BISMARCK CON.NECT.OR

A short road or highway that connects two longer roads or highways

JOB SERVICE - BISMARCK

QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER



QUICK PROFILE

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UPCOMING 2027 JOB FAIRS

Mark Your Calendar:

JAN 28 — **2027 Virtual Job Fair**
01/28/2027
10:00am- 4:00pm

MAR 2 — **Capital City Career Fair**
03/02/2027
3:00pm- 6:00pm

CONNECTING EMPLOYERS AND JOB SEEKERS THROUGH HIRING EVENTS

The Bismarck Workforce Center has been buzzing with different job fairs and hiring events the past few months. From industry-specific job fairs to individual hiring events, here's a recap of each event.

On June 4, 2026, the Bismarck Workforce Center hosted the Fair Chance Job Fair, welcoming 12 employers and 96 attendees. The event focused on connecting individuals facing barriers such as homelessness, lack of education, being recently dislocated, or a criminal background with employers offering employment opportunities. Open to all job seekers, the event helped create connections that support access to meaningful employment.

The Healthcare Job Fair, held on September 15, 2026, brought together 14 employers across the industry and 22 job seekers. This event was an opportunity to shed light on the different job opportunities within the healthcare industry.
Healthcare is often thought of only as clinical positions. The administrative, food service, and janitorial positions at healthcare facilities are often overlooked, but these are the positions that are most needed. By connecting local employers to potential employees, this event supported efforts to address healthcare workforce shortages.

On September 22, 2026, the Bismarck Workforce Center also hosted an Amazon Hiring Event, which saw a strong turnout of 75 attendees. This event showcased the exciting, new job opportunities that Amazon is brining into the community with their new Bismarck warehouse. Amazon offers well paying, flexible jobs with great benefits!

Through these events, the Bismarck Workforce Center remains committed to helping employers meet their hiring needs while providing job seekers with opportunities to explore careers, make connections, and take the next step in their employment journey.



PRIDE PARTICIPANT FINDS SUCCESS IN WORK, RECOVERY

BY AMY NELSON

Jason Leingang has seen dark days. For years he struggled with addiction, involvement with the criminal justice system, and homelessness. But for the last several years Jason has been working on himself, completing treatment for substance use and maintaining a stable job. In February of 2025 he was referred to Job Service for the PRIDE Program (Parental Responsibility Initiative for the Development of Employment), a joint initiative between Job Service and the Department of Health and Human Services Child Support Enforcement Unit. He has received support from Job Service PRIDE Advisors Shania Eagle and Dan Upgren as he works towards his goals of self-sufficiency and paying down his Child Support obligations. As he approaches a successful exit from the program, Dan and I sat down with Jason to discuss his time in PRIDE and his recent achievements.

Jason has been employed in the food industry for the majority of his working life. He knows better than most people the difficulty of maintaining sobriety while trying to make a career in this industry, as many people use drugs and alcohol behind the scenes. But after decades working in kitchens across the United States, in 2023 he landed what might be the perfect job for him: a position as a cook at Heartview, a treatment facility in Bismarck. Before he got this job, he put himself through treatment, spending 55 days in the New Freedom Center and completing their program. But it wasn't smooth sailing after that. He got kicked out of his sober living home and found himself homeless without a job. Then a friend-- a former dealer from his drug use days who had gotten clean--suggested he apply for the Heartview cook position. As a Residential Technician at Heartview, she was able to assist him with the application and give him a recommendation. He was determined to get the job. "I was persistent with them," Jason recalls. "I called them two days a week. I went in to visit them. I let them know I was serious about it. They called me up and said, 'let's do this.' They rolled the dice on me and gave me a chance and hired me." Jason realizes his luck. While he loved cooking as something he was good at and experienced in, he didn't want to go back to an environment where other users might pull him back into drug and alcohol use. "With Heartview there is a whole different environment," he says. "I can work with people who are clean and in recovery. Most of all, I get to work with the residents. People that are in the same boat that I was in. For me to go in and do this job, I can show them that anything is possible. If I can do it, you can do it!"

PRIDE

Parental Responsibility Initiative For The Development of Employment Programafter.

WHAT IS PRIDE?

The PRIDE Program helps noncustodial parents find employment or better paying jobs so they can meet their child support obligations. PRIDE is a collaboration between Job Service ND, the district courts, and the ND Department of Human Services.

If you or someone you know would like more information about the PRIDE program, the link below

VIEW MORE INFO ABOUT PRIDE PROGRAM

PRIDE PARTICIPANT FINDS SUCCESS IN WORK, RECOVERY (CONT.)

BY AMY NELSON

He sometimes works 11-hour days, mostly by himself, cooking for around 50 people in any given week. His previous experience prepared him for this, coming from a large family and starting in the industry as a dishwasher in his teens. He has worked at various restaurants around Bismarck-Mandan, cooked in Alaska for five years, and managed club kitchens where he found himself catering for large events and parties.

But his life prior to 2023 included substance use, which contributed to his inability to pay child support and achieve stability. Child support garnished his wages, and he found himself spending most of his paychecks at the bar. “It made it difficult to live. I would have to hustle, do illegal things just to make up. I didn’t want to, but I was in survival mode. It is what I knew.”

With Heartview taking a chance at him as a second-chance employer and encouraging his recovery, he was able to gain the long-illusive stability he needed on his path to become self-sufficient. But he still realized he needed more support to be successful. He didn’t have his driver’s license and found himself walking long distances to and from work each day. He didn’t have any extra money and wanted to be paying down the substantial debt of his child support now that he was sober.

Enter PRIDE. When Jason enrolled in PRIDE in 2025, he was already making good choices but was struggling to make ends meet. He recognized he “needed to build an army of support” and reached out to Child Support for the PRIDE referral

During his time in the program, Shania and Dan have been able to help him obtain his driver’s license—which he lost in 1994—and vehicle insurance. PRIDE has also been able to purchase work clothing and other support services to keep him on a successful path. One of the things Jason really appreciates about his time in PRIDE was Dan’s referral to Birthday Beacon, a local program that sets up birthday parties for children whose families wouldn’t be able to afford one. Dan recalls helping Jason with a car insurance payment, and Jason mentioning not being able to afford a birthday party for his child. “I immediately thought of Birthday Beacon,” says Dan.



Jason doesn’t take for granted the financial and moral support he has received through Job Service. “When I first came in, I thought, *these guys are just gonna treat me like I am trying to get freebees.* I wasn’t. I really wanted to be better, I just needed some help. It feels really good to be sitting here as a success story.” When he started PRIDE, Jason wasn’t sure he would be able to pay off his Child Support debt and get on his feet. He recalls telling Shania then, “I plan to die with this debt.” But with persistence and one-day-at-a time progress, he has been able to substantially carve down his debt and now owes a fraction of what he owed in Child Support at the start of the program.

Today, Jason mentors those in recovery in addition to performing his cook’s duties and finds this to be the most rewarding aspect of his role. Last month he had a resident tell him, “I am so thankful you are here. I don’t think I would have stayed if you weren’t here.” In addition to the goal of paying off his child support, he is working on getting a loan so he can build his own house. He wants a little more security and a bigger place for his kids. He sees himself staying employed with Heartview for a long time.

As he prepares to successfully exit the PRIDE program, Jason says he would recommend it for anyone who is eligible. For those in similar situations to his own, he advises: “Get all the help you can-there is lots of help out there. Once I went through treatment I found out about resources. Check out PRIDE, they do a lot of good things for people.” Above all, he recognizes the importance of trusted professional relationships in his successful journey. “I feel like I have made a friend with Dan,” Jason says. “And you have,” Dan agrees.

2027 CAPITAL CITY CAREER FAIR

MARCH 2 AT 3PM - 6PM

BISMARCK EVENT CENTER

REGISTER NOW!



REGISTRATION IS NOW OPEN UNIL FEBRUARY 19, 2027



Important Contact Information:

Bismarck Workforce Center - 701.328.5000
infojsbis@nd.gov
Unemployment Insurance Claims - 701.328.4995
Unemployment Insurance Employer - 701.328.2866
Employer Unemployment Tax - 701.328.2814

Recurring Local Events:

- WIOA Orientation Weekly Tuesday 9am
- Bismarck Veterans Memorial Library - 1st Tuesday of every month, 1-5pm
- Workforce Wednesday Hiring Event - 1st Wednesday of every month, 3-5pm
- Job Readiness Workshops - Every Wednesday, 8:30-12pm
- Dream Center - 2nd Monday of every month, 5-7pm
- Dream Center - 4th Tuesday of every month, 7-9am

Other Resources:

Secretary of State - 701.328.2900
Workforce Safety Insurance - 800.777.5033
Department of Labor 701.328.2600

NORTH Dakota Be Legendary. | Bismarck Workforce Center JOB SERVICE

Respectful | Loyal | Collaborative | Purposeful
#JobUpND

▶ PG 4