



## From surviving to thriving: HPOG opens a new chapter for a single mother.

2017 was a year of transition for Teana. The Portland, Oregon mother suddenly found herself at a crossroads in her marriage, without transportation, and on unemployment. She holds a Bachelor of Arts degree in Healthcare Management but could not find a job. She applied to positions of every caliber but was overqualified for most.

Teana's priority was her children. While transitioning from stay at home mom to working mother, she applied for unemployment to provide for them. Accepting unemployment came with the condition that she visit WorkSource, a workforce development partner of Worksystems, Inc. During her intake she found out about **Health Careers Northwest (HCNW)**, a local HPOG program bringing free healthcare training to underserved individuals in the Portland area.

Teana attended an orientation and was excited to learn about the opportunity to train as a peer wellness specialist. In December 2017, Teana started her healthcare career journey and never looked back.

Today, Teana works in the mental health and addictions field doing something she loves. HPOG made this possible by funding her peer wellness specialist course. HCNW also helped her develop her strengths and capabilities through skills workshops. After course completion, HPOG also covered the cost of her state certification exam.

After completing the peer wellness specialist program, Teana wanted a job. In August 2018, she took a position as a peer wellness specialist in the mental health court program. Within six months, she had her first positive performance review and received a raise to \$18.00 per hour. At the review, she found out about another position with even higher pay.

HPOG did more for Teana than provide funding for certification. It gave her the confidence to start a whole new career path, self-esteem, and great interview skills and techniques. Teana used her newfound skills and confidence to land that promotion. She is now a Project Coordinator at Mental Health & Addictions Association of Oregon (MHAAO).

The cost of childcare keeps her from working full time, but Teana thanks HPOG for putting her on the right track to building a career and better future for her children.

**"I went from being a nervous, unemployed stay at home mom, to having my own office, making my own schedule, travel benefits, and a starting wage of \$21.15."**

This success story was self-identified by the grantee and information contained in this document was provided by the grantee.