

The **Okanagan** S A T U R D A Y

BUSINESS

THE SATURDAY OKANAGAN MARCH 13 2010

Uber employee

Employee: Candy Rowney
Workplace: Venture Academy
Position: Parent Counsellor
Tenure: Four years



Reasons for working at Venture Academy: It feels good when you connect with a youth and you can make difference in their lives. One girl that I had in my home summed up nicely. I asked her what she got from coming to Venture Academy and she replied "I found my dignity." At the end of the day when you can help a youth to find something so deep and important it makes it all worthwhile.

My boss: Teresa is a jewel. She is a dynamic woman with gusto and abundant knowledge. She has the ability to tame any situation and keep a perspective that empathizes with the youth, the parent, the parent counselor, and the front-line staff.

I would imagine her job is the toughest as she needs to be able to balance the needs and wishes of a very diverse group of individuals and she succeeds at doing this very well. Teresa can read people and situations and come up with solutions that appease everyone. I have to tip my hat to her on a daily basis as most people would probably find this an extreme challenge, but she manages with ease and grace. If she is frustrated she does not let it show. She is cool under pressure. Teresa is always sure to let me know that I am appreciated as well.

Co-workers: I have the advantage of liking my co-workers. I feel for those who don't, however, as I have stated, we are a diverse group and we come from all walks of life, so it keeps it interesting and fun. I love the fact we are a team-based program and we all help one another out. If for some reason we have disagreements, we are able to work through them and it strengthens our bond.

Defining moment of choosing to work here: I had to talk it over with my husband and was nervous he may say no. It took a little bit to convince him we could do this together and be successful at it as he is not that social, but when he agreed I could inquire about the position I was ecstatic. It took only seconds for me to send the email with my information and resume and then came the anxious wait for a reply. So I guess that one moment is when my husband agreed to it as well. I must say we as a family have grown throughout the last four years doing this and my husband has found it to be a rewarding position as well.

The flat side: Whenever a new youth comes they usually are not happy about being here to start with, so the first few days can be pretty tense but once you get past that it mellows out and you get into a good routine.

Why I still like it here?: I feel what I do makes a difference and I am appreciated. I also love having the youth around and my family still lends great support to this. My own kids are grown now but they still come to visit with the Venture youth and make an effort to be great role models to them. I feel like it has made us grow as a family as well. When you see the troubles and issues that other youth face it makes you thankful that your own kids want to be a part of making a difference. I am doing what I love and love what I do. I don't think anyone could ask for more in their position in life.