

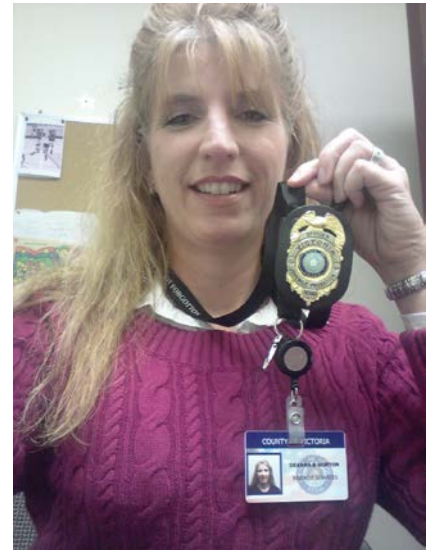
## Deanna Horton

Deanna attended a Yellow Ribbon with her husband after he returned from a deployment and was introduced to the National Guard's Job Connection Education Program (JCEP). She emailed Nicole (Austin JCEP rep) after starting her new job and tells her story beautifully, so we'll let her tell it...

"I only knew about the program because of the yellow ribbon event in Houston that my husband and I attended upon his return from deployment. When I came in to meet with Nicole initially, I had already not heard back from my first interview, which I thought had gone so well. I was looking for an answer to that issue, and feeling a lot of pressure to get back to work. Nicole offered me advice, helped me put together an excellent resume, which turned out to be the best resume I'd ever had by the way, and most importantly (to me at the time) honest support that felt objective and not like manufactured lip service. Nicole routinely sent me email leads, always remembering when I'd had an interview and checking up afterward...very often well after business hours. I filled out an incredible amount of employment applications and overall had five interviews over a 6.5 month period. Nicole never gave up, and didn't let me give up either."

Deanna sent the following email to Nicole on 16 October...

"Nicole, I finally, finally have some good news to share. I got an offer from Victoria County last week, and will start Oct 21 as a Juvenile Probation Officer. My interview with them was the first one since we did our mock interview and I used every point you brought to my attention. I have had some interviews go really well, but I have never before had someone stand up in the interview and tell me how much she had enjoyed talking with me. I had another panel member get all gooey eyed over my STAR example as well. She said, when I finished my example (about a handicapped woman who wouldn't tell me she was handicapped and I almost threw her in jail...example of a difficult person) that the story meant so much to her and it was exactly the kind of thinking they needed more of around there. Pop....home run! (The handicapped woman was deaf...I finally took out my notebook and wrote down my instructions .... crisis averted. I had no idea she was deaf until she read my notebook.)"



"I want to thank you so much for your help, the leads, the encouragement, and the reassurance you gave me while I waited for something good to happen. I didn't realize until I had no answer to the question "so...what do you do??" that so much of my identity is wrapped up in being able to answer that question proudly. I know you do as much for everyone else and more and I want to thank you for that as well."

"Also, before I forget, I very much appreciate that JCEP was available to me as a dependent. Although I am not a vet myself (perforated ulcer = permanent medical disqualification = broken heart for me and a loss for our country) I can say that helping me as a dependent is direct assistance for the vet. We live in the same household and share finances after all, so thank you very much for being inclusive."

"Have a great Thursday! I will be thinking about you as I fill out my paperwork on Monday. If I can help you in any way now or in the future, please call or email me. That offer doesn't expire."

With sincere gratitude,  
Deanna Horton