on workforce development. They look forward to participating in The Tour of Opportunity every year. PGP is committed to the community in Southwest Indiana.

The Grow Southwest Indiana Workforce Development Board serves as the governing board providing policy guidance for, and review and evaluation of, activities under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act in the nine-county region of Southwest Indiana and Economic Growth Region 11. The counties include Dubois, Gibson, Knox, Perry, Pike, Posey, Spencer, Vanderburgh, and Warrick.

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*Lauren Fields, Dislocated
Worker Services Client of the
Year*



*Jason Cooper, Adult Services
Client of the Year*



*Courtney Conder, Youth Services
Client of the Year*



PGP International, Business of the Year