

## **WIOA Adult – Constance Case**

From a very young age, Connie learned to be strong. As a young teenager, she lost her father and was forced into the workforce. Connie took any job she could to help support her mother and sister. She lived her life without the opportunity to really focus on herself and her own career. Connie experienced many personal struggles that created additional stress in her life. Nearly seven years ago, Connie lost her mother. This was an eye opening, ah ha moment for Connie, she had two beautiful children of her own to raise. Connie wanted to be the best mom she could for her children. Life was a challenge, but Connie persevered.

Recently, Connie suffered a broken leg while playing with her children. The injury prevented Connie from working. She had no income and soon had to borrow money from friends and neighbors. As you can imagine, her self-esteem was at an all-time low. Connie felt as if she had hit rock bottom. She begged her doctor to at least let her visit the Marathon County Job Center to seek services. While she was there, she heard about a short-term Machine Tool training program through the WIOA Adult Program. Connie was excited; she had a passion for the manufacturing industry. She wanted to be a part of this program. Her career assessment results confirmed she would be a good fit in this field.

The program was not easy for Connie. She endured many challenges along the way. She missed an entire week of classes due to another surgery, and she had tremendous stress and guilt about missing time with her children. Connie began to feel like she needed to quit the program. When she missed another class, Kaitlin called to check on her. Connie admitted she was upset with the world. Kaitlin invited Connie in to talk through the issues upsetting her. Kaitlin gave Connie the best advice she knew, “Set aside the negativity and focus on yourself. It’s okay to be selfish; it’s okay to focus on you. In the end you are doing this for yourself and your children. Just keep reminding yourself of this.” After a couple of hours of refocusing, Connie was ready to return to class. Together they reviewed her resume. Connie was able to see how awesome she was and all that she had accomplished. Connie stated, “I don’t know where I’d be right now if you hadn’t called me that day.”

Connie’s self-esteem began to increase. She managed to catch up with her coursework, and began preparing for her job search. Connie did mock interviews, attended workshops and with Kaitlin’s assistance, worked on marketing herself to future employers with every opportunity she found, i.e. job fairs and business tours. One tour that stood out to Connie was the trip to Point Precision in Stevens Point. Connie knew this was the place for her. Connie stated, “I remember when the manager took us to his favorite view in the plant. We were lined up at the end of the row filled with running machines. My eyes lit up and I just felt like that’s where I want to be someday.”

Connie completed the Machine Tool training with a certificate and a 3.8 GPA. She couldn’t have been more proud, despite her challenges. Guess where Connie is working today? In addition to landing her dream job, Connie won a \$500 scholarship from CWIMMA. Connie plans to use that scholarship to further her education in Machine Tool at NTC.

Connie has become known throughout the job center for her passion and enthusiasm. Connie is an example to us all that life is fragile and sometimes challenging. It is her strength, perseverance and bravery that put her back on top. We are so proud of you, Connie! We are thankful to be a part of your success! Congratulations!