

Humboldt Region

Humboldt County

America's Job Center of CaliforniaSM, Eureka

Holding a Master's Degree in social work, Jarome Pond was educated enough to know when he needed help finding a job. Still recovering from open-heart surgery and being laid off from his job, an unemployed Pond walked into the America's Job Center of CaliforniaSM (AJCC), Eureka, looking for assistance.

What Jarome found was helpful, willing, professional staff. "I would like to say that the most important thing they did to help me out was provide excellent service," said Pond, who now works in Eugene, Oregon, at the Senior Resource and Disability Center.

"It started back when I had to file a disability claim after open-heart by-pass surgery. During this time an Employment Development Department (EDD) Disability Insurance Program Representative provided excellent help to me. This was assistance both for myself and for paid family leave so my mom could be with me while I recovered."

AJCC Manager Robyn Stalcup explained that Pond "is a social worker and had trouble finding work in the local community and was directed to EDD's Disabled Veterans Outreach Program (DVOP) for services."

That's where Pond met DVOP specialist Trae Garza, who worked with Pond on résumé writing and interviewing skills. "During the job search after coming off disability Trae was instrumental to getting my résumé together and essential in helping with my job search," Pond said. "Trae also went above and beyond for a fellow veteran by connecting me to search engines that were based out of Oregon because I was relocating there."

Pond now works as a case manager at the Senior Resource and Disability Center in Oregon. "This job has allowed me to get back on my feet after a year that was full of things that were trying to keep me off my feet," Pond said. "Trae Garza and EDD have put me back in a position where I feel like I'm a valuable part of society again."