

Lee Lefkowitz
Stimulus Gives Local Man a Job

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1 The economy may be on its way to recovery.

2 The "Cash for Clunkers" program drove consumer
3 spending up more than 22%, but the nation's
4 unemployment rate is at its highest level in
5 26 years.

6 There was a debate last week over the true
7 number of jobs created or saved by the Federal
8 Stimulus Program.

9 No matter what the final number turns out to
10 be, TV 20's Robert Bradfield reports on one
11 Gainesville worker whose career was stimulated by
12 the federal program.

13 >> For 28-year-old Lee Lefkowitz, life has
14 certainly been an uphill battle.

15 He was born deaf and couldn't find work for
16 more than a year after graduating from the
17 University of Miami in 2008 with a business
18 degree.

19 But in July, things started looking up.

20 LEE LEFKOWITZ: I have always wanted to work for
21 a federal agency, so this gave me the greatest
22 opportunity that I could ask for.

23 >> Four months ago, Lefkowitz was able to find
24 a job, thanks to Florida's Vocational
25 Rehabilitation program.

1 They partnered with the Social Security
2 Administration, and with the stimulus money passed
3 earlier this year, jobs were created to help those
4 with disabilities.

5 Lefkowitz' was one of the thousands of jobs
6 that the White House says have been saved or
7 created since the stimulus was passed.

8 But the program didn't just land Lefkowitz a
9 job; they helped with his schooling.

10 LEE LEFKOWITZ: They also assisted me with my
11 hearing aids, eyeglasses, things like that; things
12 that would allow me to go to college and things
13 like that. They also paid for my books. They
14 were very helpful in what they did.

15 >> Lefkowitz is a claims representative for
16 this Gainesville office. He works with the public
17 and takes claims for retirement, survivors and
18 disability insurance.

19 His boss says he was a perfect fit.

20 DONNA MAITLAND: His resume', his charisma, his
21 initiative, his enthusiasm about the job, just his
22 overall personality.

23 >> Lefkowitz says it's his turn now to help
24 those who need it.

25 In a way, he said he's paying it forward.

1 LEE LEFKOWITZ: Returning the favor to those
2 people and providing that public service.

3 >> Lefkowitz plans on getting his MBA and now
4 joins the more than 8,000 Floridians who have
5 found jobs through Vocational Rehabilitation.

6 Robert Bradfield, TV20 News.

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	Cash (1) 1: 2	found (1) 3: 5	1: 4	perfect (1) 2:19
>	certainly (1) 1:14	Four (1) 1:23	life (1) 1:13	personality (1) 2:22
>> (5) 1:13,23;2:15,23; 3: 3	charisma (1) 2:20	G	looking (1) 1:19	plans (1) 3: 3
2	claims (2) 2:15,17	Gainesville (2) 1:11;2:16	M	program (5) 1: 2, 8,12,25;2: 8
2008 (1) 1:17	Clunkers (1) 1: 2	gave (1) 1:21	MAITLAND (1) 2:20	providing (1) 3: 2
20's (1) 1:10	college (1) 2:12	graduating (1) 1:16	matter (1) 1: 9	public (2) 2:16;3: 2
22% (1) 1: 3	consumer (1) 1: 2	greatest (1) 1:21	may (1) 1: 1	R
26 (1) 1: 5	created (3) 1: 7;2: 3, 7	H	MBA (1) 3: 3	rate (1) 1: 4
28-year-old (1) 1:13	D	hearing (1) 2:11	Miami (1) 1:17	recovery (1) 1: 1
8	deaf (1) 1:15	help (2) 2: 3,23	money (1) 2: 2	Rehabilitation (2) 1:25;3: 5
8,000 (1) 3: 4	debate (1) 1: 6	helped (1) 2: 9	months (1) 1:23	reports (1) 1:10
A	degree (1) 1:18	helpful (1) 2:14	more (3) 1: 3,16;3: 4	representative (1) 2:15
able (1) 1:23	disabilities (1) 2: 4	highest (1) 1: 4	N	resume' (1) 2:20
Administration (1) 2: 2	disability (1) 2:18	House (1) 2: 6	nation's (1) 1: 3	retirement (1) 2:17
agency (1) 1:21	DONNA (1) 2:20	I	need (1) 2:24	Returning (1) 3: 1
ago (1) 1:23	drove (1) 1: 2	initiative (1) 2:21	News (1) 3: 6	Robert (2) 1:10;3: 6
aids (1) 2:11	E	insurance (1) 2:18	number (2) 1: 7, 9	S
allow (1) 2:12	earlier (1) 2: 3	J	office (1) 2:16	saved (2) 1: 7;2: 6
always (1) 1:20	economy (1) 1: 1	job (3) 1:24;2: 9,21	one (2) 1:10;2: 5	schooling (1) 2: 9
assisted (1) 2:10	enthusiasm (1) 2:21	jobs (4) 1: 7;2: 3, 5;3: 5	opportunity (1) 1:22	Security (1) 2: 1
B	eyeglasses (1) 2:11	joins (1) 3: 4	out (1) 1: 9	service (1) 3: 2
battle (1) 1:14	F	July (1) 1:19	over (1) 1: 6	Social (1) 2: 1
books (1) 2:13	favor (1) 3: 1	L	overall (1) 2:22	spending (1) 1: 3
born (1) 1:15	Federal (3) 1: 7,12,21	land (1) 2: 8	P	started (1) 1:19
boss (1) 2:19	final (1) 1: 9	last (1) 1: 6	paid (1) 2:13	stimulated (1) 1:11
Bradfield (2) 1:10;3: 6	find (2) 1:15,23	Lee (4) 1:13,20;2:10;3: 1	partnered (1) 2: 1	Stimulus (3) 1: 8;2: 2, 7
business (1) 1:17	fit (1) 2:19	Lefkowitz (9) 1:13,20,23;2: 8,10, 15,23;3: 1, 3	passed (2) 2: 2, 7	survivors (1) 2:17
C	Florida's (1) 1:24	Lefkowitz' (1) 2: 5	paying (1) 2:25	T
career (1) 1:11	Floridians (1) 3: 4	level (1)	people (1) 3: 2	thanks (1) 1:24
	forward (1) 2:25			thousands (1) 2: 5

true (1)
1: 6
turn (1)
2:23
turns (1)
1: 9
TV (1)
1:10
TV20 (1)
3: 6

U

unemployment (1)
1: 4
University (1)
1:17
up (2)
1: 3,19
uphill (1)
1:14

V

Vocational (2)
1:24;3: 5

W

way (2)
1: 1;2:25
week (1)
1: 6
White (1)
2: 6
whose (1)
1:11
work (2)
1:15,20
worker (1)
1:11
works (1)
2:16

Y

year (2)
1:16;2: 3
years (1)
1: 5