

Putting Best Practices to Work: Results in Great Transitions



Vanessa first started in the school's transition program as a recent high school graduate and a young mom. At the time, she dreamed of being hired for full time employment in a classroom or educational setting as an Educational Assistant. She had already been subbing in a middle school Functional Lifeskills (FLS) classroom. Vanessa struggled, however, with reading, writing and math and had a difficult time grasping the information necessary to pass the test required for educational assistants to be considered "highly qualified" under the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLBA). With full time employment being her highest priority, Vanessa worked in a residential setting with individuals who experience behavioral and emotional difficulties in an around-the-clock care setting. Some time later, Vanessa decided to try her hand at something new. She decided she would like a career in the health care field. Vanessa had previously gone through classes to

become a phlebotomist but had a difficult time passing the test for licensure. In early 2008, Vanessa decided that she wanted to be a licensed certified nursing assistant (CNA) and enrolled in a free training program at Gresham Rehabilitation. She completed the training and was hired by Gresham Rehab directly following graduation. She took the state boards for CNA licensure, passed, and continued employment with Gresham Rehab for an entire year.

During the time she worked at Gresham Rehab, with support from her **vocational rehabilitation counselor** to gain further certifications to make her more marketable in the workplace. She took classes to become a CNA II so she could work in an acute care unit at a hospital. Her next step was to become a certified medication assistant (CMA), which she did with the support of transition program and her **VR** counselor.

Vanessa is currently employed with Providence Health System's Child Center as a Recreational Assistant/CNA. She works about 30 hours per week at the hospital, and also provides on call coverage at a Legacy hospice center. She is an example of a success story when school and VR work together.