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WDA 2 SUCCESS STORY WIOA Adult/On-The-Job Training

Located in the heart of the City of Milwaukee, Master Lock has been an anchor in its neighborhood at North 32nd Street and West Center Street for nearly 100 years. Employ Milwaukee considers Master Lock an “Employer of Choice” due to the emphasis the company places on attracting and retaining talented employees through the provision of family-sustaining wages, benefits, and opportunities for advancement. Employ Milwaukee and Master Lock maintain a robust partnership supported by the sector-based business solutions and shared goals.

Employ Milwaukee’s relationship with Master Lock has produced several On-the-Job Training (OJT) arrangements over the past few years, including one for Travon Topps, a participant of the WIOA Adult Program. A single father of two, Travon was underemployed at the time of WIOA enrollment, making \$11.78/hour as a machine operator. Despite working 40 hours per week, his wages were not self-sufficient. While Travon was certain that he wanted to pursue a career in manufacturing, he could not find an employer willing to overlook his lack of related experience and training. Employ Milwaukee Sector Specialist, Sara Rogers, developed a training plan for a Laborer position, and Travon began his OJT at Master Lock in March of 2019. The OJT agreement that Employ Milwaukee facilitated ensured that he gained occupational skills and competencies while earning a starting wage of \$13.04/hour - all at an employer less than one mile from his home!

Less than two months after the training service began, Travon received a wage increase up to \$15.16/hour. Due to complete his OJT in June, this 26-year-old Milwaukee man has secured a place on a career pathway in his chosen field and his employer has one less position to fill. Travon sees a long future with Master Lock, and the feeling is mutual. “Travon is a great asset to Master Lock. We might not have taken a chance on someone without related job experience if it weren’t for the On-The-Job Training program,” said Chris Gerosa with Master Lock’s Human Resources Team. For Employ Milwaukee, the success is meaningful, and the work to strengthen the regional economy, one employer-job seeker match at a time, continues.

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