

# Career Transitions, Inc. Annual Report | 2014-15

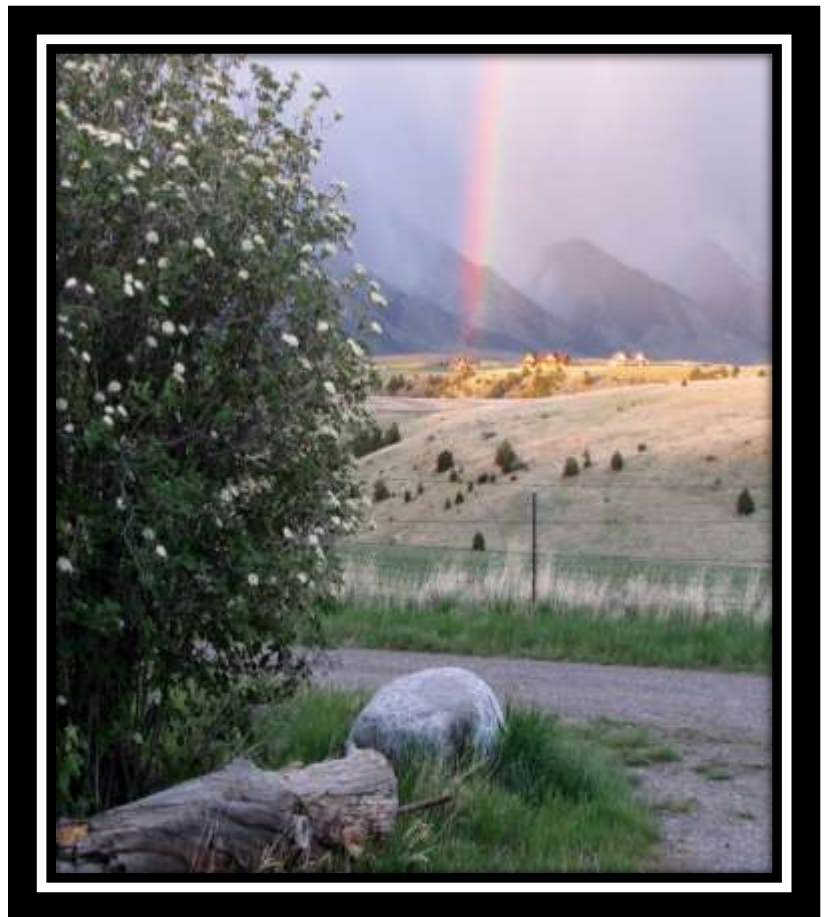


PHOTO BY VALERIE OTTO



**SINCE 1981**

A 501-C3 NON-PROFIT, COMMUNITY- BASED  
EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING ORGANIZATION

189 ARDEN DRIVE, BELGRADE, MONTANA 59714

406-388-6701

## Darla Joyner, Executive Director's Message

Time seems to go by faster as we age and I am starting to reflect on my past 20 years at Career Transitions.

Having been at the helm of non-profit organizations for the last 37 years in Bozeman, I have seen change, for the good and not so good. What keeps me and others working in the non-profit field, are the people.

The people we help; those we work with; the board leadership and the community support make the mission attainable.

While we deal with funding challenges, Career Transitions has been able to be “entrepreneurial” in our approach to our proprietary funds. We have had the good fortune to have the Gallatin Valley Farmers’ Market as an avenue to assist many start-ups and local producers and artists in their business development. Several of our vendors now have successful “main street” businesses. Economic development and community development are essential to a healthy community.

A partnership developed with the Belgrade School District has led to the growth of the HiSET (high school equivalency) and options for students to get on the road to academic and personal success. The Community Education Program is continuing to gain support as an avenue for continuing education and personal/professional development. The Certified Nurse Assistant training program just completed our full year of three classes with an average 90% completion rate for obtaining the state certificate and employment in the field.

Our board volunteers have made a continued effort to give the staff their confidence, especially when looking at new endeavors. I am thankful for their dedication.

When I talk about our organization, for me, it is the entire staff who make the difference when we further our mission and see individuals and families moving forward and obtaining self-confidence to be “the best” they can be. Their success is celebrated by everyone here at CT.

Coordination with the Bozeman Job Service, Belgrade Alternative School and Gallatin Mental Health here at the CWCTC (Career Workforce Community Training Center) has helped further the mission to offer “One Stop” services to our community. We hope to continue with them and grow together. We continue to participate in discussions with Gallatin College at Montana State to further workforce development for the valley.

As we incorporate new technology into our training mix here, you will see us offering aspects of our workforce development to areas outside of the valley, to serve those who don’t have easy access to us. Watch for new announcements regarding these additions. Change creates challenges and Career Transitions is ready to meet them, with our head in the clouds and our feet firmly on the ground.



## Career Transitions' Mission

Since 1981, **Our Mission:** To assist individuals, families and communities to become self-sufficient through training, education, employment and community development.

CT's Board of Directors recently reviewed our Mission, Goals, Core Values and Guiding Principles. We all know that many strategic plans are developed and put on the shelf.

We are happy to say that upon review we find that we are still focused on the same strategic goals and performance outcomes to make certain the organization is relevant and successful into the future.



**Our Core Values:** Open to change to meet the needs of the community and workplace; a leader and role model; a holistic approach to training; nurturing and empowering; better, cheaper and faster; maintenance of our uniqueness; up-to-date training and involvement in employment and training issues.

**Our Guiding Principles:** Remain true to our uniqueness and holistic approach; maintain flexibility; build upon our success; keep things in perspective and take advantage of opportunities.

### **One Stop Service Stats**

Total: 2241

Phone: 1023

Core Services: 1132

Vets: 86

### Community Education Program

Ellen Ornitz, Community Education Coordinator

*Career Transitions' Ready-2-Work Community Education Program continues to develop and offer training for acquiring new skills and career advancement.*

- **One-on-one Computer Training** (Introduction to Computers, Microsoft Word 1 & Word 2 & Excel) continues year round. These individualized classes are taught by the well-qualified staff of Career Transitions. Enrollment increased in spring 2015 and the teachers received excellent evaluations. Out of twenty-five participants, one appreciative student updated her computer skills and interviewing techniques. She subsequently was employed as a bank teller, which matched her chosen career path.
  
- CT business classes were very successful in fall 2014 and spring 2015 with healthy enrollment in **Introduction to Bookkeeping, Practicing QuickBooks** and our new **Mastering Payroll** class for a total of 21 registrations. The instructor Teri Patterson has suggested that CT merge Bookkeeping and QuickBooks classes which we did for fall 2015. Our payroll curriculum did expand and the class was well-attended in the fall 2015. Several of CT's students are managing their own businesses, while others are upgrading skills needed for their current positions. Many employers are now requiring QuickBooks expertise.
  - CT developed a **Certified Nurse Assistant** training program due to the high demand in the community and numerous employment opportunities. The classes are taught by Carol Scott, MBA, BSN, RN. Carol Scott is the Director of Resident Services at Spring Creek Inn Memory Care Community and has over forty years of nursing, teaching and administrative experience. Her teaching assistant Deeann Herta is also an RN from Spring Creek Inn. Potential students are interviewed to ensure that the CNA career is a good match for their abilities and interests. Our CNA students are diverse in terms of background, gender and age. Students in the high school may register for this training at age sixteen. In 2014-15 CT enrolled 20 students for our two classes. There is state-required enrollment cap of 10 students per class.
  
  - The first CNA training program offered in March and April was very successful. This class attained the maximum enrollment of ten students. The students all completed the class and passed their final examination. Out of the ten students, four were employed by Spring Creek Inn, several are continuing their education in the medical field and a few have been job hunting. CT has initiated relationships with several local health care employers in order to connect our students with job possibilities. One of our CNA graduates who was hired by Spring Creek Inn recently received honorable "Employee of the Month."

- Our second CNA training began April 20<sup>th</sup> and that class also completely filled. 90% of these students passed their final exam and are now certified. Most students have found immediate CNA employment.
- Our third CNA training began September 21<sup>st</sup> and final testing was conducted November 21<sup>st</sup>. An upcoming CNA training is scheduled to begin February 1, 2016.
- **Results:** The purpose of acquiring a CNA varies according to the individual. Some students are already working in a health care facility and want to increase their training and hourly wage. Some students are new to the field and want a change in employment. Several students are enrolled or seek to be enrolled in a college nursing program. Nurse Aides without the CNA certificate receive \$9/hour - \$12/hour while certified nurses will often start at \$13/hour. Many of our students are taking advantage of the job readiness component of their training and CT staff has helped them construct and create a pro-active resume. During a job interview, one graduating student was told by her future employer that her CNA resume was the best she had ever reviewed.



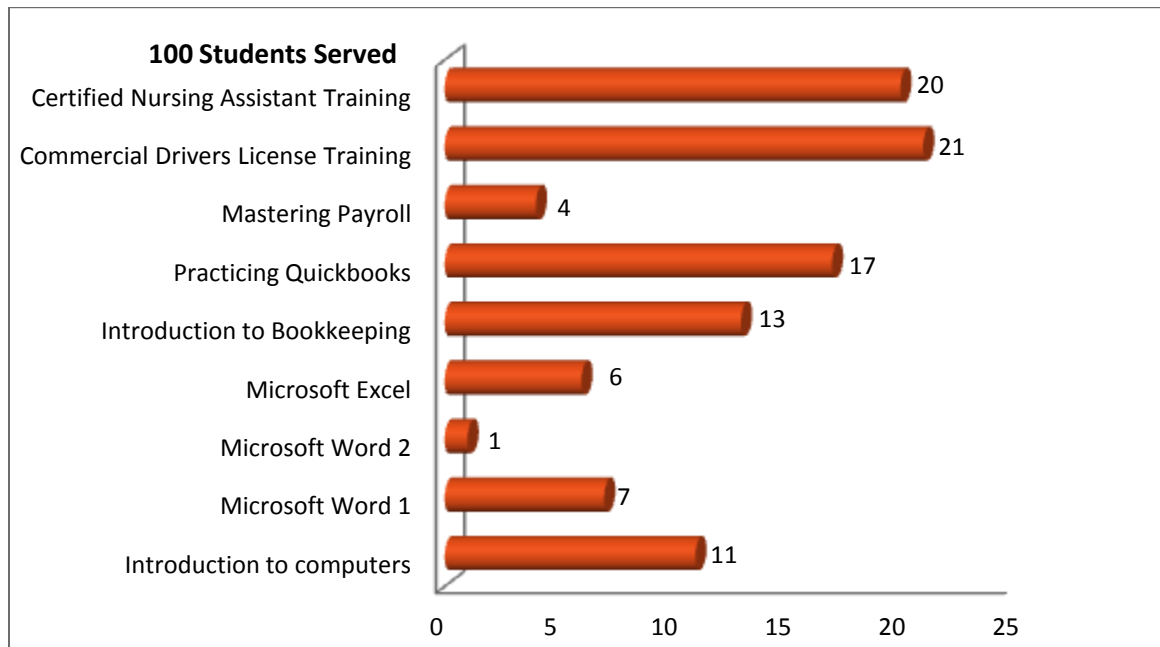
Photo by Ellen Ornitz



Photo by Ellen Ornitz

Student interest in **Commercial Driver License training** continues. We have increased the hands-on full program from 12 to 14 hours, with an optional job search component. CDL jobs are still in high demand across Montana. Wages range from \$13/hour - \$25/hour depending upon the number of miles logged by the trucker and the driver's willingness to travel regionally rather than locally. Out of the fourteen CDL students trained this fiscal year, several found immediate employment. A recent graduate of CT's training program was immediately employed by a trucking firm in Belgrade, MT.

- The Community Education Coordinator is developing new training for 2015-16 including **Advanced First Aid/CPR** which was offered fall 2015 and **Customer Service Specialist training with certification** for 2016.



## **Computer and Literacy Instructor**

***Valerie Otto***

### **High School Equivalency Test (HiSET):**

This past season we served 45 students, offering pre-testing through the TABE Test and classes twice per week as well as take-home packets for those who cannot attend class. We have also continued our third year helping credit deficient Belgrade HS HiSET Options students, who agree to a special plan at the Panther Learning Center, using 'college-ready' HiSET scores to earn their diploma. The HiSET from ETS provides both paper and computer based tests and, once prepared, our students are directed to the ABLE site in Bozeman.

Our most devoted student this past year was a young man named T. who came to CT weekly for five months after attending MT Youth Challenge (MYC). This foster child, adopted by a local family, had left Belgrade MS where he was on an IEP for social and learning problems. His commitment was tied to a plan to move and re-connect with family, and he successfully earned his certificate without ANY test accommodations!

### **Performance Assessment Network (PAN)**

This past year CT contracted with PAN, a company contracting to provide proctors for companies requiring a computer-based assessment. After extensive background tests and a detailed qualification process, 75 clients were served for the first six months of 2015, helping job applicants for USPS, TSA, Border Patrol and FBI. Time blocks are created about once per week for the tests which last from 90 to 300 minutes.

### **WIOA/One Stops**

Two hours per week are scheduled to meet with "One Stop" clients to offer career counseling. Most of these individuals are over 50, having already worked in several career fields. For one reason or another (family move, personal injury/disability, temporary absence from the workforce for caretaking, divorce, or simply a changing workforce) they need to change their focus. Often they enjoyed their previous work but it does not exist or they physically cannot continue in that field. The Montana Career Information System (MCIS) and ONETONLINE have been excellent resources as they explore possibilities, dream and share their stories. As a "coach" our role is one of encouragement and support, but they are often referred to other agencies for additional practical assistance.

### **CEP**

Through support of the Belgrade Schools we teach a 'Basic/Introduction to Computers' class. In this digital age there are still MANY who do not know the basic language and have found this a SERIOUS limiting factor when looking for employment. These one-on-one sessions are often critical confidence builders for those who have never touched a mouse; never owned a computer before; never sent an email; never edited or saved a document. In addition MS Word I and II instruction are available to those who need more confidence in their computer word processing skills.



## Employment and Training Manager

*Kristi Wetsch*

### Workforce Investment Act (WIA 2014, WIOA, 2015 Stories...

55 year old single male who had been driving semi in the oil fields in Eastern Montana and North Dakota. He lost his job due to an accident so he moved back to Bozeman which has been his permanent residence for 25 years. He took a few hours of refresher hours behind the wheel with Career Transitions' semi- truck so he could build his confidence on driving. We assisted him with updating his resume and with the help of the Bozeman Job Service, he was hired to drive locally. He is making over \$20.00 an hour with benefits and can stay in Bozeman.

48 year old widow who lost her husband a year prior to enrollment. She has a college degree and a great work history but stopped working in order to take care of her husband. She took Career Transitions' computer classes to upgrade her skills and we provided assistance with updating her resume. She worked closely with Bozeman Job Service at the Belgrade office and she heard of an office job that would fit her skills. We helped her apply and did a mock interview and she got the job. She is making \$15.00 an hour with full benefits with the chance for advancement in a short period of time.

*Follow-up with* a single 58 year old female who had lost her job because the business closed. We assisted her with upgrading her computer skills and her resume. With the assistance of Bozeman Job Service, she got the job she really wanted and has been there for a year and a half.

*Follow-up with* a 45 year old father of 3 lost his business after the recession. He had been working odd jobs but wanted something solid so he could make good money and be at home with his family. We worked on his resume and assisted with some support services. He was enrolled in the OJT with Bozeman Job Service and got a job making \$19.00 an hour at Big Sky. He was not completely happy with this job as he left home early in the morning and got home late at night and never saw his children. We did some job searching and found another similar job and he is making \$22.00 an hour close to home.





## **WoRC (Program of Temporary Assistance to Needy Families)**

**Erin Meyer, Senior Case Manager**

**Alicia Robinson, Case Manager**

The WoRC Program at Career Transitions had the pleasure of serving M in FY2015. M was a single mother of a 4 year old daughter who had been born prematurely and suffered from developmental delays. M had mastered many job skills over the years, some of which she gleaned as a small business owner with her husband prior to their divorce. M entered the WoRC Program as a student of an established online university working on her bachelor's degree in accounting and business. M utilized the child care subsidization program and secured stable child care for her daughter, providing her with the skills needed to start kindergarten at 5 years of age. M also obtained full time employment as an office manager and bookkeeper at a wage of \$16/hour and made it her goal to improve her credit score and ultimately purchase a home. M excelled at her new job and was able to enroll in programs for down payment assistance. The WoRC Program recently received a phone call from M reporting that she had just closed on her own home.

The WoRC Program also served S, a single mother of three children. S utilized TANF and the WoRC Program for several years, but had been unable to maintain employment due to frequent issues with child care. S decided, after much struggle, that self-employment would likely be the only job that would provide her with the flexibility she needed in order to properly care for her children. S elected to pursue a home cleaning business and did all of the work involved in obtaining her business license, insurance, business cards, and clients. She spent a great deal of time researching marketing options and identified those forms of marketing that cost very little for high return. S successfully built her business and made enough money to close her TANF and SNAP benefits.

The WoRC Program briefly served M, a single mother of two children. M moved to the Gallatin Valley from another state to escape a domestic violence relationship. She and her children were homeless and without transportation and were forced to rely on an area homeless shelter for housing assistance. M obtained employment quickly and made a decent wage, however, she knew that she wanted an even better job someday. M utilized her new paychecks to purchase a car and eventually found an apartment that she could afford. M enrolled in a short-term training course with Career Transitions with the help of CT donations, and she completed the course with flying colors. M obtained employment in the new field almost immediately following completion of the course and certification.

### **WoRC Statistics Fiscal Year 2015 (July 2014 through June 2015)**

The WoRC Program is an employment-focused program intended to aid families in achieving self-sufficiency. The program goes hand-in-hand with the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) Program that provides cash assistance to families with dependent children. Participants in the TANF/WoRC Programs often qualify for SNAP (the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, formerly known as food stamps), Medicaid, and child care assistance. Participants are also eligible to receive supportive service monies to aid them in paying for

gasoline, work appropriate clothing, training programs, fees for adult basic education, driver's licenses, auto repairs, insurance, and registration.

The majority of families receiving TANF cash assistance are required to comply with the requirements of the WoRC program that include activities such as: job searching and readiness, vocational education training programs, job skills training, work experience (WEX) sites, adult basic education, and community service programs. Participants generally meet with their WoRC Case Manager on a regular basis, and receive assistance with their basic needs, as well as referrals to other community agencies and resources. **All averages are obtained via the WoRC Program's monthly reports obtained from July 2014 through June 2015:**

Number of participants served	142
Average number of single-parent households	33
Average number of two-parent households	7.3
Percentage of single-parent households who close with employment at some level	42%
Percentage of two-parent households who close with employment at some level	77.8%
Average single-parent hourly wage	\$10.05 per hour
Average two-parent hourly wage	\$10.34 per hour
Average rates of compliance/participation for single-parent households	56%
Average rates of compliance/participation for two-parent households	61%

## **Gallatin Valley Farmers' Market**

### **Kristi Wetsch, Market Manager**

**Senior Voucher Program:** 165 seniors were given vouchers worth \$50.00. This meant that \$8,250.00 went to the growers.

### ***SNAP(Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program)***

\$766 were used to purchase produce, meat, baked goods, honey and salsa. (increase of \$340.00 from 2014 market season).

This year we received a grant from NCAT for an Incentive Program to promote the purchase of fresh vegetables with SNAP benefits called Double Up Bucks. When the customer had swiped their EBT card at the SNAP table, they would be given incentive tokens to match what they got from SNAP. For instance, if a customer got \$10.00 worth of tokens to shop with at the market, they would be given \$10.00 in incentive tokens. \$382.00 was used in Double Up Bucks.

This meant that \$1,148.00 went to the vendors.

### **Economic Development:**

A number of vendors have been referred to SCORE, Prospera and BEAR to grow their product into a business such as: Suzie's Cream Cheese, Third Eye Chai Tea, Stella's Breads.

A number of the vendors sell on line or in businesses around the valley such as Heeb's Grocery, Town and Country, Bakers' Street, Chalet Market, Garden Café, Nova Café and Montana State University Bobcat Stadium.

### **Changes:**

The physical changes at the fairgrounds have proven challenging for the future growth of the market. BAHA (Amateur Hockey Assn.) is building a ticket booth in the North East corner of the pavilion which will take the spaces of 4-5 vendors. The new ice building that is being constructed takes up parking on the West side of the pavilion and when they open the rink, we anticipate that there will be skating going on during the market which means more cars leaving less parking spaces.

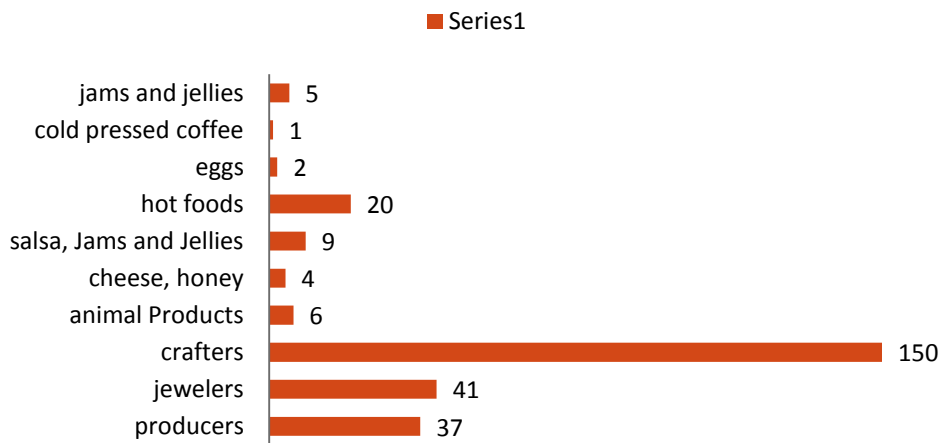
The market was established in 1971 and keeps getting bigger and better each year. This would not be possible without the dedicated workers each Saturday. A big thank you to everyone who has worked at the market and helped to make it such a success.

When Career Transitions started managing the market in 1996, the population of Gallatin County was 67,831 and in 2014 the population was 97,304. This shows how much the county has grown and we believe the market needs to grow to keep up with the demands of vendors and customers. Growth will be slow or not at all at the current location. Discussion needs to continue regarding future location possibilities and funding.



Photo by Kristi Wetsch

## 271 Farmers' Market Vendors 2015



**Board Leadership****Thersia Hancock – President/Board Member****Cheri Johnson – Treasurer/Board Member****Mike O’Donnell – Past President/Board Member****Craig Parker – Board Member****Shaina Chepulis – Board Member****Peggy Lucas – Board Member****Tracy Johnson – Board Member****Career Transitions’ Staff Members****Darla Joyner, Executive Director (1995)****Erin Meyer, Senior WoRC Case Manager (2008)****Ellen Ornitz, Community Education Coordinator (2013)****Valerie Otto, Computer and Literacy Instructor (2007)****Alicia Robinson, WoRC Case Manager (2015)****Mary Quesenberry, Office Assistant (2006)****Kristi Wetsch, Employment and Training Manager (1996)****2014-2015 Financial (from 990)****Revenue:**

Program	\$482,063
Investment	\$73

**Expenses:**

Salaries, other compensation, employee benefits	\$333,158
Other expenses	\$148,653

**Assets** \$167,441**Liabilities** \$25,353**Net Assets** **\$142,088**

## **Employment and Training**

### **Services**

- Assessment and Testing
- Job Search
- Basic Computer Training
- Community Learning Center
- Soft Skills Training
- Career Counseling
- Tutoring (Literacy/GED/HiSET)
- Eligibility Determination for Services
- Resource Referrals
- Temporary Assistance to Families -WoRC Case Management
- Community Education Program

### **Services to Business**

- Training for employment
- Entrepreneurship Training
- Small Business Development and Support
- Customized Workforce Training

**Contact us with your workforce development needs.**

careertransitions.com

189 Arden Drive, Belgrade, MT 59714, 406.388.6701