

Success Stories: Vocational Rehabilitation



Johnathan Beddoes



OCCUPATION:
Facility Manager/Peer Support

COUNSELORS:
VR Counselor: Barbie Cederlof
Employment Counselor: Carmen Bento

VR PROVIDED ASSISTANCE:

- Vocational Guidance and Counseling
- Individualized Plan for Employment
- Referral and Partnership with Workforce Development Division (WDD)
- Assistive Technology
- Transportation and Clothing Assistance
- Training and Certification
- Job Search and Placement

For many, getting sober and maintaining sobriety can be challenging. For Johnathan Beddoes, however, this quest is what brought him a new outlook on life and its possibilities. Jonathan was referred in 2022 by a community partner and the Warrior Spirit treatment facility to vocational rehabilitation (VR) counselor Barbie Cederlof in Tooele. Meeting with Cederlof he shared his goal of wanting to help others overcome addiction and substance use. His VR counselor and Workforce Development Division (WDD) employment counselor, Carmen Bento, knew how to partner effectively and open the door for Johnathan to step through. His immediate need, however, was to get employment through Deseret Industries to pay his rent and stay connected to treatment.

The three worked together to get Johnathan enrolled in a peer support certificate program through Salt Lake Community College. Using a WDD-purchased laptop, he completed the program in under three weeks. The

VR team assisted him with transportation and work clothing as part of his preparation for his new profession. With his certificate in hand and completion of the allotted time of sobriety, Johnathan landed a peer support training position at Warrior Spirit. His innate skills and developed abilities for that work led to a promotion as a facility manager at Beacon Heights Senior Living.

His peer support training allows him to guide and mentor others in their future planning and successful sobriety. Jonathan is now a role model and advocate for those in his care. The VR program's impact in his life is evident in his own words, "Through vocational rehabilitation, I received specialized training in communication techniques, conflict resolution, and empathy-building skills. As a result, in my peer support specialist job, I've been able to effectively engage with clients, de-escalate conflicts, and provide empathetic support, ultimately fostering a positive and supportive environment for those I assist."