

BRIDGES

From School to Work[®]

WINTER 2013, ISSUE 6

ANGELICA'S "AH-HAH" MOMENT

Bridges participant, Angelica Valenzuela, posing in the aisle of the Wal-Mart in Panorama City. Angelica has been employed there since October of 2011, and her supervisors consider her one of their best employees.



Angelica Valenzuela was referred to the Bridges program by her Transition Teacher at San Fernando High School. At the time, Angelica had never been employed, was extremely shy, and exhibited little self-confidence. Despite participating in numerous workshops, she had difficulty making eye contact and projecting her voice. In mock interview after mock interview, Angelica was given the same feedback, and her confidence began to drop.

Her Employer Representative, Sara Ambrose, continued to discuss Angelica's interests with her, and discovered that she had a passion for food and cooking. She spoke about cooking with enthusiasm and confidence, and Sara challenged Angelica to try answering interview questions the same way she spoke about food. This proved to be an "ah-ha" moment, and Angelica nailed the very next interview she went on.

Angelica has now been employed in a competitive position with Wal-Mart for over one year, and she is considered one of the best employees at that location. Her supervisors rave that she is a hard-worker and a team player, and her confidence has skyrocketed. She is currently working 30-40 hours per week and is now looking to enroll into culinary school. Angelica thanked Sara for helping her find something to relate to.

IT'S GROUNDHOG SEASON!

Groundhog Job Shadow Day is a national campaign that gives young people a new perspective on employment through hands-on learning and a one-day mentoring experience. These events are always a hit with our students and employers alike, and are a great way to become involved with the community. If you or your business would like more information on how to participate, please contact John Nave at (213) 347-0042, ext. 29, or john.nave@marriott.com.





JONATHAN MEEKINS

In August of 2012, Jonathan Meekins attained employment with HMS Host, the world's largest provider of food, beverage, and retail services for travelers, with the support of Senior Employer Representative Ivonne Silver and Job Coach Darin Garcia. During his first couple weeks on the job, Jonathan experienced some difficulty communicating with his customers. Jonathan's supervisor explained to Darin that he needed to speak more clearly. Darin began to work on different exercises with Jonathan to increase his confidence and assertiveness. He began putting these exercises into practice at his job, and saw immediate improvement. When Darin checked back with Jonathan's supervisor one week later, he was told that Jonathan's performance had made a 180-degree turn and that he was successfully and effectively communicating with his customers and co-workers. Jonathan has been on the job for over six months now and shows no signs of slowing down. Congratulations, Jonathan, on setting yourself up for success!

ERNESTINE HERVEY: CHEERFUL AND UPBEAT

Ernestine Hervey was referred to the Bridges program by her Transition Teacher at Hamilton High School, Lynn Sabin. When Ernestine's Employer Representative, Kevin Weinress, interviewed Ernestine, he noticed that she was very shy and had no employment experience. At the time of her intake, she was not working, not going to school, and did not seem to be sure which direction she wanted her life to go. She did, however, have a cheerful and upbeat personality, and Kevin recognized that Ernestine was a smart and talented

young woman who just needed a little extra encouragement.

Ernestine diligently attended her workshops with Kevin, and an opportunity presented itself at Smart and Final. Ernestine was prepared, dressed professionally, and had an excellent interview. Upon successful completion of her orientation period, Ernestine was officially hired!

Ernestine has been an excellent employee and her General Manager raves about her. She has been working for almost six months and is line to

receive a promotion to cashier. She is currently undergoing her cashier training, and Kevin is confident that Ernestine will earn her promotion.

