

SUCCESS STORIES:

Amy L.

Amy L. came into our program in January of 2008; she was married and the mother of 3 children – ages 6, 3 and 1. She was working 50-60 hours a week as an assistant manager at McDonalds. She wanted to do something else with her life and thought that something in the medical field would work for her. She first went through the Certified Nurse's Aide program and finished that program with the highest GPA in her class. She quit McDonalds and worked as a nurse's aide at Timberlane while she continued her education.

She decided to major in Surgical Technology and graduated in August 2012 with her AAS degree. Upon passing her certification exam, she applied for several positions in the area and is now working full time as a Surgical Technician at the Medical Center of South Arkansas.

Romona T.

Romona came in to our program as one of our first Career Pathways participants in 2007. She is single mom of 2 daughters and came to us unemployed and on disability – she is visually impaired. She was active in the program for a year or so and then withdrew from our program due to financial and health reasons.

However, she came back into the program in 2011. At that time she was majoring in Medical Laboratory Science and had just been accepted to the program. She did very well in her program and graduated in 2012 with her Associate of Applied Science degree in MLS; she immediately began work part-time at AHEC as a laboratory technician making \$14.69 per hour. Since then, she is now employed full-time with AHEC, and she has continued her education by working on the general education requirements for her bachelor's in MLS. She now attends UAMS and is working on her online bachelor's degree in MLS with AHEC's assistance. She is no longer on disability or any other assistance.

Timmie S.

When Timmie enrolled in the Career Pathways program in October of 2008, she was working on her GED. She successfully completed that goal, but did not stop there. Timmie had always wanted to be a teacher, so she continued her education here at SouthArk beginning in spring 2009. She majored in education and completed all of her requirements for the 2+2 program here at SouthArk. She not only received her General Studies certificate, she also received her Associate of Arts in Teaching in August 2013. She recently passed her Praxis and will be graduating in May with her bachelor's degree in education. She is a single mom of three children.

James L.

James received his GED in August of 2008 and enrolled in CPI in December of 2008. He had been laid off from the Calion Lumber Company and was on unemployment; he was interested in finding an occupation with more stability. He chose welding and began classes in spring of 2009 at SouthArk as a first-generation college student. He completed his technical certificate with honors in welding in spring of 2010, and he immediately began working for the City of El Dorado at a beginning salary of \$9.55 per hour.

When asked about James, his immediate supervisor made the following comment, "James is an excellent employee. He comes to work every day on time and his attitude toward his job is great. James does every job that he is asked to do and completes it in a timely manner. He will accomplish whatever he decides to do in his future. I cannot ask for a better person to work with in our department."

Gayla W.

Gayla entered the CPI program in August of 2008. She is married, has one child in the home, and is also the proud grandmother of two. She was working at the front desk of the Ashley Inn making minimum wage, but felt that she could do more. She majored in Rad Tech and graduated cum laude in August of 2012 with her associate degree in Radiologic Technology. She worked very hard to get to where she is now, and she is very thankful for the assistance provided by the CPI program. Gayla is pursuing her bachelor's degree in Rad Tech through UAMS and is working with Onsite Imaging as a radiologic technician making \$17.50 per hour.

Bobbie S.

Bobbie S. was an active participant in CPI from April of 2008 to May of 2010. At the time that she was in our program she was a single mom of one son. While here at SouthArk, she was an integral part of the IT department through a work study job; she served as president of Phi Theta Kappa; and she graduated Magna Cum Laude. She transferred after receiving her Associate of Arts degree to South Arkansas University. She continued to work as an instructor for classes in the Community Education department here at SouthArk. She has graduated from SAU with her bachelor's degree and is now enrolled in graduate school majoring in psychology.

Lesley D.

Lesley D. entered the Career Pathways program in May of 2012. She is married and the mother of 2 children and was a first-time college student when she came to SouthArk. She attended classes, took care of her family, and worked for one of the computer instructors as an office aide through the work study program – all while maintaining an excellent GPA. She was inducted into Phi Theta Kappa in the spring of 2013 and graduated with high honors with her Certificate of Proficiency and her Technical Certificate in Administrative Assistant Technology in May of that year.

Lesley actually began working as a legal secretary to a lawyer here in El Dorado in April before she graduated in May, 2013, and she remained in that position for over a year. She next accepted a position as the Administrative Specialist to the Dean of Liberal Arts here at SouthArk. She is thrilled to be working here; she wants to help and encourage students in the same way she was. She plans to continue to take classes as her position allows and work toward her associate degree in Administrative Assistant Technology.

Amy F.

Amy enrolled in Career Pathways in August, 2011. She is married and the mother of 3 daughters who were at the time 19, 15, and 4. She received her GED in 1994, but had never been in college before. She came into our program interested in the Physical Therapy program; however, once in school, she developed a real love for education. Amy's experience at SouthArk convinced her that she wants to teach English; her true desire is to teach adults who need instruction in how to read and write better, and she would love to do that here at SouthArk.

Amy truly excelled in the college atmosphere. She was inducted into Phi Theta Kappa (honor society) and served as both Vice-President and President of this organization. She also served as a student representative on the President's Advisory Committee. She graduated in May 2014 Magna Cum Laude. Amy received the Transfer Scholarship and is currently attending UALR. Her plan is graduate in 2016 with her degree in English Education at that time.

Rebecca W.

Rebecca W. entered our Career Pathways program in August of 2010. She was interested in nursing and began her pre-requisite classes for the LPN program while working fulltime as a CNA at Timberlane making \$8.50 per hour. She not only completed her pre-requisite classes for the Licensed Practical Nursing program, she also began working on the requirements for the Registered Nursing program prior to beginning the LPN program in January of 2012. She received her technical certificate in LPN in December of 2012 and graduated with honors. She also received the Most Diligent Student award chosen by her class instructors.

Rebecca began working at the Medical Center of South Arkansas as an LPN on the 4th floor while finishing her pre-requisite courses for the RN program. She was accepted to the Registered Nursing program here in January of 2014 and graduated in December of 2014 with her AAS degree in Registered Nursing. She is now working as an RN at the Med Center making \$23.00 per hour.

Rebecca is married and the mother of one son. Her work ethic and her ability to get along with others have definitely proven to be assets as she works to meet her goals.

Michael H.

Michael first walked through the doors in spring of 2011 after hearing about CPI from friends. He was 40 years old and a single father of one son – 4 years old. He had never been in college before and had never really considered it a possibility. Michael had worked in various areas of construction all of his adult life. He was good at what he did, but he wanted something more that would allow him to provide better for his son. He had just been laid off from his job and felt that the time was right to begin something new.

By summer of 2011 he was part of CPI and enrolled in nine hours of classes. Michael had to begin with some of the basic studies classes, but worked hard and had an excellent summer; by the fall of 2011 he had begun the pre-requisite classes for the Occupational Therapy Assistant program.

Michael's academic career is outstanding; he began the 4-semester OTA program in summer of 2013 and was inducted into the Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society in spring, 2013. He graduated in December, 2014 with a GPA of 3.13.

Michael completed his fieldwork assignment at Jefferson Regional Medical Center, and he truly feels that he has found his passion. In a recent phone conversation, he told us, "This is the first job that I have ever had where I am excited in the morning about going to work!"

In December, 2014, he walked across the stage to receive his diploma with his associate degree in Occupational Therapy Assistant. In April, 2015, he passed his certification examinations and became a fully credentialed OTA. He is currently in the process of applying for positions in the area. Michael was asked what advice he would give to others considering going to school: "No matter how long it has been since being in school, anything is possible as long as you work hard."