

## Michael Stephens IPS success story 3/1/19

At 17 years of age, I entered state prison and served 15 years. After being released, I spent time with my family and realized they needed my financial support. I considered finding employment and asked to be referred to IPS for help. My supported employment coordinator helped me find a good job. Working has helped me stay out of trouble and stay safe. I learned how to communicate with employers and make eye contact when talking to others. I work as a dishwasher at a Tai restaurant with really cool people. The owner allows me to call her grandma and it makes me feel like family. Since starting work, I have learned new skills and learned a lot about the Tai culture. Grandma has taught me how to write my name in the Tai language. Everyone is very helpful and they teach me new skills. I have become more confident and believe I can do anything I put my mind to. I recently enrolled in RCC to start working towards my Auto Specialist degree. I'm excited about the idea of becoming a mechanic one day and continuing to help support my family. My family is cool about me working and the new skills I learn. I am pleased with the support I have received from supported employment.