



Connecting People, Work, and Training

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Services Provided In:

Alma
Black River Falls
Durand
Independence
La Crosse
Mauston
Prairie du Chien
Tomah
Viroqua

www.workforceconnections.org



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 Kurt Bear, *Member*
 Anna Boland, *Member*

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 Bob Hillary, *Member*
 Rocky Lisowski, *Member*
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 Sharon Bliss,
Employment Resource Coordinator
 Gina Brown
W-2 Programs Manager
 Lisa Burnham,
W-2 Resource Specialist
 Cassie Bye
W-2 Employment Coordinator
 Amy Felber
Director of Finance
 Jessie Foss
Accounting Coordinator
 Shannon Franek
W-2 Operations Coordinator
 Amy Gernetzke
Employment Resource Coordinator
 Ray Heidel
Employment Resource Coordinator
 Wade Kohls
Assistant Construction Trainer
 Kim Lenning
W-2 Employment Coordinator
 Shay Mahoney
Construction Trainer
 Jacie Meier
WIA Employment Coordinator
 Gina Merrell
WIA Programs Manager
 Danita Muller
*Building Opportunities
 Program Manager*

Brad Myhre
Website/Database Coordinator
 Kelly Norsten
Employment Coordinator
 Wanda Palmer
WIA Employment Coordinator
 Teresa Pierce
Executive Director
 Sarah Rick
W-2 Employment Coordinator
 Sarah Saito
WIA Employment Coordinator
 Amy Scarborough
WIA Operations Coordinator
 Tom Stark
*Building Opportunities
 Employment Coordinator*
 Pam Taylor
WIA Employment Coordinator
 Carmin Trillo
W-2 Resource Specialist
 Sandy Turner
Employment Coordinator
 Chong Vang
WIA Employment Coordinator
 Jonathan Ward
W-2 Employment Coordinator
 Carol Wagenson
Workforce Development Manager
 Sarah Westbrook
Administrative Coordinator

Financials

Statement of Activities Year Ended June 30, 2013

	Unrestricted	Temporarily Restricted	Total
Revenue:			
Grant revenue	\$ 3,063,847	\$ 64,943	\$ 3,128,790
Contributions - Program match	33,895	0	33,895
Fee for service	362,386	0	362,386
Other income	119,979	1,233	121,212
Interest income	3,858	0	3,858
Net assets released from restriction through satisfaction of program restrictions	33,660	(33,660)	0
Total revenue	3,617,625	32,516	3,650,141
Expenses:			
Program services:			
Adult programs	2,023,494	0	2,023,494
Youth programs	683,952	0	683,952
Dislocated worker and incumbent worker progr	462,403	0	462,403
Other	44,988	0	44,988
Employer services	70,324	0	70,324
Job center services and support	14,782	0	14,782
Total program services	3,299,943	0	3,299,943
Management and general	441,509	0	441,509
Total expenses	3,741,452	0	3,741,452
Change in net assets	(123,827)	32,516	(91,311)
Net assets at beginning of the year	566,146	187,148	753,294
Net assets at end of the year	\$ 442,319	\$ 219,664	\$ 661,983

Reaching Out to Businesses

Workforce Connections, Inc. has more than 25 years of administrative experience, including executive and human resource functions.

In the past year, Workforce Connections, Inc. has focused its energies on acting as the executive administrative function for the Wisconsin Auctioneer's Association.

The Wisconsin Auctioneers Association is a non-profit trade asso-

ciation that exists for the purpose of promoting the growth and professionalism of the auction method of marketing and auctioneering in Wisconsin.

Workforce Connections, Inc. has helped the association plan and execute its winter and summer conferences.

The highlight of the year, which Workforce Connections, Inc. staff organized, is the Wisconsin Champion Auctioneer

Contest held during the Wisconsin State Fair.

Workforce Connections, Inc. staff also helps in membership drives, including informing current members about the benefits of being a part of the organization, and aiding in improving and streamlining processes.

Carol Miller, Wisconsin Auctioneer's Association Board President, said she is grateful for all Workforce Connections, Inc. has done over the past year.



Greetings!

On behalf of the Board of Directors and staff of Workforce Connections, Inc., we are pleased to present the 2012-2013 annual report. Thank you for taking the time to read it!

Within the pages of this annual report, you will meet real people who are better off because of the services we provide, and learn more about the programs we operate. One of the elements of our mission is to help our local and regional businesses access a well-skilled workforce by offering placement and training services. We are proud to partner with our local economic development organizations, the technical colleges, the Western Wisconsin Workforce Development Board, the State of Wisconsin and the United States Department of Labor to help our local citizens overcome barriers to employment to reach self-sufficiency. In doing so, we impact not only the lives of our citizens, but also the productivity of our businesses and the communities in which we operate.

We thank you for your support in these worthwhile efforts!

Rocky Shepherd
Board Chair

Looking Back: Success in 2013

"I don't want to go back to prison. I have to have a job. I have to be able to take care of my son."

Miranda said those words and is now living by them.

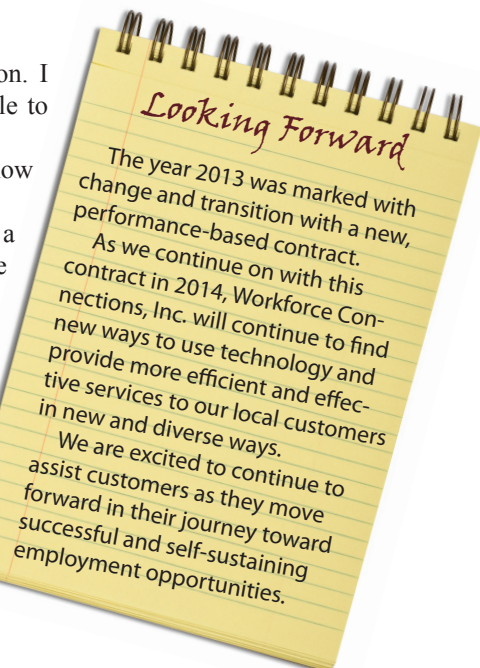
She came to Wisconsin Works, a program administered by Workforce Connections, Inc., with a newborn son and a criminal record after problems with methamphetamines had landed her in jail. She also came with the resolve to not go back to prison and to support herself and her son.

Miranda had been out of prison for a little more than a year and because of her record was having a hard time finding a job.

Sarah Jackson of Workforce Connections, Inc. placed Miranda through the Wisconsin Works trial jobs program at TLC Center in La Crosse. TLC Center was started as a way of giving back to the community and offers clothing, furniture and other items at a low cost to its customers.

Within two weeks of starting at TLC, Miranda was offered a position and within six weeks of that she was promoted to a supervisory role.

"I was put there for a reason," Miranda said

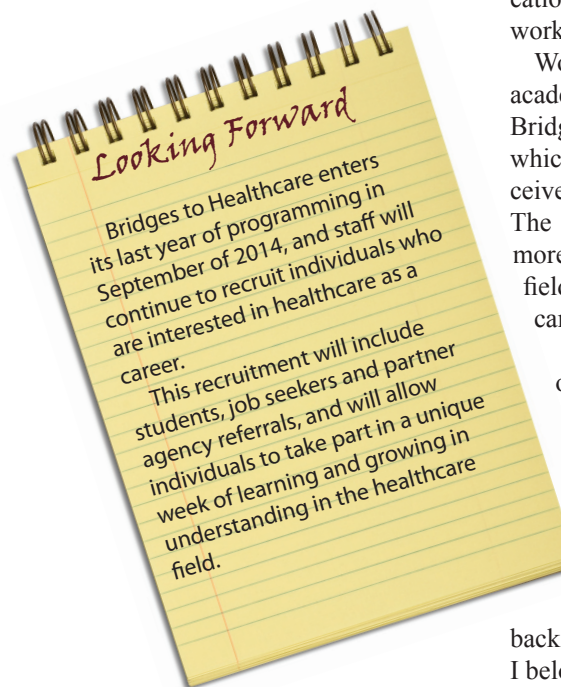


of her job placement. "It's been a blessing; a major blessing."

Miranda loves her job and the variety it offers her. She said if she hadn't taken the first step and come to Workforce Connections, Inc. she doesn't know where she would be today.

"If I was still unemployed and had a new baby I would probably be a little down," she said. "I definitely would not have had this opportunity had I not come in [to Workforce Connections, Inc.]."

The Wisconsin Works and related programs are funded through the State of Wisconsin Department of Children and Families using Temporary Aid to Needy Families (TANF) funds.



cation, study and test taking and teamwork skills.

Workforce Connections, Inc.'s academies are just one part of the Bridges2Healthcare programming, which is made possible by a grant received by Western Technical College. The program is designed to prepare more people for jobs in the healthcare field and present a variety of healthcare job options.

Laura Schulz participated in one of the academies this past summer and was grateful for what the experience offered her.

"I'm excited I was able to enroll in this training program" she said. "I felt I was able to motivate myself to the next steps of my journey; hopefully back to the healthcare field, where I feel I belong."

Looking Back: Success in 2013

Helping people get their start in the healthcare field is what Bridges2Healthcare is all about.

Workforce Connections, Inc.'s part in the programming has been to offer several free, 40-hour academies that provide resources needed to explore a career in healthcare. The academies introduce students to different healthcare career options, training and employment requirements and reinforce job seeking skills. Participants also brush up on basic math skills and work on communi-



Participants celebrate completing of one of the Bridges2Healthcare Academies held in La Crosse.

This workforce solution is 100% financed through a \$12,695,868 grant for from the Department of Labor's Employment and Training Administration.

Changing Lives with the Department of Corrections

Workforce Connections, Inc. staff assist offenders with services to help them find successful employment options.

As part of the Department of Corrections contract from the Western Workforce Development Board, staff provide services to offenders inside the Jackson Correctional Institute, New Lisbon Correctional Institute, and Prairie du Chien Correctional Institute as well as those recently released from these institutions

into the local WDA area.

Services begin about 6 months prior to release and continue for up to 1 year following release. This allows for a bridge of services to those who are at moderate to high risk to reoffend.

Case managers assist in change thinking, basic household needs, education, training and employment assistance. Case management is ongoing to assist the customer in their transition back to their local community and their successful reentry into the employment world.

This program is made available with Workforce Investment Act funding from the United States Department of Labor, the Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development and the Western Wisconsin Workforce Development Board, Inc.

Reopening of Connections to Independence

The early part of 2013 marked an exciting time at Workforce Connections, Inc. with the reopening of its Connections to Independence program.

The program is two pronged -- offering job development and benefits counseling services.

Job development contracted with the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation and offers services to individuals with disabili-

ties seeking to learn more about employment options and opportunities available to them.

An employment coordinator works with individuals to choose the right job.

Benefits counseling educates individuals on the effects earnings can have on benefits.

The potential loss of benefits is a common fear among people with disabilities who are consider-

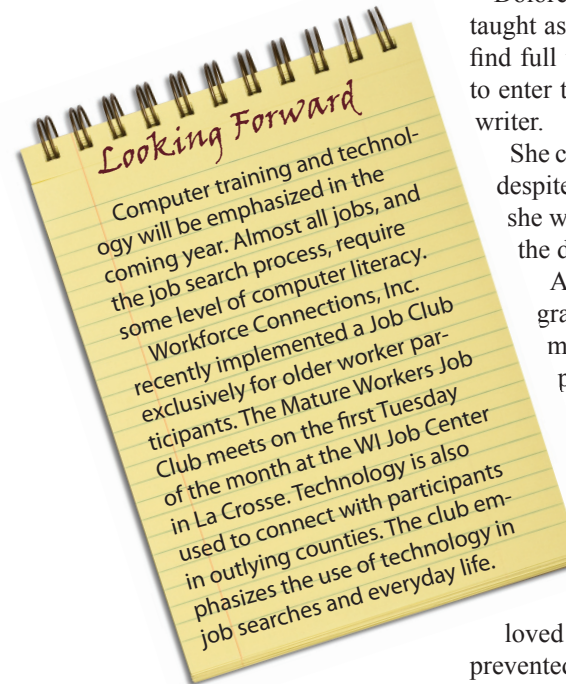
ing employment.

A benefits analysis can help people overcome this fear and help them make informed decisions.

Brad, who gained employment through Connections to Independence has glowing words for the program.

"Without Connections To Independence, I wouldn't have been given a chance to demonstrate my skills," he said. "Many times when people see someone with a disability they assume the person can't do it."

Workforce Connections, Inc. administers employment and training programs funded through a variety of sources including the United States Department of Labor, the Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development, the Western Wisconsin Workforce Development Board, Inc., local employers, and community organizations.



Looking Back: Success in 2013

Intelligent, skilled and compassionate. They're all words that describe Dolores. The Wisconsin's Older Worker Network 2013 Older Worker of the Year can also now be used to describe her.

Dolores is a participant in Workforce Connections, Inc.'s Wisconsin Senior Employment (WISE) Program and



works as an assistant to the program.

Dolores has a degree in English and taught as an adjunct professor. Unable to find full time work teaching she decided to enter the workforce as a secretary and writer.

She came to the WISE program when, despite her experience and education, she was no longer able to get a foot in the door to employment.

As an assistant to the WISE program, Dolores spends her days mentoring other program participants as well as handling day-to-day program tasks.

"This job works for me," she said. "I really understand [other participants] because of what I've been through."

Dolores has spent much of her adult life caring for loved ones with disabilities. This has prevented her from being away from home for long periods of time, but she also knows being out of the house is vital to her wellbeing.

"It's very important for me emotionally to be out of the house and doing something productive," she said.

"I don't want to be here and stare just because I'm a senior citizen now. I want to be here to be a great use to someone who needs it."

Outside of work, Dolores is also an accomplished writer, painter and gardener.

The Wisconsin Senior Employment (WISE) Program is the state-administered Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP), authorized by Title V of the Older Americans Act, federally funded by a grant from the U.S. Department of Labor.

Looking Back: Success in 2013

The honeymoon phase. It is with that kind of excitement that Andrew describes starting his new job as a welder with Mid-City Steel in La Crosse.

Early in 2013, Andrew didn't describe his life as a honeymoon. He was struggling to find work after losing his job and really wanted to get into a different field of work.

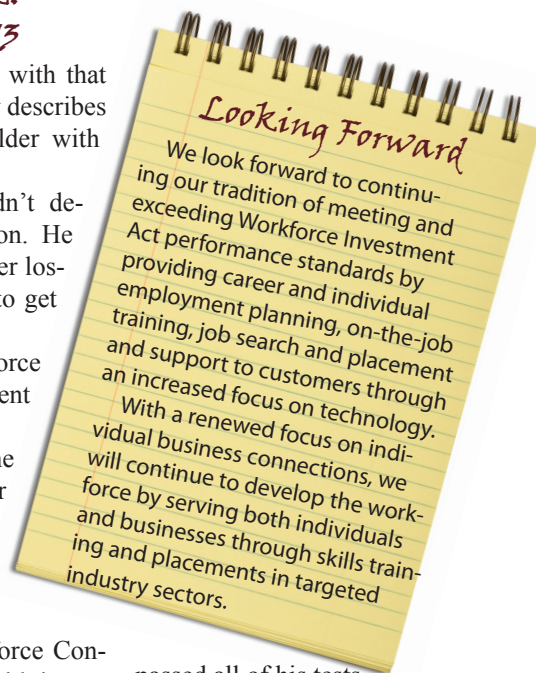
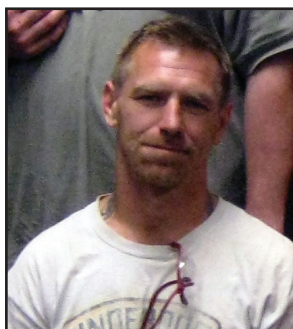
He was introduced to Workforce Connections, Inc. Employment Coordinator Sarah Saito.

Andrew had experience in the construction field and a career interest inventory showed he had a propensity for the welding field.

He entered a welding training program offered by Workforce Connections, Inc. that was put on with incentive dollars received from the Western Wisconsin Workforce Development Board and the Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development as a result of meeting or exceeding performance standards for the Workforce Investment Act program.

Workforce Connections, Inc. teamed up with Western Technical College to provide the training.

Andrew excelled at the welding academy. He had nearly perfect attendance



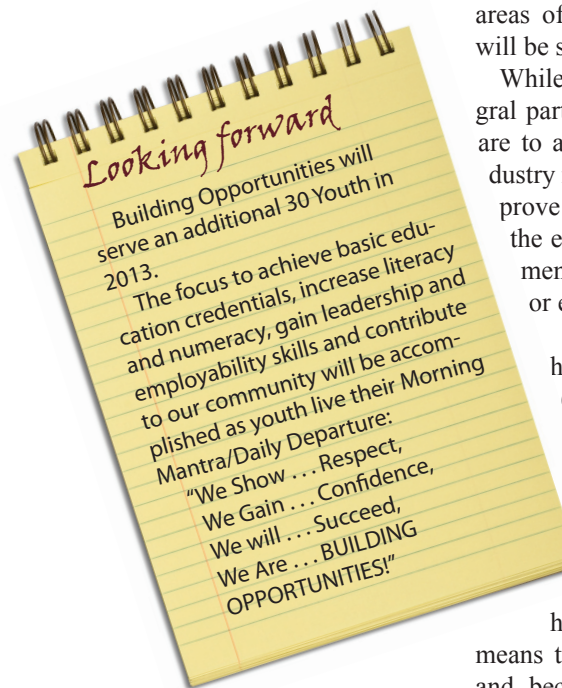
passed all of his tests.

In part, it was Andrew's sincerity and hard work that helped make him a success, Sarah said.

Andrew's praise for Sarah and Workforce Connections, Inc. is high. He believes he wouldn't be where he is today without the two.

"The schooling gave me the information I needed to be confident in this field," Andrew said. "Without Workforce Connections, Inc. doing a great job I would have been struggling."

This program is made available with Workforce Investment Act funding from the United States Department of Labor; the Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development and the Western Wisconsin Workforce Development Board, Inc.



Looking Back: Success in 2013

After months of planning and preparation, February 2013 was the official restart of the Building Opportunities program.

Workforce Connections, Inc. previously ran the program and was able to reopen it after being awarded a YouthBuild grant by the United States Department of Labor and funding from YouthBuild USA/AmeriCorps.

The program is working with the city of La Crosse to rehab houses in rundown

areas of La Crosse. The homes in turn will be sold to low-income families.

While construction training is an integral part of the program, the main goals are to achieve basic education, earn industry recognized certifications, and improve employability skills. The goal at the end of training is to gain employment, enter post-secondary education or enlist in military service.

Since February, 12 participants have achieved basic education (high school diploma, GED, HSED), 9 have increased their literacy and numeracy skills, 11 have obtained employment and 2 have enrolled in post-secondary education.

The AmeriCorps grant has participants learning what it means to give back to their community and become a positive leader. Participants have logged more than 3,600 hours of community service from February through September.

Service partners include WisCorps, TLC, Hunger Task Force, Kane Street Community Garden, Salvation Army, and Bethany St. Joseph's. Participants have taken great pride in their accomplishments and hard work.

Tanner has seen immense changes in his life since participating in cohort. He has a job, bought a house and truck and plans to attend Western Technical College's diesel tech program.

"It's crazy to think about how much this program did for me," he said.

This program is made possible through a \$1,078,796 YouthBuild grant from the United States Department of Labor and \$31,760 from YouthBuild USA/AmeriCorps funding. An additional \$549,490 is provided by local matched and leveraged funds.