

VA Success Story: Agunda House

Agunda House is a veteran who served as a master sergeant in the U.S. Army for 26 years. He was honorably discharged with a service-connected hearing disability in 1996 and went on to employment as a tractor trailer driver. Most recently, he was a University of Maryland Medical Systems' Distribution Manager, until his position was eliminated in early 2008. Mr. House then decided to contact the Veterans Administration, as a means to "upgrade my computer skills by learning Microsoft Word and Excel programs."

In June 2010, Mr. House was referred to VSP by the Veterans Administration's Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment Unit for services. In August 2010, he entered VSP's Work Adjustment Training (WAT) program in Sinai Hospital's Distribution department. Staff there quickly recognized Mr. House's experience and assigned him advanced tasks while in training. When reflecting on his Work Adjustment Training experience, Mr. House stated that the program "gave me a much-needed routine again and built up my self-esteem."



In December 2010, following successful completion of WAT, Mr. House entered VSP's Contemporary Office Technology Training (COTT) program, a 17-week intensive computer software, customer service and job readiness training program. Mr. House describes his COTT program as "most worthwhile in teaching me Microsoft Word, Excel, and business writing skills while improving my typing speed. I learned resume writing

and the latest job search techniques." Mr. House describes his group of fellow trainees as "quite close-knit and supportive of one another. We maintain contact with each other to this day."

On May 28, 2011, Mr. House graduated from the COTT program, and, on June 1, he entered employment with Stanley Black and Decker as an International Shipping Coordinator, earning \$22.50 per hour. Mr. House is convinced that his acquire software skills

was instrumental in his job search success. While he was recently laid off from this position (software replaced him!) and is once again in active job search, he is confident that with the invaluable skills he attained at VSP, his future employment prospects are bright.

