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ADULT EDUCATION
An Investment in America's Future



ADULT LEARNER SUCCESS STORY

Marissa Benfield | Missouri

Adult education gave Marissa the chance at education that she had been denied time and again by her parents. Growing up in an abusive household to parents struggling with drug addiction, Marissa found herself dealing with mental health issues. By the time she turned 14, she had been diagnosed with Major Depressive Disorder.

Marissa's behavior became out of control, and her parents decided to enroll her in homeschool classes. The homeschooling program she was enrolled in provided videos with worksheets to complete, which her parents were supposed to turn in, except they never did. She states, "For a full year, I was not allowed to leave the house or hangout with friends, and was refused an education." Next, they moved to an area that was eight miles away from the nearest bus stop. Her father refused to drive them to the bus stop in the morning most days and Marissa missed a lot of school. Two to three times a week she would find a ride from others in the neighborhood, and by the end of the semester Marissa had A's in all of her classes. The principal informed her at the end of the semester, however, that it was school policy that one could not pass a semester if one had missed a certain number of days of school. Marissa felt so angry she just never went back.

Since entering the AEL program, Marissa has been nominated for the honor's society, and has been promoted at her job. She hopes to enroll in college and become a teacher. She states, "I have always wanted to become the teacher I never had when I was younger." Marissa's plan to give back to the education system shows that adult education truly changes lives! ■