



# Telamon Corporation

Virginia



West Virginia



Quarterly  
Newsletter  
February 2017

## Message from the State Director Tom Grecco

Since joining Telamon Corporation on 8/1/16, I have been able to gain a considerable understanding of the NFJP, VDACS and the Theodore H. Barth Foundation, Inc. grants. I am extremely appreciative of the NFJP staff, other State Directors as well as Corporate staff for assisting me in becoming familiarized with these programs.

Our NFJP and VDACS programs are meeting or exceeding our projected goals. I'm also pleased to report that we have exceeded our goals under the Theodore H. Barth Foundation, Inc. grant for 2016. To date, we have served 139 farm worker youth with cultural enrichment activities. I'd like to commend staff for their continued efforts and dedication serving individuals under these programs.

Virginia and West Virginia  
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## Justin's Journey

By Jane Bacilio  
Workforce Development Specialist II  
Moorefield, WV

Justin Murphy was referred to the National Farmworker Jobs Program from the local Department of Health and Human Resources (DHHR). From the beginning, he was a motivated young man; however, he found himself in a difficult situation. He was eligible for the NFJP due to his diligent work as an egg picker on a farm in Pendleton County, WV. Unfortunately, he was no longer employed, and along with his paycheck went his housing. He was homeless and living in the woods when he called the West Virginia NFJP office. Telamon Corporation NFJP staff was able to assist him in many ways.

The days had been rainy, so Justin was very grateful when we helped him get out of the woods and into a motel. He had health issues that required his medication be refrigerated and his feet stay dry. He spent the days at the motel applying for employment. He only had the clothes on his back, so clothing for work and interviews was purchased for him. Staff helped Justin get to the job service office and create a professional resume. On this visit, he contacted George's Chicken and was sched-

uled for an interview. After he became employed, DHHR provided Justin with three nights at the local hotel. NFJP staff searched extensively to locate rental options, and then provided emergency housing funds.

Soon Justin had a new job and a new apartment. His lack of a driver's license had been an issue, but his new housing was located close to the bus stop that took him back and forth to work, the grocery store, and a laundromat. He worked hard, had his driver's license reinstated, purchased a van, and transferred to the Harrisonburg, VA plant to be nearer to family. He is no longer at George's, but transferred his skills and work experience to R&R Donnelly as a book packer at a significantly higher wage of \$13.84/hr. Congratulations, Justin, on the hard work and dedication you invested in this life-changing journey.



# Bridget Succeeds

By Sara Lopez  
Workforce Development Specialist II  
Montross, VA

Bridget Robinson enrolled as a farmworker into the NFJP program in Montross, VA. She was the only family member in her household earning income. She planted and picked a wide variety of vegetables.

After finding Bridget eligible for services, staff met with her and discussed her interest in the healthcare field. We then matched this during her career exploration and assessments. Bridget knew that she wanted to work in physical therapy and she was driven to reach her goals. She told staff that she didn't know if she would be able to successfully attend college because of her financial situation. Once she found out what services we were able to provide, she showed more hope.

Staff assisted Bridget with completing her FAFSA application and provided her some financial help with tuition, books and fuel. During her training, Bridget attended a career fair and decided she wanted to go into the National Guard in order for them to assist her with continuing her education as well. Unfortunately, she got injured during training and had to come back home early. She found out that she was not healing like she should be and was unable to continue her training with the National Guard. Bridget was disappointed, but didn't give up on her education. After a lot of hard work and dedication, Bridget received her physical ther-



apy assistant certificate!

Staff assisted Bridget with job readiness training and she was soon prepared to seek employment. We set up a couple of interviews for her and she was beyond excited to inform staff when she got hired! She is now making double the amount of money she was making when she first entered the program.

She expresses much gratitude for the help Telamon Corporation was able to provide to her. Congratulations Bridget!!! We are proud of your accomplishments and wish you much success in your new career!



## Public Recognition from Telamon Corporation Virginia

Last quarter, we received a donation grant from the *Wonder Fund* of The Community Foundation *Serving Richmond and Central Virginia*. The generous \$5000 grant helps to support our mission and the general operation of Telamon Corporation programs in Virginia.

## State Director's Message

*(Continued from page 1)*

staff have participated in the Theory of Change (TOC) training. It is anticipated that TOC will enhance our critical-thinking skills and enable Telamon to reach its long-term goals.

I have also become involved with the Telamon Marketing Committee and the Branding Standards Guide (BSG). The BSG will provide a valuable tool for Telamon when interacting with partner agencies, funders and customers.

There is an upcoming AFOP conference in Washington, DC where staff will be able to meet a variety of individuals from partner agencies and organizations. Staff will participate in a number of workshops which will enhance our ability to serve the farmworker population.

As 2017 progresses, I would like to continue to build a strong team to meet/exceed all of our program projections. My goal is that this will be accomplished as a collaborative process with contributions from all staff through our L-10 meetings and daily interactions.

# Every Day is a Second Chance

By Isa M. Martell Bonet  
Workforce Development Specialist I  
Harrisonburg, VA

Edwin Villatoro was a seasonal farmworker that worked at George's, Inc. in their Hatchery Department. Edwin found out about the NFJP Program in a community presentation that Telamon Corporation had in Harrisonburg, VA. Edwin wanted to find better opportunities for his future, developing new skills through education. During that time Edwin started taking Criminal Justice classes at Blue Ridge Community College and had a couple of career changes.

Finally, on August 14, 2014, with the assistance of Telamon Corporation, he started working at Montebello Packaging Company as a Machine Operator Assistant. Then, on March 14, 2016, we



talked to Edwin about his career history and his goals. We reviewed his participation in the program. We analyzed his assessments and evaluated his interests and aptitudes. He expressed to us that it had always been his desire to become an electrician, and Edwin was

granted another opportunity to pursue his real dream.

Edwin started in the Fall of 2016 at Massanutten Technical Center (MTC) as a part-time student taking the Residential Electricity Course. After finishing his first semester, Edwin told us very happily that his manager offered him a better position in the company. His manager knew that Edwin was taking classes at MTC, including Supervisory Skills and OSHA.

Edwin is now a Machine Operator. He is working full-time, receiving a complete benefit package, and earning \$18.80 per hour. Edwin said he was very happy to be providing a better life for his wife and two-year-old daughter. He also indicated a desire to continue taking classes to get his Electrician Certificate, now that he can afford it. Edwin thanked Telamon Corporation for all the help and support we have given him.

## A Photo Essay

By Sara Lopez  
Workforce Development Specialist II  
Montross, VA

Farmworker youth play soccer at the YMCA during Fall 2016,

thanks to funding from the Theodore H. Barth Foundation, Inc.



# Virginia Housing Program News

By Tytiana Dennis  
Housing Program Coordinator  
Danville, VA



## Networking & Training

Housing Program coordinator, Tytiana Dennis, participated in Pittsylvania County Community Action resource fair and Danville Community Market. Several agencies took part in a re-entry program designed for felons to improve the lives of men and women as they reintegrate into society. It was a great pleasure to participate.

Tytiana Dennis attended USDA **502** Home Loan Packaging training in Oswego, NY. There she learned valuable information to assist rural clients. USDA offers **502** Direct loan which offers 100% financing to clients as well as **504** home improvement loans. They also accept "non traditional" credit if you do not qualify with a traditional score.



Tytiana attended the Governor's Housing Conference in Roanoke, VA. The conference was held at the beautiful Hotel Roanoke.

Agencies from all over Virginia attended and participated in networking at the Governor's lunch-



eon. Great information was exchanged and new partnerships formed.



Telamon VA10 shot a housing documentary! We featured Cindy Martin one of our first successful home buyers. Cindy has always been a joy to work with and has now been in her home for almost 10 years. Her son is now a senior in high school. She has continued to succeed as a home owner.



## Lease-Purchase

Our lease purchase program is moving along successfully. We have done a few upgrades to one home on Hughes street, including removal of two large trees to open up the yard.



What a difference a tree made! Plans are to add curb appeal by planting new greenery and laying a new walk way. We are excited to see upcoming changes.

Also, our final home in the WI Powell project has been leased. The Thompsons took possession of the home just in time for Christmas.



The couple have 3 children and love the idea of having a yard with space for them to play. The couple are working with our housing coordinator and USDA Rural Development to purchase the home.

# Virginia Housing Program News (continued from page 4)

## Pre-Purchase

A. Oakes came to Telamon Corporation in 2012 with extensive debts that totaled over \$30,000. She was a little discouraged she would ever be in position to purchase her a home. Through hard work and dedication, she has managed to pay off everything and acquire new positive credit. She is now able to purchase a new home for her and her children, which is definitely a blessing and a dream come true.

## Default

L. Walker was behind on her mortgage and afraid of losing her home. Job loss and the death of her

mother caused her to fall behind. After meeting with our program coordinator and getting a sustainable budget, she learned that her loan had been *written off!* Yes, in the middle of foreclosure prevention negotiations, she received a letter stating the lender was no longer collecting debt and her deed was free and clear.

## Partnership

Housing Program Coordinator, Tytiana, had a client who was wheel chair bound with severe health issues. He relied on his wife to get around. The couple had relocated to VA with hopes of better lives. During rental and financial

counseling, Tytiana learned of a free power wheel chair in Martinsville, VA. With the help of Linda Albright and Sto Belongia of Disability Rights and Resources, we were able to obtain the wheel chair and batteries. This was a huge blessing, because the kids were starting school and his wife had just started a new job. Telamon Corporation was happy to assist the family with our counseling and this other need as well. As stated in our motto: *empowering individuals and improving communities.*

It saddens us to announce, this young man, with such a loving spirit, has recently passed. He leaves a wife and 3 children.

## Virginia Weatherization Program

By Wendy McRae  
Weatherization Program Support Specialist  
South Hill, VA



The Weatherization office in South Hill, VA. has received several letters from clients showing appreciation of the work performed by Telamon Corporation.

We are very pleased with the home winterization project on my mother's home in Lawrenceville.

The customer service of the company was excellent. The crew was extremely respectful and mannerly. They explained every aspect of the project to us. They completed the project in a very timely and efficient manner.

I also want to share that the before and after of the home is

amazing. Before the home was cold and drafty, but after it is very noticeable that the home is much warmer. It has made a great difference.

We are very appreciative of the time and work that was put into this project.



**BEFORE**



**AFTER**



# Virginia Weatherization Program (continued from page 5)

## From Brodnax, VA:

Telamon Corporation did weatherization on our home. We are pleased with their work. We are sure we will see the difference in our electric bill after they insulated the attic, wrapped the water heater, and insulated the pipes. They also did a good job weather stripping the windows and door. The work crew did an excellent job and they were very professional.



**BEFORE**



**AFTER**

MERRY CHRISTMAS TO ALL AND TO ALL A HAPPY 2017!!!!!!

To Whom It May Concern,

We, the Terry family would like to thank the young men who came out to weatherproof our home. They worked in a safe manner, and always stayed busy. They seem to have good knowledge about the job they were performing, and always there on time. Their cooperation and attitude was outstanding!!!!

They were very motivated and put forth great effort to get the job done. With that being said, they performed good quality work.

We are really pleased and appreciate the great job they have done.

Truthfully Thankful

**BEFORE**



**AFTER**

