

## Jason Parra

### New Occupation During Trying Times

Jason Parra, a Branson resident and former hotel worker, like many was impacted by the economy that supports the massive tourism industry despite having a family to support.

As he has for the past several years, upon lay off Jason visited the Missouri Job Center to job search after applying for SNAP benefits at the local Family Support Division office located on the opposite end of the shopping center. However, this year would be different after Jason learned about the SkillUP program.

After reviewing the limited job listings available to him, Jason and his family decided his time would be best spent in classes to build his skills, break the cycle, and try something new. After speaking with SkillUP staff and enrolling into the SkillUP program and reviewing the vast training options available to him, at 39-years-old Jason decided to go back to school.

In just a few short weeks, on May 13<sup>th</sup>, Jason was back to work. Hitting the road for Prime trucking with the CDL he obtained thanks to the SkillUP program. He started at \$600 a week while in training and will earn much more in the future. In addition, he is also getting medical, dental, vision, and life insurances which can have huge costs to individuals and families.



*The SkillUP program is Missouri's employment and training program for Food Stamp (SNAP) recipients. The program is funded through the United States Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Service. The program is also funded through the Administration for Children and Families, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families block grant.*