

SUCCESS STORY: TONY CLEMENTE

Tony Clemente is a Business Access Achiever who participated in Innovations in Creating Access To Careers in Healthcare (I-CATCH), a training program for low income adults at Edmonds Community College, Everett Community College, and Skagit Valley College in Washington state. Prior to entering the program two years ago, Tony was commuting 60 miles every day to his job as a Line Operator at a gypsum recycling plant.

Previously, Tony served as a Hospital Corpsman in the US Navy for over four years. Once he completed his service, he worked as a Patient Care Technician in Alaska. Despite his experience, Tony had a difficult time finding work in healthcare after relocating to Washington. He worked in various construction and manufacturing jobs before finding the Line Operator position. Although the drive and job were difficult, Tony had resisted looking for other work due to his lack of motivation and self-confidence.

One morning while Tony was driving through the snow to get to work, his car spun out and ended up in oncoming traffic. Luckily he was not injured, but as he arranged for a tow, he decided it was time to make a change for the better. A few days later, Tony found himself at a WorkSource employment center. After hearing about his extensive experience in healthcare, the employment specialist helping him recommended that he apply for the I-CATCH program.

Funded by a Health Profession Opportunities Grant (HPOG) under the Affordable Care Act, I-CATCH equips participants with classroom and lab training to prepare them for in-demand healthcare jobs. A nationally-recognized program, I-CATCH was recently awarded a second, five-year HPOG grant to launch I-CATCH "2.0" which kicked off in March of 2016.

Business Access has been the I-CATCH technical partner since it began in 2011. Participants receive the patented In-Home Learning System to obtain the digital and workplace skills they need to thrive in the healthcare field.



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It had been years since Tony was in a classroom. He was overwhelmed by the technology that now replaced pencil and paper and considered quitting the program on multiple occasions. Thanks to the structure and support received, he persevered and progressed toward his goal of returning to the healthcare field.

“I still feel a lot of appreciation for the I-CATCH program and the support they have given me.”

The In-Home Learning System was a valuable tool provided for Tony throughout the program. Using the laptop, internet access, and the library of thousands of online courses, Tony developed the important computer skills that are essential in the modern workplace, especially in healthcare. A community navigator from Business Access also provided one-on-one tech support and mentoring throughout the program. He earned permanent ownership of the laptop by meeting program requirements.

“My laptop was integral to my success in the I-CATCH program.”

Tony subsequently used the laptop for his studies to become a Certified Nursing Assistant. With his new CNA certification in hand, he attended a series of on-campus interviews and was soon offered a position at a home healthcare agency. While working at his new job, he also completed further training as an EKG Technician through I-CATCH 1.0.

As of spring 2016, Tony completed his prerequisites for Medical Assisting and will be half way through the program by this fall. Tony enjoys being in school, and although the work load has been challenging while balancing his work schedule, completing classes is a gratifying accomplishment. Tony is participating in the I-CATCH 2.0 program, continuing on his path of success to become an exemplary healthcare professional. He has been working regularly as a CNA while taking Medical Assisting classes. When asked about the career progression, he said he wanted to increase his role and capacity in healthcare to become more versatile in the field.

“I still use the computer I earned during the I-CATCH Program. It was very useful in writing papers for my English course last quarter. My math course was fully online and the computer was essential that quarter.”