



ARRA and Oregon's Rural Workforce Development Network - Working Together, Changing Lives

Tasha Brooks is an amazing young woman who started with MTC Works to get her GED. Her goal was to make a better life for herself and her daughter and she knew this was the first step.

While Tasha worked part time at Taco Bell, she attended our GED prep class and Girls Circle. When she was laid off at Taco Bell due to lack of work, she worked harder on her GED to finish so she could find better work and ultimately go to college and work in the legal field. Tasha was fortunate to have housing with a grandparent so she has always kept a roof over their heads. Grandma also helps with childcare.

On May 13, 2009, Tasha completed her GED and started our computer class. While in the class, she made connections with a friend, Kim, who worked at a law firm in Portland. Kim suggested she apply to work at the law firm, but wasn't sure if they had any openings. Tasha applied and then talked with us about funding a work experience through the ARRA funds and things began falling in place. Before Tasha could start her work experience, she had to work out transportation schedules. She lives in St. Helens, rides the bus to downtown Portland, transfers to MAX to get to the Lloyd Center area and then walks several blocks to the office. This takes her approximately 2 hours. According to Tasha's supervisor, she was doing an excellent job and because of the variety of skills she was learning, we extended her work experience. Tasha is a hard worker, learned a great deal and never missed work. Her final day on the work experience was July 31st and she started work as a Dodge Law Firm employee on August 3rd.

While commuting to and from work, Tasha met a teenage girl whom she would see sleeping on the bus stop bench. The girl had become homeless recently when her boyfriend lost his job. Both were searching for work and needed help but did not know where to look. Tasha called and I gave her connections for the two young people to get help with food, housing and job search assistance. She gave this information to the girl, along with items she and her friends gathered to help. Tasha is paying it forward and told me she wanted to help because that could have been her had she not received the help she did through MTC Works and her family.

Tasha received services provided by MTC Training & Placement Services and Supported by the Oregon Workforce Alliance—Workforce Investment Board.