

LITERACY CENTER

PROMOTING RESEARCH & STUDY OF LITERACY & LANGUAGE

THE EDWARD STEVENS CENTER
FOR THE STUDY AND
DEVELOPMENT OF LITERACY
AND LANGUAGE



Andrea Notestone

Pickaway-Circleville ABLE

Andrea Notestone left high school in tenth grade as a result of years of frustration in the classroom and a lack of support from her family. In the classroom, Andrea needed to hear information more than once – and often felt foolish asking instructors to continually repeat the information. At home, her parents were active addicts with little regard for education and Andrea's future.

Eventually, Andrea married and she and her husband, Michael, moved away from her home state to make a new life in Ohio, near Michael's family. Free from the stress of her family's addiction issues, Andrea began thinking about her own future. Michael had returned to school and completed his EMT training. Andrea decided she would try to complete her high school classes.

"I was scared and nervous about going back to school," Andrea said. "I told Brenda, 'I'm not going to be able to do this.'" Andrea admitted that she really had to overcome her fear of failure and low self-esteem in order to persevere towards her goal. Brenda McMahon was Andrea's GED teacher at the Laurelville location for the Pickaway ABLE program. The program met two evenings a week in the local school cafeteria. Andrea thought that Brenda was a good teacher. "She was patient and encouraged me to ask questions. She made me feel comfortable." With support from her husband and God, Andrea was able to complete her GED and graduated in May, 2009.

The story doesn't end there, however. Inspired by her success at the ABLE program, Andrea enrolled at Ohio Christian University where she is pursuing a two-year degree in Christian Ministry. She plans to pursue a four year degree in Substance Abuse Counseling and would eventually like to work with youth facing the same challenges she did while growing up.

When asked what advice Andrea would give to other folks who are contemplating going back to school, she said, "I thought I wasn't smart. I found out that learning is different when you're older and its more important. If you really want it, you will be able to do it. I feel more independent. I was so dependent on everyone. I got my [driver's] license! I'm caring for my own child! I can really live life without depending on anything or anybody. Through Jesus Christ, you can do anything!"

*"If you really
want it, you
will be able
to do it.
I feel more
independent!"*

Student Success • October 2009

