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ADULT EDUCATION
An Investment in America's Future

ADULT LEARNER SUCCESS STORY

Eric O'Connell | Connecticut



Adult education is helping Eric to turn his life around. Eric, now a 28-year-old student in the Credit Diploma Program (CDP), struggled to cope with his parents' divorce in high school. Disoriented, bullied, and depressed, he turned to self-medication to cope, and he dropped out of Portland High School during his senior year. Although he did begin to pursue his GED® credential, he soon found himself addicted to drugs, homeless, and eventually incarcerated.

Upon release, Eric felt completely lost. His sister encouraged him to check out the Connecticut Men's Center, part of the Adult and Teen Challenge program. He moved in and spent one and a half years living in the center prior to returning to adult education. Although he was just one test short of completing the GED® exam, he enrolled in the CDP program. He wanted to experience everything that he had missed before.

After enrolling, Eric was able to receive a tablet due to the Affordable Connectivity Program (ACP). This allowed him to study extra hours and do his homework outside of school hours. He was also able to participate in classes that provide digital literacy skills like VR use, 3D printing, Adobe Workshop, and more. The ability to participate in these classes sparked his interest in IT careers, and even today Eric is exploring career paths along this vein.

Today Eric is back on track, working hard to complete his last remaining section of the GED® exam. He hopes to give back to society by volunteering to tutor at his adult education program, and he hopes to attend college to pursue a career using his newfound digital skills. ■