

Celebrate Rehab

The client came to DVR as a high school student three years ago. He/she was born with Klinefelter's Syndrome. While the client wanted to attend college, a psychological evaluation recommended that he/she train "in a hands on fashion" instead. However, the client was determined to attend college. DVR and the client agreed to a trial semester at LCCC at the client's own cost to determine the viability of a college training program. Not only did the client pass that semester with a 4.0, this last spring he/she graduated from LCCC and transferred to UW. His/her grades at UW are excellent so far! He/she is a client that encourages me to remember that clients are not always what shows up in records, but what effort and dedication can mean in his/her own life. I am looking forward to all the big things the client is going to do from here.

Andrea Clubb Cheyenne, Wyoming

The client came to me here in Rawlins after being put on an Employment Improvement Plan at work. It was expiring in less than a month, and he/she hadn't made any notable progress. The client had called the Client Assistance Program for help, which referred him/her back to me to see if I could help facilitate a conversation with his/her employer and help in any way I could. The first few visits with the client were all listening. He/she had a lot on his/her mind, and just needed to vent. I learned through those first few visits that he/she was diagnosed with epilepsy, and had had a seizure at work in February 2017. He/she aspirated a granola bar during that seizure, and it had really alarmed his/her coworkers, and they had begun acting nervous around him/her. In the months following his/her seizure, he/she was trying all kinds of new medicine and doses, and needless to say, wasn't responding well. His/her work suffered significantly. His/her memory seemed to be compromised, and his/her organizational skills weren't complimenting him/her in a way that helped him/her complete his/her job assignments.

After establishing eligibility and gaining a full scope of the client and his/her situation, the first order at hand was to see what accommodations were in place at work. The client got a copy of his/her accommodations from his/her employee file, and essentially, it was a bunch of scribbles and initials and notes on a piece of legal pad paper. It was hard to understand, and it was certainly hard to implement in any sort of a consistent way. We reached out to the Job Accommodations Network (JAN) immediately. They connected us with a case manager who helped us sift through the list of accommodations, and come up with a clear and concise list. Once we had a complete and professional document, we sent it to the client's doctor in Casper for notes. He made some adjustments, and sent it back for a final review. Once the final product was put together, we submitted it to HR, and the client scheduled a visit with his/her supervisor so that they could all get on the same page about his/her needs in the workplace.

With accommodations in place, we started exploring assistive technology to assist the client with his/her memory and organizational issues. He/she had been taking a class from UW, so he/she reached out to WIND/WATR and was able to learn about a couple apps that could help. He/she downloaded them to his/her phone and implemented them right away. Once he/she was able to show his/her phone usage as "assistive tech," we were able to get his/her cell phone added to his/her accommodations list without issue.

A couple of the final things we did together were to ensure he/she had adequate support, not only in his/her personal life, but his/her professional life, as well. I made a referral to a mental health counselor who the client still sees to date, and we scheduled an epilepsy presentation for his/her coworkers during a "brown bag lunch" they had at work. The client had noticed a nervousness surrounding him/her after his/her seizure, and he/she noticed that coworkers didn't want to go out in the field with him/her for fear of him/her having a seizure and not knowing what to do. The presentation helped to set their minds at ease and inform them of actions to take if necessary. The good news? The client's medications were finally adjusted and he/she has been seizure free for several months now. To solidify his/her re-integration in to the workplace, the client emailed me just a month or so ago to let me know that he/she had been included in an "office funny" email chain—the first he'd/she'd been included on in months. His/her relationship with his/her coworkers is improving every day!

The client was taken off the Employee Improvement Plan, and is in Status 22 currently. He/she is thriving, and I am slowly transitioning myself out. He/she has got wonderful supports in place, and I am incredibly hopeful for him/her! It also gave me the opportunity to learn that, sometimes, we don't have to spend money on a client for them to benefit from our services. I

didn't spend a dime on the client, and he/she is one of my most successful cases! Sometimes, it's just about connecting them to the appropriate resources and helping them find their voice. I'm so grateful to have gotten to work with him/her.

Brooke Snyder Rawlins, Wyoming

In the beginning of 2016, I received a letter from the Social Security Department about the Ticket to Work program, due to back injuries with RA and pain. After doing more research into this, I found that I would be eligible to work from my home in an online situation. I contacted DVR in Cody and became eligible for their services.

Nicole Langman, my DVR Counselor, helped to get me into training with a company called NTI. After going through all their training and applying for many positions over several months, it just wasn't working out. I don't know if it was due to geography (my location) or educational experience, but it wasn't working for me.

At that point, I sat down and took a long, hard look at my situation. I thought to myself, "What do I know how to do, that I could make money at and is not currently available in this area?" I landed upon sewing and alterations. I didn't know anyone that was doing it. However, I enjoy sewing and I knew I'd like to do more than just alterations. So, I contacted Nicole Langman and we discussed the idea of starting my own business.

Nicole put me in contact with Inge Huband of BEP for the State of Wyoming. Inge Huband helped me through the entire process and even helped me get the start up money I would need for my small business venture. The Business Plan development was the biggest and the hardest part of the whole thing, but Inge helped me through it every step of the way. It is also the biggest single item for success, in my opinion. You have to get every aspect of your business down on paper. Inge kept pushing me and helped me get through the hard parts.

In November of 2016, I received my two sewing machines that were allocated to me by Schuyler Hinckley through DVR and the start up money through BEP. I started sewing small items for people (i.e. zippers, buttons, patches, etc.) to see if there truly would be a need for my business and thus a future for me. There was definitely a need.

In the early spring of 2017, the Business Plan was finished. The small business was born, and I finally felt like I had a definite path to follow. Inge helped me to understand time

management and goal setting in the business realm. I put a small ad in the service section of a newspaper classifieds which served the Big Horn Basin. I started getting calls from not just the Greybull-Basin area, but as far away as Cody, WY (50 miles) and Powell (45 miles), Worland (35 miles) and Lovell (40 miles), as well as rural villages around the Park County and Big Horn County area. All those customers traveled to me to have their sewing and alteration needs met. The small business was no longer a dream, but a reality.

With the help of Jessica Williams, my new DVR Counselor, I had business cards printed and signage put on my car as well as an actual sign made for my place of business. It was taking off and starting to grow. I had put the small business under an LLC that I had gotten when I thought I might be working online and with the help of Inge Huband, once again, it was a smooth transition for me. Inge also stressed to me the importance of obtaining all the needed and correct licensures. It makes things go a lot smoother, especially with collecting sales tax and following state laws. Inge made sure I followed this protocol and I'm glad I did.

My business was taking off and growing. I had business cards, signs, and a steady clientele to prove it. If I have one piece of advice, it is this, "Treat your customer's right, and never underestimates the power of word of mouth."

By October 2017, things were going pretty well and Doug Harsh, my last DVR Counselor, helped me with my final purchase of mannequins and thread. In this business, there are times when I'm so busy that I feel overwhelmed (but it's a good feeling) and then there are lag times. In those lag times, I design clothing for people and items to sell at craft fairs and shows. I average around \$300 per month profit after expenses.

Overall, it has been a great experience for me. My ultimate goal now is to give back what I have been given. I'd like to teach others how to sew. I don't see them as competition, but just fellow sewers.

I'd like to thank Nicole Langman, Jessica Williams, Schuyler Hinckley, Theresa Whitpan, and Doug Harsh of Cody DVR. A special thanks to Inge Huband of BEP. You have made something that was complicated simple, so that I could understand it. I really appreciate it. Thank you so much.

--The client

Douglas Harsh Cody, Wyoming

The client is operating a successful car detailing business. He/she has a stationary and mobile business. He/she had a lifelong career as a project manager for construction companies, but after a shoulder/back injury he/she could not do the work. He/she is able to do perform the current job duties, but has also hired help which has presented and allowed for others to be employed in our community. The client plans to expand his/her business out of the Cody area. He/she was approved for the VR Award under Workers Compensation and with training, equipment, supplies and advertisement his/her business is flourishing. He/she has benefited from guidance and counseling during this time and continues to stay in contact with our office.

Charlotte Deming Cody, Wyoming