**DRC Spotlight Series**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Leah Hastad</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Disability Resource Coordinator (DRC)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SouthWest Private Industry Council, Inc.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**A little bit about me...**

People would be surprised that I spent the first 10 years of my career as a corporate trainer before becoming a DRC in February 2017.  

**My favorite quote is** “She is clothed with strength and dignity and laughs without fear of the future” -- Proverbs 31:25  

**The three words to best describe me are** Confident, Positive and Understanding  

**My favorite toy as a kid was** Barbie.  

**My favorite hobby is** hobby hopping. Some of my favorites include crochet, scrapbooking, jewelry making, sign making, using my Cricut, and reading.  

**What this work means to me...**

I feel the greatest impact I have made as a DRC is being a part of a team that helps young people with disabilities realize their potential, find out what they are passionate about, and see them pursue a meaningful and successful future career.  

**My proudest accomplishment as a DRC has been** establishing our workforce as an Employment Network and seeing beneficiaries gain financial success. I am also proud about becoming a certified Work Incentives Practitioner.  

**The greatest barrier I face as a DRC is** misconceptions about what disability is and how it affects people.  

**A recent example of how I helped provide accommodations to someone using workforce services is** adapting a Youth Action Plan to include Guideposts for Success, workforce elements and Pre-Employment Training Services. This provides one framework for career counselors to use across all youth programs and provides youth with a consistent enrollment process.  

**Using an Integrated Resource Team approach has enabled** individuals to bring important partners to the table to help everyone understand how we will work together to help that individual meet their goals.  

---

**Making an Impact / Systems Change**

I believe my role as a DRC has made an impact by increasing the financial wellness of each customer with a disability I serve in my region. I knew that in order to make that happen, my American Job Center (AJC) would need to be a place that could serve customers based on where they were in life. By receiving specialized training through the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), I became a SOAR (SSI/SSDI Outreach, Access, and Recovery) Advocate. This allows me to help customers with disabilities apply for needed Social Security disability benefits. With each person I assist, revenue is generated for my local AJC. I am also certified as a Community Work Incentive Practitioner and provide Ticket to Work services through my region’s Workforce Employment Network (EN). Successful outcomes from this EN also brings in revenue for my region’s AJC. I am proud of the work I do to help so many customers with disabilities design a path out of poverty.