



THE SCOOP



WORK OPTIONS FOR WOMEN'S QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER

April 2021

Vol. 3

A Note from our Executive Director

by **Julie Stone**

Executive Director

Hello Friends,

We are very excited to invite you to join us on May 1st , 7:00 pm MT, for a one of a kind virtual event called The Show Must Go On!

This year we are not able to hold Women Cook but still wanted a chance to connect with you to bring you up to date on all the exciting and innovative ways WOW has risen to the challenges of the past year. We will share videoed stories from our students, delicious culinary techniques from your favorite Denver Chefs and a very special musical set performed by Broadway stars.

It will be an amazing show, all in just over an hour!
I hope to see everyone there.

Julie Stone

You're Invited
TO A VIRTUAL EVENT BENEFITTING
WORK OPTIONS FOR WOMEN
MAY 1ST, 2021
7:00 PM MST

**THE SHOW
MUST
GO ON**

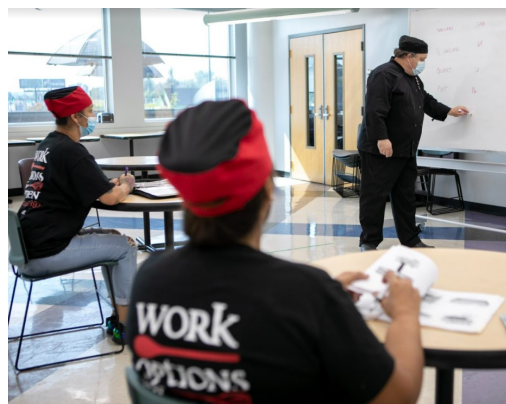
VISIT [HTTPS://WORKOPTIONS.GIVESMART.COM](https://workoptions.givesmart.com)
FOR INFO & TICKETS

Student Stories

by **Yoselin Corrales**
Manager of Student Services

Steven

Steven entered our program during a turning point in his life; in the past, he'd made some choices he wasn't proud of, but wanted to create a different story for himself - which led him to Work Options. Steven was passionate about pursuing a career in the culinary industry and was excited to find a program that would allow him to gain new skills and set him up for success. During training, circumstances forced him to look for employment, so he quickly found a part-time position that would allow him to take care of his finances. Unfortunately, with COVID continuing to affect dine-in services, the company was forced to lay Steven off due to budgetary constraints, but because of his connection to WOW, he knew just who to reach out to for assistance. Around this same time, an employer had reached out to Work Options looking to fill a position within their restaurant - and because of Steven's incredible sense of responsibility and work ethic, staff referred him to them with a glowing recommendation. Then, less than a week later, Steven was working full-time, at a higher pay rate, in a position that better aligned with his long-term goals and would allow him to continue to grow his skills!



Work Options students in Kitchen Math class

Patricia

Patricia came to Work Options after relocating to Colorado, she'd worked in the food service industry before but had never received any formalized training, and was excited to learn new and valuable skills. Due to her participation in athletics, she was pulled out of school at a young age, which kept her from earning her HS diploma, which had been a barrier for her with finding employment in the past. While at WOW, Patricia successfully completed training and earned her Prep Cook certification; upon leaving, she felt empowered and was so grateful to have the opportunity to feel like she had completed something! Shortly after leaving training, she secured employment as a Supervisor with Panera, and was able to improve her stability by moving into her own home with her family.



Meet Yoselin

Yoselin serves as the Manager of Student Services with Work Options for Women, and has been on the team for a year. In her role, she oversees the Job Readiness and Case Management components of the training program. This includes teaching classes, working directly with students to navigate community resources, and coordinating services, including collaborating with employer partners to assist with their hiring needs. Yoselin studied Psychology at Nebraska Wesleyan University and has been working in the Denver non-profit world for over seven years now! Yoselin is passionate about advocating for systemic change, and increased opportunities, education, and empowerment for all people.

Understanding Scarcity

by **Yoselin Corrales**
Manager of Student Services

Scarcity /'skersədē/- refers to limited goods or services, limited time, or limited ability to achieve the desired ends // having less than you feel that you need.

Individuals come to training at Work Options at different points in their lives... some folks join us in the process of a career change, others while experiencing homelessness, and some come to us after exiting incarceration. Regardless of where clients choose to engage with us on their journey, there can often be external factors in their lives that can affect their ability to gain and maintain employment. When individuals have existed in a state of not having their needs met, they can fall into a mindset of scarcity, which automatically orients the mind toward their unfulfilled need. In training and in the workplace, this can affect an individual's ability to learn, focus, retain information, and even regulate their emotions. As a crucial component of training at Work Options, we provide individualized and person-centered case management and resource navigation to alleviate barriers that may stand in the way.

Last year, the Case Management staff had to get creative. Libraries, community centers, and a majority of other traditional resource offices shut down to prevent the spread of COVID-19; clients were limited even further from accessing services and goods that would help meet their needs. Throughout the summer, staff personally collected and then distributed over 50 food boxes from a local distribution site so students could receive free, fresh, and local produce, dairy, and meat. In the fall, the staff collaborated with Dress for Success and Coats for Colorado to collect over 150 coats and jackets, and have distributed well over half to students and their family members. Also, through a partnership with Goodwill Industries and a federally funded program, Work Options has been able to issue nearly \$7500 in rental assistance, which has allowed our students to move into housing, stay housed, and even make utility payments.

With a limited experience of scarcity or possibly none at all, it's easy to take a pair of work shoes or having a social security card for granted, but these are real world barriers that underserved individuals in our community face every day - at Work Options, we see obstacles as opportunities. We know that when scarcity has been removed, individuals can be engaged in their workplace, and they'll have a better platform for long-term success. Over time, this will impact them and their family, the organization they lend their skills to, the customers who enjoy their product or service, and ultimately the community at large. At Work Options, we are committed to providing a beneficial experience to all of our students, from culinary training and certificates, to working with each student individually to help set them up for success. We believe in our students and are grateful for the work we get to do each day - thank you for your support!



A proud Work Options graduate with his family

The Show Must Go On

by **Tessa Houston**

Culinary Program & Special Projects Manager

The past year has taught us all many lessons. Here at Work Options we have learned to make a dollar stretch even further, to change gears in order to keep things moving forward, and to be more resilient as a whole. The restaurant industry suffered catastrophic damage due to the Covid-19 crisis, but we knew that other sectors of the foodservice industry would need our students more than ever. We shifted our programming to include Covid safety certifications, and created strict Covid protocols so that our students could learn to be the essential workers that were needed most in that moment.



Chef Jen Jasinski

That resilience paid off, and here we are gearing up for all of the anticipated hiring that the restaurant and hospitality industries will be doing as Covid restrictions loosen and life returns to something that looks more like "normal."

We want to honor the resilience shown by the foodservice industry, our students, the Work Options staff, and all of YOU over the last year. That's why we are calling our virtual event on Saturday, May 1st, The Show Must Go On.

Join us for stories of our student's resilience, delicious demos from great Denver chefs including Chef Jen Jasinski from Top Chef Masters, and musical performances from real Broadway stars! It will be a fun evening that everyone can participate in right from the comfort of home.



SATURDAY May 1st, 2021

Tickets available now
WORKOPTIONS.GIVESMART.COM

Suggested donation of \$10 per viewer

