

Casino trainees look to deal themselves in on new career

Written by Administrator

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Mark Hult believes dealing cards to casino patrons will be a good deal for him.

The 21-year-old Salem resident is among a dozen prospective dealers learning blackjack techniques under the tutelage of Trinity Savage, a four-year veteran dealer from Canonsburg who works as a floor supervisor at Live! Casino Pittsburgh in Hempfield.

“It seems like something I could make a career out of,” Hult said of dealing cards, adding, “It seems like a fun way of meeting people.”

It’s a new direction for the Greensburg Salem High School graduate, who has held a food service job for seven years while discovering his original plan of pursuing a career in computer science wasn’t the right fit.

“I went to Saint Vincent College for two years,” he said. “It wasn’t really something I was enjoying. It didn’t seem right for me, and then covid hit.

“Maybe I’ll try college again someday.”

After four weeks of instruction and practice, Hult and his fellow trainees will audition for spots on the floor of the Westmoreland Mall casino. If they pass the audition, Savage told her students, Live! Casino will pay for their dealer’s license, with the expectation that they will stay at the gaming venue for at least six months.

They’ll finish their training with two weeks of instruction on carnival games, including Ultimate Texas Hold’em.

Another of Savage’s students, Cathy O’Barto of Monongahela, is in her late 50s and sees work as a casino dealer as a better alternative after years as a cashier.

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“It’s a great opportunity,” she said. “I wish I would have done it sooner.”

She has been to the casino as a patron. “I want to make some money,” she said, “but I like the atmosphere, and I like the people.”

Her son joked that she should get a job at the casino, but O’Barto has taken that idea seriously.

“I saw one day that there were classes, and I said, ‘I’ll do it. I’m going to try it,’” she said.

“It’s a fun, but serious, job,” said Savage, who noted tips, which are pooled, are what make working as a dealer financially rewarding.

Savage has worked at the Westmoreland Mall casino since it [opened in November](#) . She previously worked at The Meadows Racetrack and Casino in North Strabane, but lost her job there during pandemic-driven staff cutbacks.

She said the ideal casino dealer should be fun, energetic and “a people person, but not a people-pleaser.

“I will do whatever I can for anybody; I’m a people person. But if it is not good for their benefit or any of my dealers, I will say, ‘No.’ ”

Live! Casino Pittsburgh lists [job openings](#) on its website.

Read more <https://triblive.com/tribextra/casino-trainees-look-to-deal-themselves-in-on-new-career/>