

IPS Supported Employment and Education Success Story

Supported Employment changed my life. After graduating with my Bachelors of Science in December of 2020, I found it extremely difficult to find employment in my field of study. I found a temporary option for a year and then moved to Southern Oregon where I spent several months looking for employment. I was becoming very worried, anxious and hopeless about the process of looking for work in my field.

In speaking with my therapist at Options for Southern Oregon, my therapist recommended referring me to Supported Employment for assistance finding employment. Once I met with my employment specialist she provided encouragement and accountability. My self-esteem improved and it made me feel qualified and hopeful. Working the process together improved my ability to take the steps I needed to apply for jobs. Having my employment specialist to discuss my process motivated me to increase how much effort I was putting in. I valued celebrating that process with someone who supported me.

Through guidance and encouragement I found a job at a Rehabilitation Center as an animal keeper, which has been a great starting point. My employment specialist and I continued to apply for and reach out to local government and federal forestry offices. I have now also been offered the job of my dreams in a federal forestry department.

My confidence has increased and my anxiety has decreased. I now feel productive and hopeful about my future. I enjoy being busy at work, learning new things and having friendly co-workers with common interests. I like spending time with wildlife, learning new things about Oregon wildlife and discussing those things with my coworkers.

In the future I plan to change positions and will work with the federal government in the U.S. Forest Service. This will allow for long-term path where I can grow and move to new positions.

My family, my wife and my friends are proud and happy that I am doing what I enjoy. My Employment Specialist is a wonderful person and was so helpful encouraging me.