

# SERVICES FOR YOU SERVICIOS PARA USTED

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## On the Job Training- A Great Service for Companies and Participants

By Richard Vargas

Straub International is a family oriented company which pledges to operate with integrity and loyalty to it's customers. They have more than seven locations in the state of Kansas and pride themselves for their level of customer service. The result of their great service is in customers returning back to them year after year for their equipment needs.

Straub International recently collaborated with SER Corporation and signed an On the Job Training (OJT) contract with one of SER participants. OJT's have helped many of our participants to obtain jobs throughout the years. SER reimbursed Straub International 50% of the participant's training wages while in training for six weeks. Nicole Lang the Human Resources Director, was very pleased with the process and minimal paperwork needed to sign an OJT as it is a very simple process. Nicole said that she was happy programs like this exist because it helps students get ahead of the competition while applying for jobs. In addition, she stated that SER is able to give companies references for their participants and employers know what to expect.

SER's participant is still employed at Straub International and both employer and employee are happy with how the OJT worked out. SER is happy for this new relationship with Straub International and we hope to continue working with them in the future.

### Inside this issue:

A Win-Win for All	2
A LONG ROAD TO SUCCESS	3
PACIFIC AG: WHO WE ARE, WHAT WE DO	4
Legacy Farm and Lawn	5





# A Win-Win for All

By Vicki Needham

Hubert Deines was referred to the Hays SER office by the local workforce center after it was discovered he had some farm work history. After meeting with Hubert, I learned that he had indeed done some seasonal farm work. On completing the intake and getting the necessary verification, it was determined that Hubert would qualify for the National Farmworker Jobs Program (NFJP). Hubert was born with a birth defect which affected his hands. He underwent several operations as a child and he never let his disability slow him down. Hubert has an upbeat personality that brightens ones day and he enjoys helping others.

During the intake Hubert expressed to me that he had a desire to become a Certified Nurse's Aide (CNA) and that he had also qualified for services with Vocational Rehabilitation (Voc-Rehab) Program. I was able to partner with his Voc Rehab case manager and we co-enrolled him into both programs to assist Hubert with obtaining a CNA certification. SER Corporation NFJP assisted him with tuition and Hubert enrolled in and later completed a short-term CNA training program. Voc-Rehab was able to provide Hubert with some adaptive computer equipment, scrubs, and shoes needed for his training. Both case managers worked together to meet Hubert's need. On successfully completing the CNA program, Hubert showed up at my office with a big grin on his face to show me his certificate.

By taking advantage of the NFJP On-the-Job Training service, SER Corporation was also able to help Hubert obtain a full-time permanent position as a CNA. Hubert was offered a position at CedarView Assisted Living Center in Hays. He went from seasonal agricultural work to a job that is full-time year round employment with benefits. His yearly income was increased by approximately \$15,000 per year. Hubert stated, "SER Corporation provided me with the tools I needed to successfully gain year round employment with benefits. I am very appreciative of the help."

Treva Beniot, Director of CedarView stated, "As an employer on the receiving end of the SER Program, I would have to say, Wow! What a great program! Giving an individual the support to experience a new direction (career) in life and that person actually taking the opportunity and using their new skills to help mankind is a win-win no matter how you look at it! With programs like SER Corp, individuals can contribute to the workforce and economy and the employers are rewarded for giving the individual the opportunity and chance to succeed. Like I said, it's a win-win for ALL of us! Thank you SER Corp!"

Hubert, who always has a smile on his face, has been an inspiration with his go-getter attitude. I am honored that I was able to work with Hubert through SER Corporation. Congratulations Hubert!



Hubert Deines



## A LONG ROAD TO SUCCESS

By Roberta Pianalto

Dreading the long drive today to do a follow-up on Mauricio Soto-Urueta, reminded me of the long road that began for Mauricio over two years ago. He had to travel many hours plus endure the curves and turns on his long road to success.

Mauricio grew up in the small Kansas town of Cimarron. He worked many feedlot jobs along with all of his family. Driving the silage trucks and cleaning out manure from the stalls was his primary job at the feedlots. Attending college right after high school was not an option because he could not afford it. But, he knew this was not the job he wanted to do the rest of his life. So he began saving what he could from the little income he made working at the feedlot. When he finally felt he could afford to quit his job he took the steps to enroll into college.

He always enjoyed mechanics and decided to seek out the Diesel Technology Training Program at Northwest Kansas Technical College in Goodland, Kansas. There is where I met Mauricio. After going over his past employment, I found him eligible for the National Farmworker Jobs Training Program and was able to help Mauricio with tuition, transportation and housing expenses. Mauricio also worked a part-time job at the local feedlot in Goodland to help with additional expenses. He looked for every opportunity to make extra money and not to spend any of his earnings unless it was absolutely necessary. Mauricio recalls many days when he would only eat one meal because that was all he could afford. Even though living this way was very difficult, Mauricio was determined to get his Diesel

Technician Certification so he would never have to work in the feedlots again.



After a very long journey, Mauricio graduated from the Diesel Technology Program and obtained work with a large company named Foley. This company only hires the very committed and talented students from the college. Mauricio was thrilled to be working for them. He was able to move back to his home town and work at the Dodge City dealership. Now, he is near his family and is working a job which allows him to earn a living wage. The long road he traveled to become successful was well worth the journey.

Mauricio Soto-Urueta



## PACIFIC AG: WHO WE ARE, WHAT WE DO

By: Mike Medina

PacificAg

Leading From Experience



Pacific Ag designs, builds, and operates large-scale agricultural feedstock supply chains for two growing global markets. The first market is to replace petroleum and other fossil sources in the creation of bioenergy, cellulosic biofuels, bio-based chemicals and other bio-based products. A second market is for animal protein to feed the demands of an expanding global middle class. Founded in 1998, Pacific Ag operates the largest agricultural residue and hay harvesting business in the United States (US), experiencing rapid growth over the last three years. Pacific Ag operates currently in seven states, Oregon, Kansas, Texas, Oklahoma, North Dakota, North Carolina, and Washington. Pacific Ag has the largest fleet of biomass harvesting equipment in the US.

Locally Pacific Ag is located in Hugoton, Kansas, which usually hires around 80 harvesters per season and has many other full time employees on their crew. When asked if Pacific Ag would be interested again in participating in the National Farmworker Jobs Program (NFJP) by hiring more participants, administrative assistant Donice Medina said the following. “First of all I would like to thank you for introducing yourself and letting us be able to take advantage of the program. Hopefully, we will be able to work with you again in the future. Yes, in a heartbeat, they seem to be great workers, and it not only benefited them to learn what we do as a company, but we were able to train them as well. We train our employees in the type of equipment they will be handling, whether it is a baler, or mower, stacker etc.” When asked how hiring a NFJP participant benefited Pacific Ag, here is what she said. “Well certainly, not only did it provide us an operator, but we received income back. It doesn’t get any better than that!”

With a growing national and global footprint, Pacific Ag can balance a year around harvest schedule for its growers and end users. From initial project scoping and feasibility to full-scale feedstock supply chain development and operation, Pacific Ag is uniquely positioned to provide long term and reliable agricultural biomass feedstock solutions.

Pacific Ag is a privately held limited liability corporation headquartered in Oregon.





# Legacy Farm and Lawn

By: Joel Leiva



## History of Legacy

In 2008 three small local businesses in three different counties in Missouri (MO) came together and decided to form a new company. Barton County Implement Company located in Lamar, Mo., Purinton's in Lockwood, MO., and Joplin Farm and Lawn announced they were combining their respective companies to form Legacy Farm and Lawn. Four years later another John Deere dealership from Nevada joined the group. Legacy Farm and Lawn supplies products to fill the needs of homeowner's lawn care up to the largest agricultural production needs. The name Legacy Farm and Lawn was chosen to recognize all the years invested by the previous generation to their local communities in addition to future generations and communities to be served. In June of 2015, SER Corporation of Kansas, National Farmworker Jobs Program (NFJP) partnered with Legacy Farm and Lawn to establish On-the-Job Training (OJT) Contracts and provide permanent employment to a couple of SER participants.

## Background of Participants

Two NFJP participants were close to finishing their certification at Fort Scott Community College (FSCC), John Deere Technical Program in Pittsburg, Kansas. While in school the two participants had shown interest in working at Legacy Farm and Lawn. I contacted the company and met with the Human Resource Director, Lisa Banks. Lisa was very welcoming and after dialoging and explaining how the OJT program worked she indicated an interest. She agreed on the terms. We finalized all the documentation needed so that our two participants could start training as soon as possible at Legacy once their training at FSCC was completed.

## New Partnership

On completion of their OJTs, our participants were offered employment at Legacy. Lisa's first comments about our participants were positive. She was especially impressed with one of the two. In a phone conversation that I had with her, she asked about the possibilities of doing this again in the future. In fact, she mentioned the company's interest in helping young people wanting to be a John Deere Technician. Legacy would help with tuition reimbursement at FSCC, as long as the participant decided to work at Legacy upon completion of training. I told her that as soon as I recruited more participants interested in training I would communicate with her. I believe that with Legacy, SER has found a great partnership which can be translated into four job placement options for our participants seeking a career to build their own legacy.





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