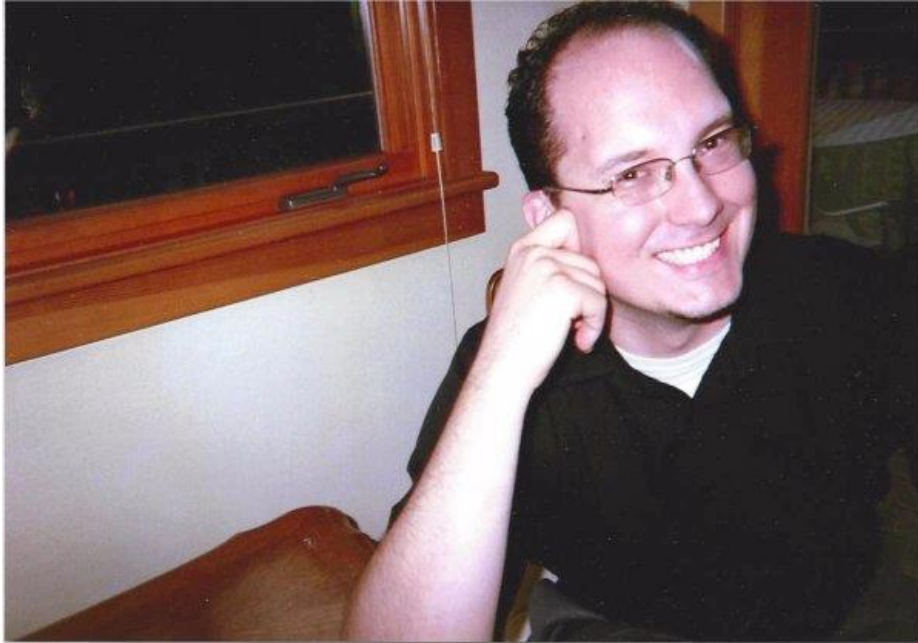


Coastal Region

**Santa Cruz County
Capitola Career Center**



If anyone understands the struggle of trying being out of work and hoping for a break, it's Employment Development Department Disabled Veterans Outreach Program (DVOP) Specialist Jacob Retz. It wasn't long ago that Jacob was in the same place as the veterans he's helping today.

"I know first hand this program works," said Jacob. Jacob knows because he turned to the Capitola Career Center when his job contract ended at UC Santa Cruz.

Aside from not having connections in the job market, Jacob also knew he had to improve his interviewing skills. Though he served four years in the Navy and another four years in the National Guard, through the Career Center Jacob learned he had other skills to offer. Through free workshops, he touched up his resume and took part in mock interviews.

His tenacity and commitment to building his skills landed Jacob a referral to the Department of Rehabilitation Limited Examination and Appointment Program (LEAP), where he got his certification. He was also referred to various veteran resource agencies in Santa Cruz County. Ironically, EDD had an opening for a DVOP Specialist and Jacob was hired in May. After all the twists and turns, Jacob said it's a job that fits him perfectly because he can empathize with other out-of-work veterans.

"Now it seems obvious," said Jacob. "I could do this job until the end of my career."