

## Notes from a Returner to my fellow PTA members

As my kids get older, the questions of “What’s next?” and “Should I go back to work?” seem to permeate my thoughts . When my oldest son was born, I decided to take a career break and fully commit my time to being a mom. I’m not sure career break is actually the correct term; it was more of a career change. As a stay-at-home mom who has been heavily involved in the PTA and other volunteering opportunities, I have continued to develop organization and leadership skills, all while managing the demands of a busy family life. I have learned to be a creative problem-solver, to be adaptive and patient, and have come to cherish working with others to accomplish a shared goal.

I am certain fellow PTA members understand the demands of being a parent and the skills you develop as a volunteer in the PTA, but I was concerned with how my experience would translate to the workplace. Return Utah is a program designed specifically for people like me. Lieutenant Governor Deidre Henderson recognized the need to help individuals who have taken a career break return to work in meaningful, mid-level jobs and created the Return Utah Program.

I am currently working part-time in a returnship position that happens to be in the Lieutenant Governor's office and have nothing but positive things to say about the experience. While receiving on-the-job training, I also have access to training resources designed to help program participants feel confident and qualified to reenter the workforce. Each returnship position offered through the state is different and unique but the resources available to participants are the same.

This process has helped provide valuable experience I can add to my resume and I am excited to see where this opportunity will lead. My returnship is scheduled to end in March and while I am not certain returning to work is the best decision for me right now, the relationships I've created and skills I've been able to develop will continue to serve me regardless of the path I pursue.

If you find yourself asking some of the same questions I've asked myself about what is next, I strongly encourage you to look into doing a returnship at [returnutah.org](http://returnutah.org) and invite others to join you!

- Joani Stevens



# WHAT'S NEXT?

return UTAH

Leading the way in  
Career Reentry

**Return Utah provides opportunities for meaningful, family sustainable jobs** by seeking candidates who took a career break for any reason (child rearing, health, higher education, retirement, etc.); and **helps them re-join the workforce**, with transitional support, training, coaching, and resources.



Lt. Governor Deidre Henderson is the impetus behind Return Utah after taking a career break herself before returning to work and ultimately running for public office.

"I know how hard it is to feel like you can't apply for jobs or have the relevant experience to get hired... Just because you've been out of the workforce does not mean that you don't have valuable skills to contribute and we want to help you sharpen those skills and help you find... new opportunities."

Consider this is your personal invitation to learn more and apply now at  
[returnutah.org](https://returnutah.org)