

Good morning.

I am happy to be here to share my life's experiences with you.

In February, 1946, my junior year in high school, there was a big snow storm that lasted several days. We lived 3 miles from the school; and the roads did not get opened until the thaw in the spring. By the time I could get back to school, I was concerned that I wouldn't be able to catch up on my school work. I was overwhelmed by the amount of work, so it seemed easier to not go back. Another consideration ~~that~~ ^{that} was, I was already seriously thinking about marriage, and completing high school didn't seem that important *at that time.*

I got married in July of that same year. My husband and I lived on a farm so I worked with him milking cows, and all the other farm work that needed to be done. Over the years, we had 6 children, 4 boys and 2 girls. Even though Alfred and I had not finished high school, we encouraged and stressed the importance of education to our children. They all finished high school, and 4 of them went on to further education. I didn't think too much about

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my own education during all this time, even though I have always been an avid reader.

In 1972, my husband and I worked in Lisbon at the Dahlgren Bird Seed Company. Ten years later my work there was taken over by machines. At that time, I looked forward to catching up on unfinished things at home - which, of course, never did get done.

In 1985 my husband retired from the seed company and from farming. Everything seemed to be going along well. He worked for farmers in the area, and I just kept going as though nothing would ever change.

3 years later
In February of ~~1988~~ we found out that my husband had Leukemia. He died in July of that year. All of a sudden, everything changed. All of my children were married and on their own, so I lived by myself on the farm. I still thought I was doing okay.

a year later,
In ~~1989~~, I had a chance to get a job, so I had to take the *test* GATB through Job Service. I went back to see how my tests turned out, and the person I talked to, suggested going on for more training in office work, because of my aptitude in that area. I

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thought that was a good idea, because I knew the time would probably come when I wouldn't be able to stand or walk all day on a job. However, I didn't know what my capabilities were, and if I could handle school. Job service gave me 2 phone numbers to call, but I tucked them away in my purse and forgot about them.

Later that year, I went to visit my daughter and family in Coeur d' Alene, Idaho, for the 4th of July. When I got back on July 9, I decided I couldn't just drift along the way I had been. I would have to do something different. That evening, I found those 2 phone numbers in my purse (no one would believe that). My purse is so full after a couple of days, everything is lost. The first phone number I called no one answered. I then called the other number, which was the Fargo Adult Learning Center. The instructor said there was a class that evening at North High, and I should come at 7:30. When I got there, I took a test, and she then suggested that I come to the Learning Center during the day where I could finish my GED faster. She also asked me if I would like to have a job while I was preparing for my GED finals. I was

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traveling 50 miles to get to the Learning Center, so a job would really help with expenses. I was put in touch with the Association of Retired Persons, which is a program to help people like me gain experience on the job.

Within a couple of days, I had a part-time job at the Holiday Inn Gift Shop, and I could attend school every day. With the help of a very supportive staff, I finished taking my tests, and completed my high school equivalency in one month.

I am very impressed with the GED program, and would like to encourage anyone to finish, or get their high school education in this way. The program is also designed so that you can upgrade your skills, in any basic academic area that you feel a need for.

My next step was to enroll in the vocational education's Office Procedure's class, ~~where I learned to type~~. While attending class, I worked part-time at the Small Business Administration in Fargo, as a receptionist, and doing other general office work. As a result of my studies and work experiences, I am now employed at the Ben Franklin store in Wahpeton.

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After I received my GED, I got an invitation to my high school reunion. When I received invitations before, I had never considered attending, but now that I had graduated, I felt welcome. I went to the reunion and had a wonderful time.

Looking back over the past two years, I wouldn't have known where to start, if North Dakota Job Service hadn't encouraged me to further my education at the Adult Learning Center. The program is very flexible and can fit into anyone's schedule.

While I was attending the Fargo Adult Learning Center, I encouraged 2 family members and 3 friends to begin attending also.

Three
~~Two~~ of them have completed their GEDs and one has recently started preparing for the GED tests.

As a matter of fact, when I was called to come speak here, I gave the Fargo Adult Learning Center the names of 3 more friends who want to begin studying.

Going back to school, getting the GED, and completing the Office Procedures course, have altered my life and my outlook. I now look forward with confidence.

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Many people and agencies worked with me to achieve my new
good
status: Job Service, Adult Education, Vocational Education, the
Association of Retired Persons and *All the others that* ~~The Holiday Inn~~ all contributed
to my success. I am grateful that different agencies co-operated
in a joint effort, to secure my future.

Life-long learning should be a commitment by society for
society. I am here today because of the services provided for us,
through all of these important agencies. Our nation needs this
continuing, co-operative commitment, to give people the hope and
confidence needed, to live and compete in our global world.