

Telamon Corporation Virginia

November 2016

Empowering Individuals, Improving Communities

Message from the State Director Tom Grecco

I joined Telamon Corporation on 8/1/16 and was very fortunate to have two weeks of cross training with the outgoing state Director, Sharon Saldarriaga. This period gave me a good understanding of the NFJP, VDACS and Barth grants. Sharon was also very helpful in sharing her positive experiences with Telamon. We thank Sharon for her contributions to Telamon and wish her well in her retirement as she enters a new and exciting phase of her life.

I'm happy to report that we have exceeded our goals under the Barth grant for 2016. To date, we have served 115 farmworker youth with cultural enrichment activities. I'd like to commend staff for their efforts and dedication in serving this population.

In September 2016, Telamon staff attended the AFOP confer-

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Maria Lewis Success Story

By Zugey Ramos
Workforce Development Specialist I
Montross, VA

Maria Lewis was enrolled into the NFJP program at our Montross office. She was a seasonal farmworker and single mother of four. Maria came into our office in need of emergency assistance. After assisting Maria with her immediate needs, staff explained to Maria what Telamon has to offer and the endless possibilities of having and providing a better future for her family and herself.

After completing career evaluations and some career exploration activities, Maria told staff that she used to have a Certified Nurse Aide license, but once her children were born, the schedules didn't work for her and she let her license expire. She stated that she was still very interested in the health industry. Staff assisted her with our job readiness course. She then told staff that she was interested in looking into opening her own Herbalife business and quickly met with Herbalife directors who happily assisted her with a business plan. Maria had a new-



found confidence in her decision to start her own business and she beamed with excitement. Maria rapidly put her plan into action and found a space to rent right on the main road here in Montross. Before long, Maria was ready to open her business and not only offer healthy, nutritional products but also exercise classes. Staff assisted her purchasing a few items needed for her to be successful in her business startup.

Maria is now making a steady income and has more time to spend with her children. She is always enthusiastic about expanding her customer base each week. She is so excited and thrilled to have this opportunity. She enjoys her job every single day and thrives to make a difference in her customers' health and lifestyle. We are very proud of you, Maria!

Blooms of Hope

By Isa Martell Bonet
Workforce Development Specialist I
Harrisonburg, VA

Ruthann Hogan was a seasonal farmworker who worked planting flowers for Bloom Makers Company. When she first met with us Ruthann had two main barriers: she was a single mother with dependents, and she was a long-term agricultural employee. Ruthann has a nine-year-old son and a five-year-old daughter, and before entering the NFJP program, Ruthann was unemployed and living in a shelter. Even though Ruthann was having financial struggles and personal problems with her ex-husband, she was determined to overcome those barriers for her family.

Ruthann entered the program with the hopes of finding support and guidance. Telamon assisted Ruthann with the following services: nutritional assistance, gas assistance, child care support, job search and counseling. After various job applications, in which Telamon helped her, Ruthann found employment. Ruthann is now working for EN Computers in Waynesboro, Virginia. She is working as an Account Executive with a wage of \$14.00 per hour, plus health benefits.

Ruthann is finally in the process of moving in to her own apartment. Ruthann is thankful for the care and direction that Telamon has given her to live a joyful and better life.



State Director's Message

(Continued from page 1)

ence in Crystal City, Virginia and were able to meet a variety of individuals from different programs and organizations. There were a number of valuable workshops and presentations attended by staff. It was also a good opportunity for me to make connections with various individuals serving the farmworker population.

Moving forward, I would like to build on Sharon's successes and build a strong team and continue to meet or exceed all of our programs' goals. I want this to be a collaborative process with contributions from all staff. I look forward to working with the dedicated employees at Telamon in assisting individuals toward self-sufficiency.

Staff Notes

Jane Bacilio, Workforce Development Specialist II, in the Moorefield, WV office was awarded certifications in WIOA Operations and Advanced Business Services at the recent Association of Farmworker Opportunity Program's (AFOP) annual conference in September. She was presented with her certificates by Daniel Sheehan, Executive Director of AFOP and MaryAnn Laurence, President and CEO of PowerNotes, LLC.



Heather Hernandez has joined the Telamon team as the new Field Service Representative in the Moorefield, WV office. Heather is a recent graduate of West Virginia University. She has expressed a huge love for the immigrant population and a desire to learn and help others. Heather is a native Moorefield resident and has many connections in the community. On a personal note, she has studied socio-economic and diversity issues as a personal interest. Congratulations, Heather!

Staff Notes

(continued)



Heather Hernandez conducts outreach at her first job fair in Grant County.

Telamon Corporation welcomes **Wilson Perez!** Wilson has joined Telamon as the new Pesticide and Workplace Safety Trainer in the Richmond, VA office. Wilson graduated from Salem State University with a BS in psychology and is currently pursuing an MBA.

Wilson, a United States Airforce Medic (Veteran), enjoys playing sports, exercising and spending time with his family. Wilson has expressed that he is very excited for the future and all the experiences and opportunities that he will gain in his new position at Telamon. Congratulations, Wilson!

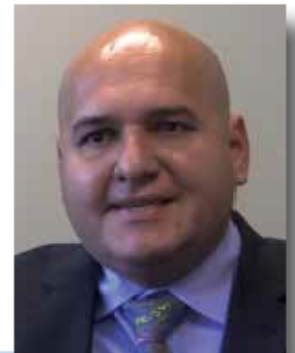
“My word means something.”

Roberto Quintero is a stellar example of a Telamon employee who personifies integrity—the quality of being honest and fair, adherence to a code of moral values. When Roberto was hired for his job as Workplace Safety Pesticide Trainer for the state of Virginia, he had no experience. He believes he was hired because of his community connections and ability to relate to people—and this has served him well. Roberto trains hundreds of farmworkers each year throughout the entire state of Virginia about ways to stay healthy while working in harsh conditions in the fields—exposure to high heat and dangerous pesticides. He has developed a rapport with skeptical farm owners, promoting the benefits of this training—workers who are healthier and more safety conscious are at lower risk for on-the-job accidents and thus

farmers may secure lower insurance rates. Roberto believes that his job goes beyond pesticide and heat stress training—it’s about the holistic health of the farm workers. He takes pride in his ability to “open conversation,” to refer workers to other health services they may need. He follows through on his promises to the customers he serves, and considers the needs of entire farmworker families. He is passionate in his belief that “information is power” and in his desire to help people. Last year, a special award was bestowed upon Roberto by the Association of Farmworker Opportunity Programs in honor of his dedication and hard work. While he was absolutely happy to receive this honor, he humbly stated, “my best reward is the smiles I receive from the people I work with every day.” Roberto feels it’s life changing for people to know that there is someone who cares about them, and we’re honored to have him as an employee. “Roberto is that rare individual one can count on to always do what he says he will do. His commitment to the core values of Telamon has expanded and increased the quality of our pesticide and workplace safety programs.”

—Sharon Saldarriaga, State Director, Telamon-Virginia

Roberto Quintero, Telamon Employee, *Workplace Safety Pesticide Trainer*; Virginia



“I am your friend, and I am here to help you.”

Weatherization Program

By Wendy McRae
Weatherization Program Support Specialist
South Hill, VA

We inspected the home of Ms. Boswell and completed numerous upgrades to improve quality and efficiency. The photographs and her words express this story best.



To: Telamon Corporation
From: Sarah V. Boswell

My home was built in September 1973. There were no home improvements after it was built. Telamon staff came to my home and explained everything that I needed.

They covered the ground very professionally, which was needed because my doctor placed me on a breathing machine due to the poor quality of air in my home.

Telamon wrapped the pipes and the water heater. I know this will make my winter worry-free, no matter what kind of winter we have.

A Big Thank You!
God Bless All!



BEFORE

AFTER