

## **February 11<sup>th</sup> Hearing Panelist Information and Written Statement**

### **Panel Four: What it's Like to Work at the Airport Dana Stewart, Server, Bigfoot Food and Spirits**

#### **INFORMATION:**

Dana Stewart is an employee at Seattle Tacoma International Airport.

#### **STATEMENT:**

Hello, my name is Dana Stewart and I am 22 years old. I am currently working as a pharmacy technician full time and a part time server for Filo Foods and BF Foods at SeaTac Airport for over 6 years and I love it. I am looking forward to speaking and being a voice for equal opportunities within the Port of Seattle.

My career journey at SeaTac started at age 16; I was just a high school student looking for my first job to provide for my family as well as myself. I applied at many companies, but with no experience they would not hire me. I went to Port Jobs and looked at the job listings; however, very few jobs hired at 16 except for Filo Foods. I was hired as a customer service associate. I was so excited! While attending school I was promoted to shift supervisor, I learned how to do inventories, ordering and receiving, bank audits and a list of supervisor responsibilities. Because they are a small business it was easier for them to be flexible with my work schedule. When I turned 18 I moved to their bar as a food prep. I always had goals to move up to the next step in my education and career. I believe I worked hard and I was promoted again to lead server. I looked for opportunities and worked hard for them.

During my whole career I went to school and was given the opportunities to promote within the company. I attended a medical institute while working and also did my externship. Now 22, I am a pharmaceutical tech and I still work part time at the airport. I am a non-union worker with the same or better benefits, which includes paid holidays, vacations, and medical. They also pay for their employees to attend classes at Port Jobs. I believe not all jobs should pay the same. It

should depend on the training and skills of the employee. I believe if the employer gives you the opportunity, it's yours to work for. My wage is almost \$30/hour as a server. The airport has lots of opportunities. I see my job as a starter job. I was given an opportunity for a first job with no experience. They promote from within. They think education and career goals are important. They are pretty flexible. They make the working for them fun by having contests and incentives to encourage us to keep up our good work. I work with a lot of people from different countries, and they are still learning English. Most employers won't hire them for any position, but our employer will give them a chance.

Everybody has to start somewhere and Filo Foods gave me my start. For me the training and education while working at SeaTac Airport has been the best thing in my life.