

JANET, HUMAN SERVICES PROGRAM COORDINATOR

## Janet, '06

Human Services Program Coordinator for the State of Wisconsin

*Please provide an overview of the kinds of duties you perform at this job.* I am the bilingual worker in my office, so I handle all communication with Spanish-speaking clients. The office handles centralized processing of applications for public assistance benefits, mainly health care, food assistance, and prescription drug programs. In addition, I also translate policy and coordinate communication between coworkers and their Spanish-speaking clients.

*What additional training (beyond your undergraduate degree) did you need for your current job?* I completed a 12 week training program and approximately 6 months of on-the-job training provided by the State for this position.

*In your current position, do you use any of the information or skills you learned as an IECA major in particular (a foreign language, understanding of economics, politics, cross-cultural sensitivity, research, etc.)?* I am always using my Spanish language skills, whether I am speaking to a client, translating documents, or writing letters and notices to clients. I also use a lot of the research skills learned while studying IECA, as typically I have to find unique ways of obtaining the information that I need. I also try to explain to my coworkers and my boss why some things are said slightly differently or explained differently to Spanish-speaking people, so I refer quite often to cross-cultural sensitivity. I also encounter a lot of politics on a daily basis, as my job is centered around public policy, so understanding how politics function is vital to understanding what will happen next in my job.

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