

Brooke B. Jones
Sevier Utah
brookestream88@gmail.com

Participating in Rural Online Initiative has given me many more tools that I needed to work online. When I first learned about Rural Online Initiative November 2018 I thought it would provide me with a job. I did not, however, expect it to teach me how to work from an online platform nor help me learn apps that would help my organization skills. Specifically it helped me to feel more secure working online. I actually had the idea to teach English to Chinese children or to anyone as an ESL teacher, but I wasn't really brave enough to take that leap. I didn't know some of the things that I needed to understand about protecting my computer and how to access information on the internet. Going through the process with Rural Online Initiative helped me gain greater understanding so that I was able to take that leap.

I now work for Magic Ears, which is a company that teaches English to Chinese students. I'm on a platform that is run by a Chinese company so I have had a few things that I had to do to get through that process. First, I am in the process of earning my Bachelors in Elementary Education, which was started long before I ever contemplated this line of work. Second, I had to have an Ethernet connection in a private area of my home so that I could shut the door and block off people. Third, I had to be able to have some encryption put into my computer to protect it. Fourth, I had to learn about ping, which is technical information that helps me to better access the line of work that I do or troubleshoot if I have an issue while working. I am still learning to better understand this information.

The basic information given within ROI helped me to think widely outside of the box. Another thing I learned was how to be influential to my children and show them how they could make an income in their futures. I appreciated the discipline that was presented through the course.

It was not easy for me to take the course. The first week my canvas would not show me all of the information for my classes. At the first get together I realized that I was missing something. You must be very innovative and determined if you are going to work online because you are the one who has to do all of the problem solving and be willing to communicate. I have always thought that someday I would be able to earn an income from my home and I have tried many things which I think increased my ability to recognize what ROI offered and I ran with it. Now I am trying to pick the best offers.

One thing that I know needs to have greater attention is internet providers in rural areas, which affects what companies on the Wasatch front will outsource to. In my particular experience two of the companies that I initially applied for would not work with my wireless connection, even if I connected with an Ethernet cable directly to my router. Companies that require a Bachelor's is another thing that affects being able to secure employment. Magic Ears has only required me to have a certain upload speed so they are alright with my satellite connection as long as it is plugged in by my Ethernet, and because I am in the process of securing my Bachelors they were willing to hire me. Other companies have to have cable connections through fiber optics. This cable connection is not an option that I have in my rural area. Our internet is Infowest and it just went through the buyout process from being Vivant. We were supposed to be grandfathered in but have found that our speeds were actually throttled. This required us to purchase a faster speed at the end of the buyout, so much for grandfathering. Hughes-net is one that many think they can use but it's package is actually rather faulty and racks up your data to a point that you would be paying for your job not making money when connected to that internet source. My particular internet is the only one in my area. Perhaps someday there will be a fiber optic option and the online job sources will increase. Having to sign an internet contract can also be an issue.

Having gone through the ROI course has made me more attentive to work from home opportunities. This led me to helping my son secure a job that he now works from his home in Richfield Utah. The internet was his greatest challenge but because of perseverance and a Mom who knew what to do he is enjoying staying close to home instead of moving to the crowded Wasatch Front. My son really went through a rough time getting it all set up and he can explain that in his story. I am grateful for the information that I learned and if you need any input ask and ask some more, that's my rule of thumb.