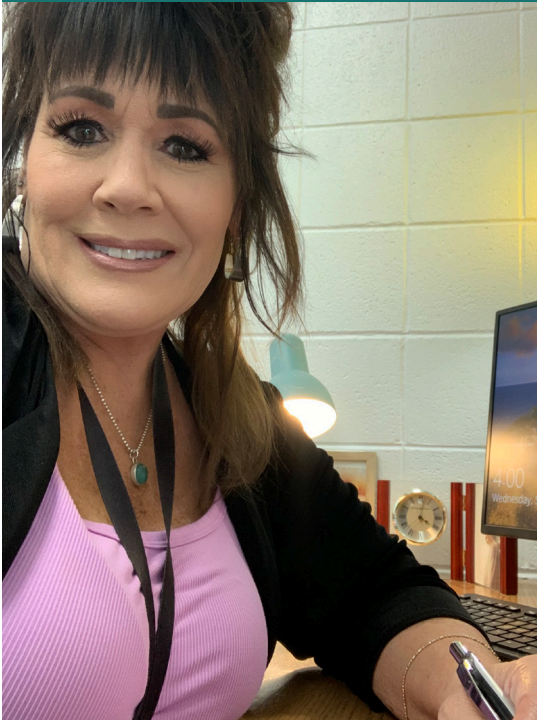


Success Stories: Vocational Rehabilitation



Susan Stone



OCCUPATION:
Substance Abuse Disorder Counselor

VR COUNSELOR:
Cristiane Lundgreen, Central Utah District

VR PROVIDED ASSISTANCE:

- VR Counseling and Guidance
- Individualized Plan for Employment
- Mental Health treatment
- Transportation Assistance
- Education Assistance for Utah Valley University
- Job Development and Placement

When Susan came to VR in March 2023, she was very insecure about her future. She described feeling physically that the clock on her career was ticking. But Susan had disabilities that prevented her pursuit of her vocational goal of counseling. Would she be able to compete with younger graduates? Could she complete the required coursework? How would she live while going to school? And could she control both her physical and mental health? She reported these and other questions going through her mind at the time. She applied for VR services in order to get answers to her questions.

Susan and her VR counselor Cristiane Lundgreen teamed up to develop her Individualized Employment Plan (IEP). She was able to receive assistance with counseling, medications and treatment for her disabilities as she prepared for a training program. Her VR counselor was able to explore a number of career and educational options with her, and later provide the

educational funding, a needed laptop, and prescription lenses to facilitate completion of her schooling through Utah Valley University. Susan was able to find permanent employment with the Utah Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) and will obtain her Substance Use Disorder Counselor (SUDC) certification in a few months. She loves her work as a counselor in a mental health treatment environment.

Reflecting on her transformative journey with VR, Susan states, “This past year has been a roller coaster of adventures. I took a leap of faith and walked into Vocational Rehabilitation to see if there was any help available. I was introduced to my counselor, Christiane, and OH MY GOODNESS! This beautiful woman believed in me. She listened, she heard, she cared. This has been the greatest blessing ever! Everything I have experienced with VR has encouraged me forward.” A little determination and a supportive VR counselor bring great dividends!