

## NFJP Success Story: Business Engagement in Action

The Opportunities Industrial Center of Washington (OIC) collaborates with Columbia Basin College (CBC) and its local American Job Center (AJC) to provide industry recognized credentials to workers that fulfill skill and certification requirements. This approach increases opportunities for farmworkers to begin a career pathway as well as serving the needs of local business. In collaboration with CBC and the local AJC, OIC identified two industry recognized short-term training credentials, the Production and Logistics Technician certifications, which would build upon skills that many farmworkers already possess. Once OIC confirmed that these certifications matched the needs of employers in the area, they worked together to disseminate information to other employers who had job openings requiring similar skills. By demonstrating an interest in one employer's business needs, OIC learned that the company was in the process of opening a distribution center in Pasco and had many positions to fill. To be responsive to this demand, OIC expanded its marketing and promoted its credential program to workers and other employers. In order to reach additional local employers with similar needs, OIC collaborated with several partners to hold a "Fast Track to Jobs" event for both businesses and workers, promoting the Production and Logistics Technician certifications as well as other short-term industry recognized credentials available at CBC.

The event began with an overview of the credential programs followed by employer presentations on the open positions that directly related to the certifications. Credentials included: Hospitality, Commercial Driver License Training, Food Truck Academy, Production Technician, Logistics Technician, and Basic Industrial Maintenance. Workers were then encouraged to meet directly with the individual employers and WIOA programs including NFJP to discuss training options and program support. To make sure it covered its bases, OIC held three "Fast Track to Jobs" events. After the first event, OIC added a certification for Basic Machining. Overall, many positive outcomes resulted from creating a space where businesses could meet with workers and training providers to hold a dialogue about their business needs and create a pathway to build NFJP participants' and other job seekers' skills to meet those needs.

Below are participant success stories illustrating how OIC's collaboration with CBC, its local AJC, businesses and other partners create career pathway opportunities for farmworkers.

"Erik completed the Basic Industrial Maintenance Short-term Certificate at Columbia Basin College which included Forklift Certification. He attended the event as an opportunity to network with employers. He was hired by AutoZone as a Forklift Operator earning \$14.25 per hour. He earned \$3,113 in the year prior to his enrollment. Through his hard work and dedication he earned \$29,655 in the year following his placement."

"Filomeno was enrolled in a Commercial Driver's License training during the event. He attended the event to learn about potential opportunities following the completion of his training. He was hired by AutoZone as a Truck Driver earning \$23 per hour. He is in follow-up service at this time. His second quarter earnings were \$22,424. He attributes his success to the support he received through co-enrollment in NFJP and the WIOA Adult Programs, and the carefully coordinated services and encouragement that were provided."

“Anthony learned about NFJP services at the Fast Track to Jobs event. He qualified as a seasonal farmworker. He graduated from high school four years earlier but could not afford to attend college. He was involved with the justice system, and was having difficulty finding stable employment. Anthony received tuition assistance and completed the Production Technician Certification. He was hired by AutoZone as a Warehouse Production worker earning \$14.25 per hour. He earned \$29,125 in the year following his placement. That is over six times more than he earned in the year prior to his enrollment.”