

## WorkOne Participant Success Story: Morgen Benner

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I believe my educational story is unique, but the excellent service I received at WorkOne Logansport is as typical an example as can be seen. When I began my venture toward further education, I already had nearly a decade of experience working in the field I have chosen. So allow me, if you will, to tell a story of how I was assisted.

Unfortunately, my once prestigious Engineering position had fallen victim to the crashing economic downturn and I found myself jobless. I applied for literally hundreds of jobs and discovered I was quite unique. When I applied for near-minimum-wage labor positions, I was told I was overqualified. When I applied for Engineering positions, I was told that I wasn't quite ready. The whole way the caring staff of WorkOne were there helping me to find potential jobs and offering to assist me in obtaining a Workforce Acceleration Grant to pay for additional education.

I began to grow frustrated as the seemingly endless line of rejections grew longer. On a whim, I decided to call an employer and inquire as to why I did not receive a position for which I felt I was more than qualified. To my dismay, I found that two of the applicants for the same entry-level position held Master's degrees in Mechanical Engineering. My heart sunk.

I had previously attended Ivy Tech Community College for Computer Aided Design and Manufacturing. Through my own hard work and dedication, I was able to work my way into a position as a Mechanical Engineer, though I possessed no Engineering degree. This worked well for a few years, but now that I knew what I was up against it was time for action. With help from WorkOne staff, Deb Sheets and Missy Kraay and a Workforce Acceleration Grant, I went back to school and obtained an Associate of Science degree in Mechanical Engineering Technology from Ivy Tech.

My first door opened quite quickly as I applied for a summer temporary position for engineering students at Ball Corporation in Monticello. They were thrilled to have a student with so much real-world

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experience, and after seeing the dedication I put into my degree, they offered me a full time position with a thirty percent pay raise.

But it gets better; I was contacted recently by a company familiar with my past work looking to replace their Engineering Manager. They needed someone with an Engineering degree, which meant that I was not a candidate before. Thanks to my hard work and the assistance I received from WorkOne, I am negotiating for that position just months after my graduation.

I know none of this would be possible without the financial help and friendly encouragement I received from WorkOne and the education from Ivy Tech. I truly thank the WorkOne staff because without their help I would never be in such a good position as I am now.