



Arkansas Division of
Workforce Services

Arkansas Rehabilitation Services

ARS Success Stories

Jan/Feb 2025

Yolanda Washington

Yolanda Washington, a 58-year-old resident of Little Rock, Arkansas, was diagnosed with breast cancer and anxiety. Due to the demands of cancer treatments, surgeries, and other personal needs, she found it challenging to maintain steady employment. A close friend referred her to Arkansas Rehabilitation Services (ARS), where she applied for assistance.

Upon enrolling, Yolanda was paired with a vocational rehabilitation counselor who guided her through managing her disabling conditions and employment limitations. Together, they developed an Individualized Plan for

Employment (IPE) with the goal of launching a small business. With ARS's support, Yolanda created a business plan and successfully established **Yovyo Beauty & Barber** in September 2023 in Little Rock, AR. Reflecting on her journey, she describes her experience with ARS as transformative:

"ARS helped me with resources for developing my business plan and navigating through the process of becoming a small business owner; it has allowed me flexibility with maintaining regular employment with independence and accessibility to being gainfully employed."

Yolanda's story is a testament to resilience, determination, and the power of support in overcoming challenges to achieve self-sufficiency.





Arkansas Division of
Workforce Services

Arkansas Rehabilitation Services

ARS Success Stories

Jan/Feb 2025

Litzy Aldaco

As a client of Arkansas Rehabilitation Services (ARS), Litzy embarked on a transformative journey toward achieving her career goals. With ARS's support, she successfully completed her education at **DeSigner Barber Academy** and utilized necessary accommodations to pass her state board exams—earning her license as a professional barber.

Now employed and excited about this new chapter in her life, Litzy is grateful for the opportunity to build a stable future for herself and her son. She expresses her heartfelt appreciation to ARS for their invaluable assistance in helping her achieve this milestone and looks forward to thriving in her new career.





Arkansas Division of
Workforce Services

Arkansas Rehabilitation Services

ARS
Success Stories
Jan/Feb 2025

Taundra Johnson

Taundra Johnson was recently hired at Pediatric Associates in Crittenden County. Ms. Johnson is the mother of three beautiful children. She previously struggled to obtain a job due to her disability. One day, after she saw a posting on Facebook, she looked into Southwest Medical Academy. She reached out to them regarding their programs, after which they referred her to Arkansas Rehabilitation Services. Ms. Johnson was connected to a counselor who worked with her to complete the steps required to determine her to be eligible for Arkansas Rehabilitation Services. Ms. Johnson began her program at Southwest Medical Academy as a Medical Assistant with the financial assistance of Arkansas Rehabilitation Services. After completing the program, Ms. Johnson was hired as a Medical Assistant at Pediatric Associates. At Pediatric Associates, Ms. Johnson is responsible for triaging patients, retrieving their vitals along with their chief complaint, preparing them for the doctor to enter, and reporting her initial screening results to the doctor before the doctor enters the room to meet with the patient. Ms. Johnson is also responsible for completing various paperwork and giving vaccines to patients.

Regarding how her disability affected her, Ms. Johnson stated: "I was diagnosed at age 26, and it impacted my ability to work and provide because it caused me to have bad headaches and sensitivity to light. And with that, I couldn't get out of bed sometimes or go outside due to the brightness."

Ms. Johnson also stated that "My experience with ARS was GREAT! I had a wonderful counselor. The services I received were great as well, and it was a tremendous help for me to obtain my medical assistant certification." Since completing her program, Ms. Johnson does not hesitate to share her story with others as she refers other potential clients to Arkansas Rehabilitation Services for help.