

ANNA — Jobs for Michigan's Graduates

Anna wasn't afraid to try new things. When she re-joined Jobs for Michigan's Graduates (JMG) in September 2024, she was determined to continue her education and discover what a successful future could look like. While she wasn't entirely sure where her path would lead, she was eager to learn, gain experience and explore careers that matched her interests. Along the way, she faced challenges, including transportation barriers and health concerns, but never lost sight of her goals.

Throughout her time in JMG, Anna embraced opportunities to learn both about herself and the world of work. She participated in career assessments, virtual reality job shadows, college tours, employer visits and networking events that exposed her to a variety of industries and occupations. One memorable experience was attending Michigan Works! West Central's 20 Under 30 awards event, where she had the chance to connect with community leaders, professionals and other young adults working toward their goals.

As Anna explored different career options, she discovered a growing interest in creative fields. A Talent Tour at Pioneer Group gave her a behind-the-scenes look at



careers in graphic design, marketing, journalism, editing and printing operations. Seeing how creativity, technology, and communication come together in a professional environment helped solidify her interest in graphic design and gave her a clearer vision of what a future career might look like.

Anna also worked hard to develop the skills employers value. She earned the National Retail Federation (NRF) credential, completed the Succeed in the Workplace course, and created a professional resume and cover letter. She strengthened her communication and customer-service skills through volunteer experi-

ences, including assisting at Michigan Works! West Central hiring events. Whether she was welcoming employers, helping job seekers or participating in a Talent Tour, Anna consistently demonstrated a positive attitude, curiosity and a willingness to contribute.

After nearly two years of participation, Anna reached an important milestone. Staff reviewed her accomplishments and realized she had completed nearly every requirement for Michigan Works! West Central's Pre-Apprenticeship Career Readiness Program. With only a few final steps remaining, she completed the program and earned her

certificate of completion. This achievement reflected the effort, dedication and persistence she had shown throughout her journey.

Most recently, Anna secured a summer work experience at Buffalo Wild Wings. Excited for the opportunity, she looked forward to gaining hands-on experience in a public-facing role, building her confidence and applying the skills she had developed through her previous experiences.

Today, Anna has a strong foundation to build upon. Through career exploration, volunteer service, workplace training and hands-on work experiences, she has gained valuable skills, earned recognized credentials, and developed a clearer understanding of her interests and goals.

Looking back, Anna's success isn't defined by a single certificate or work experience. It can be seen in the confidence she built, the new experiences she embraced and her willingness to keep moving forward when challenges arose. What began as a search for direction became a journey of growth, self-discovery and achievement. Anna's story is a reminder that success is often built one step at a time and that being open to new opportunities can lead to possibilities you never imagined.