

THE PULSE

WE ARE THE HEART & SOUL OF EVERGREEN

**"It's not me empowering people.
I can't empower anyone.
I can only help them
empower themselves."**

Meet Gena Isles, EChO's new Job Center Manager who started in April as part of a Job Center relaunch. Gena joins the EChO team with incredible experience as a Vocational Counselor and Clinical Case Manager for 20 years. As a mom with five grown kids, four puppies and six grandkids she also knows how to create a "family" within the Job Center.

How does the Job Center work?

For every EChO client seeking a job, I perform an intake interview to find out what their employment goals are, what experiences they have, education and interests.

We serve a wide range of clients from those seeking a second part-time or minimum wage job, to high level professionals. Depending on their needs, we help people develop resumes and cover letters, and do targeted job searches together.





"It is only with the heart
that one can see rightly.
What's essential is
invisible to the eye."

- Antione de Saint-Exupery

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When we find jobs matching their interests, I coach them with their application and interview skills, and in some cases, reach out to employers on their behalf. We also provide ongoing support and accountability after they achieve employment. EChO provides a full-service job center.

What barriers can hinder someone's search for long-term employment?

Transportation, childcare, housing, criminal background, physical limitations and disabilities, mental and emotional disabilities. These are some common hurdles. EChO has many of the resources to help with these hurdles and we work together with their Client Advocates to overcome the unique hardships a person might face. By providing this extra "wraparound" support, we help the client achieve long term sustainable success.

What kind of life-long skills can clients acquire after they've completed the program?

While we plan to relaunch the computer lab in the Fall timeframe, after the remodel construction is complete, right now we are focused on developing soft skills. I help them prepare for interviews by doing mock interviews with them so they can be aware of their public speaking skills, prepare themselves for the hard questions and walk in to meet an employer confidently. When the lab reopens, we'll add workshops for Microsoft training, resume creation and online search techniques, as well as offer open computer time to enhance tech skills.

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How does it feel when a client walks out of your office fully prepared and ready to take on the world?

It feels so good. I'm so proud of them. This is why we do what we do. Everywhere I've worked in human services, it's been about helping people empower themselves.

It's not me empowering people. I can't empower anyone. I can only help them empower themselves. That's a big deal when it happens. Suddenly, we don't have breakdowns, we have breakthroughs. We can watch the client's transformation each step of the journey and it is truly rewarding.

What are you most excited about that's next?

Great question! I was really excited recently when EChO was approved to become vendors for the Division of Vocational Rehab, or DVR. I feel accomplished in that. *Which is awesome!*

The great thing about partnering with DVR is they provide unique support specific to the needs of people with disabilities, things like prescription glasses, adaptive equipment, vocational training and educational programs.



This means anyone with a documented disability can come seek our services and we will receive special public funding in order to better serve them.

I'm excited about how this new partnership will enhance our abilities to serve our neighbors with disabilities. It's a real game changer!

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Client Success

Alan came to EChO for interview coaching. Gena helped him fine tune his resume and cover letter and they practiced mock interviews." Although he still felt anxious when an employer called for an interview, we reviewed his key strengths and encouraged him of his own qualifications for this job.

Alan walked into that interview confidently and landed the job!



Alan



Debra

Debra was a bus driver for many years but had been laid off and needed help to stay in the industry. Gena helped her write a targeted essay and apply immediately as a driver for the local public schools.

Debra is now fully employed earning a living wage with benefits.

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