

Climb

NEWSLETTER 2018



Marissa's determination to support her family won her a University of Wyoming Outstanding Staff Member Award (above).

THE DIFFERENCE YOU MAKE: When You Believe in a Single Mom's Potential, She Will Make **THIS** Happen!

Last year was a big one for Climb graduate Marissa, culminating in the moment she stood on stage at the University of Wyoming's College of Agriculture and Natural Resources.

Marissa says that 10 years ago, she definitely wouldn't have seen herself there. She was working at a fast food restaurant. When her kids got sick, she couldn't be home with them or had to forfeit a paycheck, and the family was on public assistance.

Fast forward to today...and Marissa is an Office Associate in the University of Wyoming's Molecular Biology Department, where she was placed after graduating from Climb's Office Careers training in 2012. She's had hard-earned promotions along the way and taken on more and more responsibility for the department.



Watch a video of Marissa sharing her Climb story at climbwyoming.org.

"I hadn't done any accounting before this job," says Marissa. "Now I'm navigating the University's new accounting system. I have an eye for detail. Numbers just work for me. The people I work with say I'm a problem solver. That I'm smart. They've told me that I know how to fix a problem before it becomes a problem."

"It's amazing how my initiative to learn computer skills has changed (my kids') lives." –Marissa

And that's why she stood on stage last year: to accept the College of Agriculture and Natural Resources' 2017 Outstanding Staff Member Award, for which she was nominated by her colleagues.

Having reached such a critical career milestone, what's next?

"I want to watch my kids grow," Marissa says. "I'm now able to give them a back yard to play in, my girls are in swimming, one is in the school orchestra, and another takes piano. It's amazing how my initiative to learn computer skills has changed their lives."

TOOLS OF THE TRADE

YOUR SUPPORT HELPS SINGLE MOMS USE ADVANCED TOOLS AND TECHNOLOGIES TO CHANGE THEIR FAMILIES' LIVES AND CONTRIBUTE TO WYOMING'S WORKFORCE.



With its dashboard of buttons, levers, and hydraulics, the forklift is a machine that takes hours of technical training to master. At the latest **Warehouse Inventory** training in Casper, participants practiced lifting and moving large boxes and tires up to 30 feet in the air. They also practiced backing up and maneuvering around cones to fine-tune their work in tight quarters and fast-paced warehouses.

Four consecutive **Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA)** trainings in the Sweetwater Area are helping address a severe CNA shortage statewide, especially in long-term care. The 99-hour training exceeds federal requirements and includes skills like monitoring patients' hearts and lungs with a stethoscope. "I think that I'm probably the only director of nursing in the state of Wyoming who isn't short of CNAs all the time," says Sara Allison, who has hired several Climb graduates at the Sage View Care Center in Rock Springs. "We're very thankful for Climb!"

Familiarity with QuickBooks™ software can jumpstart careers in bookkeeping and accounting... and lead to higher wages! This skill is increasingly sought by employers in the Teton Area and was a focus of the recent **Office Careers** training there. In addition, moms who take this type of training learn to use the Microsoft® Office suite of programs and have even taken apart computer hard drives, something that builds expertise and makes the machines less intimidating to operate.

The recent **Intro to Construction Trades** training in Cheyenne was action-packed with technical skills, including how to use welding torches to cut and connect complex electrical pipefitting systems. The moms also earned their Commercial Driving certifications and received OSHA, technical math, and forklift training. Starting wages after this program are as high as \$21 an hour with a wide range of employers, including the Union Pacific Railroad.



Climb staff helped Felicia (left) and CJ (far right) find resources to meet their dental and vision needs.

"CLIMB HELPED ME GET MY SMILE BACK"

Every day, Climb staff advocate for moms to get the help they need to be ready for work.

Felicia, who lives in Gillette, knew she wanted to become an electrician for years before graduating from Climb.

At the start of her Climb training last year, Felicia expected to learn technical skills—but she was surprised when the program went way beyond that to other areas of her life that were holding her back from a professional career.

"I didn't think I would be taken seriously with my smile," says Felicia. "I was too embarrassed, so I was having a hard time getting out and finding a job. It was impossible to afford the expensive dental work I needed."

Helping moms connect to the resources they need to be successful at work is a critical priority for staff during the Climb program. This advocacy can range from finding legal assistance to helping moms access daycare or housing programs they might not know about.

For Felicia, Climb helped her apply for a local grant that funds dental work. Once she got the grant, Felicia went right in and had the work done.

"I didn't think I would be taken seriously with my smile. I was too embarrassed, so I was having a hard time getting out and finding a job. It was impossible to afford the expensive dental work I needed." –Felicia

The impact was immediate. "My confidence has really turned around. I feel like a new person. Climb helped me get my smile back," she says.

Felicia is now pursuing her dream job at Delta Wye, an electrical company. She'll serve as an apprentice until she becomes a licensed electrician with the potential to earn up to \$34 an hour.

Another Climb grad, CJ, who completed Warehouse Inventory training in Casper last year, also had something holding her back from gaining the skills she needed for a higher-paying job. "Because of my eyesight, I couldn't read certain signs," she recalls. "I had to go out of my way to clarify what things said, especially if things were written on a whiteboard in different colors."

Climb staff worked with CJ to apply for funding that would help her get glasses. "If it wasn't for Climb, I probably still wouldn't have glasses. I couldn't justify the expenditure. Having glasses has certainly made forklift driving easier! It's also helped with my confidence, and I have a lot less anxiety."

When you walk into work on your first day, having confidence and feeling ready can make all the difference. "I'm now in a place where I can hold my head up high and be proud of myself," says Felicia.

FEATURED EMPLOYER PARTNER



Noel (left) and Tonja (right) on Halliburton's cement operations job site with Aaron Hone (center).

Aaron Hone, Halliburton Field Service Quality Coordinator, was looking to diversify his workforce at the company's cement operations in Evansville, Wyoming. He says hiring two recent Climb Wyoming graduates brought different perspectives to his job site, and that's a win for business and families alike.

A PARTNERSHIP, AN OPPORTUNITY

Hiring more women into our organization is really important for us to drive a culture that's diverse and inclusive. It's an opportunity to truly strengthen our organization and makes us a more diverse company.

STAND OUTS

I was very impressed from the get-go with Tonja, Halliburton cementing bulk material operator, and Noel, cementing operator assistant for Halliburton. I could tell immediately that the Climb program matched their skills and strengths to what jobs they applied for, so in that way they were already ahead of the curve. Out of the last 20 interviews I conducted, Tonja and Noel stood out immensely.

WORKING TOGETHER

We've continued to have follow-up meetings with Lesha, Climb's Program Director in Casper, and each employee. It's been a way to accelerate their learning and a chance to talk about what's going well or iron things out. For Climb, it's not just 'here's an employee,' it's more of an

ongoing conversation about how we all work together to have the employee grow and be successful. From the very moment that we connected with Climb, it feels like a true long-term relationship. The responsiveness and openness and willingness to work together has been truly helpful.

HIRING PROBLEM SOLVERS

It impresses me that Tonja and Noel have taken steps in their lives to get ahead—it says a lot about their character. These jobs are a commitment, and that's a huge task for any single parent. But they've gotten right to work and jumped into things in such a responsible way.

INVESTING IN FAMILIES

At Halliburton, we want to invest in highly trained professional workers who are looking for long-term employment. It's good to know that we're helping these women support themselves and their children; that's important for our business but also for our community. It's all a win in my book.

—Aaron Hone



WHY I GIVE... EVERY MONTH!

LONGTIME MONTHLY DONOR GREG DYEKMAN SAYS IT ALL COMES DOWN TO ONE WORD: TRUST.

"Climb Wyoming is one of the few organizations that I support where it is automatic each month. For me, trust is very important for monthly giving. Contributing to Climb is one thing I've never questioned and represents a long-term commitment, one that I don't need to reevaluate every time I'm asked for a donation. I just like to know something is working if I'm going to support it in this way.

I continue to be impressed with the single moms Climb serves—I think they're gutsy for jumping into the workforce the way they do. For me, it's important that they have more hope for the future after Climb—they gain skills that will give them a better chance to make something out of that hope.

And this hope has a ripple effect for their families. It impacts their children and, beyond that, a wider circle of people in the community who are rooting for them."

Greg Dyekman grew up in Cheyenne and is an attorney with Dray, Dyekman, Reed & Healey, P.C. Greg believes strongly in giving back to his community and state and has served in leadership roles for many organizations and projects.

Your reliable support ensures that we can help Wyoming's most vulnerable families. Every monthly gift holds the promise of a brighter future for families bravely seeking a way out of poverty—and shows your personal commitment to their strength, tenacity, and courage.

Join today!
Sign up online at climbwyoming.org or return the enclosed envelope.

THANK YOU!



Hello Climb!

I never thought this is a letter I would be writing to you! I never thought that I could make it this far. You ALL changed my life more than I can ever express.

Attending Climb was the first time I started AND finished something! I haven't stopped since. I wasn't sure I wanted to be a Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA) when I went through the Climb program, often doubting myself and my needs.

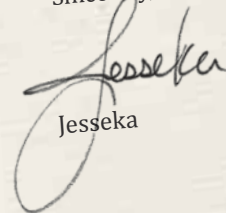
I have since discovered I have a LOVE, a PASSION, a DESIRE to care for people. I have worked as a CNA since finishing Climb in 2013. It wasn't until 2015 that I decided I wanted more—I wanted to do more and be more.

So I did something I never thought I would do. I started traditional college, but I did it in full force, taking up to 22 credit hours some semesters. I graduated in 2016 with my associate's degree in science. Then I applied and was accepted into a Bachelor of Nursing program! I am more than exuberant to announce that on May 5, 2018, I—the single mom who never finished anything, who never thought she could be more—will graduate nursing school!

My oldest child was only a year old when I went through Climb, and my youngest child was born in the middle of my toughest semester. He is now nine months old, and I can say BECAUSE of Climb, I knew I could make it, and I have. I am almost done! You all sparked a fire in me that I'm not sure will stop with a bachelor's. Now I have my eyes on a Certified Registered Nurse Anesthetist (CRNA) program!

So you took a broken, unsuccessful girl and made her into a bold, adventurous, eager-to-learn, successful woman. I will never be able to say thank you enough for all that you have done for me and my little family!

Sincerely,


Jesseka



YOUR GIFTS AT WORK...

THANKS TO FRIENDS LIKE YOU,
CLIMB GRADS ARE DOING WHAT THEY
NEVER THOUGHT POSSIBLE!

Jesseka (below) says Climb “sparked a fire” in her. Now she has her sights set on a Certified Registered Nurse Anesthetist (CRNA) program.



THIS MOTHER'S DAY,

*you can help more
moms like Jesseka
create brighter futures
for their families.*

*Thanks to a group of
generous donors, your
contribution to Climb
will be matched! If
you make a donation
in someone's name,
we'll send them a
recognition card.*

Look for your
invitation
coming soon!





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