

Lina Cedasero

Trainee

Jane Addams Resource Center

After getting promoted twice within a logistics company, Lina Cedasero had no idea where her career would go next. Eventually, she slowly began to realize that the future she was looking for was not in some far away place or an-out-of reach industry. It was right next door.

Cedasero worked as an inbound coordinator at a warehouse in Chicago where the company shared a large facility with a candy manufacturer. Over time she would get to know some of the employees at that manufacturer and they would tell her about their jobs. She was impressed by the variety of professions that they did and the volume of work that they handled.

“They were always busy,” recalled Cedasero. “No matter what, it could be a down day for us, but they were always busy. And they were getting paid well.” One of her friends from high school had just graduated from JARC after working for years at O’Hare International Airport. Though Cedasero did not know what JARC was, it was her friend who recommended the program.

When Cedasero looked around at the other business in the area and the products that they produced, she became interested in manufacturing. She began to ponder that if a company manufacturing candy had so many interesting jobs, then companies making even more robust products will have just as many and more opportunities. “That’s why I decided to go through the program at JARC,” said Cedasero. “So I can know what they do, and learn from them.”

Receiving CNC training at JARC was a new experience for her. Everything from the terminology to learning to code was new. “They give you a book to read, do the work and move on to hands-on training. That’s how you

learn,” she said. Though she doubted herself at the beginning, she became confident enough to show other people how to use the machine. Now as a certified CNC operator, she encourages other trainees to get their certifications. When they are reluctant, Cedasero tries to convince them.

“You already know how to do it. Just get certified,” is what she tells them. “That makes you more legit.”

As for her younger relatives, Cedasero is already trying to influence them. “My niece saw me doing math and working with blueprints in the beginning, and commented how she does that in her school too. I told her to keep with it, because in the future that knowledge can open a lot of options.” With her 18-year-old nephew, who is harder to influence, she tries to get him to join JARC by encouraging him to watch YouTube videos of people making things with their hands and with machines. “You know, in the future, you could probably even have your own machine and make whatever it is you wanted to make,” she tells him. “You could start a business. You never know.”

Cedasero has shown that just making friends within the neighborhood, even at work, can open up a world of possibilities just next door that you didn’t even know were there.

