

CAREER PATHWAYS SUCCESS STORIES

MARIA P.

CPI first met Maria and her two beautiful daughters at one of SouthArk's Hispanic outreach efforts in the fall of 2014. Maria always wanted to go to college, but she never felt the time was right. However, within a few weeks of the event she was in our offices beginning the process of applying for SouthArk and CPI, and she began her college career in the spring semester of 2015.

Maria originally majored in nursing and worked on pre-requisite classes for both the LPN and RN program. She proved to be an excellent student with a great work ethic.

Maria eventually decided to look at the Surgical Technology program instead of nursing, and she was accepted into the Surg Tech program in Fall, 2018. She truly found her niche in Surg Tech. The director of the program said that she had never had someone catch on so quickly and be so excited! Maria completed the Surg Tech program in early August, 2019, with a 4.0 GPA in the program and was chosen as the Outstanding Student in the Surgical Technology program. Maria passed her certification exam and began working at the Medical Center of South Arkansas as a surgical technician.

When asked for advice for others, Maria wrote, "Never give up! Don't be too proud to seek help or receive assistance. There are some good spirited people who live to help others."

ROBIN R.

Robin R. enrolled in Career Pathways in March of 2019. She was a single mother of 2 children. At the time of enrollment, she was completing her pre-requisite classes for the Occupational Therapy Assistant program and earned her Pre-Health Science Technical Certificate in May, 2019. She was accepted into the OTA program and began classwork the 2019 summer semester.

Robin excelled in the OTA program and completed the program with a 4.0 GPA. She graduated Magna Cum Laude in December of 2020 with her Associate of Applied Science in Occupational Therapy Assistant. She passed her boards and is now working in her chosen profession. When asked for any advice she would like to pass on to others, Robin wrote, "Sometimes it helps to just look at the immediate goal – finishing the paper or passing the class – rather than focusing on how long or hard the end goal is. The small steps lead to the big goal. The main thing is never give up and keep working. Remember your children are watching and celebrating your achievement with you."

ASHLEY L.

Ashley L. first entered the CPI program here at SouthArk in October, 2014. She had attended college in the past, but personal issues prevented her from reaching her education goals at that time. When she came in to our offices, she had decided to major in nursing.

Once Ashley had completed the pre-requisite classes for both Licensed Practical Nursing and Registered Nursing, she entered the LPN program in summer of 2017, and graduated with honors from that program in May, 2018. After working for a short while, she applied for and got into the ARNEC RN program here at SouthArk. She began that program in January, 2019, and she completed her Associate of Applied Science in Registered Nursing degree with honors in December, 2019. Ashley completed the entire registered nursing program while working full-time as a LPN.

Ashley's future plans are to attend a 4-year school to complete her bachelor's in nursing. She is working full time as a Registered Nurse in pediatric care. Ashley and her husband now have 2 daughters, and she wants them to understand the power of education and the importance of working toward achieving their dreams.

When asked how CPI assisted her in achieving her goals, Ashley answered, "They helped financially, emotionally, and encouraged me to set and reach each of my goals."

When asked for advice for others, Ashley wrote, "Don't quit! With the right guidance and attitude you can reach your goals!"

PENNY M.

Penny M. first came to Career Pathways back in September of 2016 as a single mother of a 7-month-old daughter. She was working part-time at McDonalds and was looking for a career in law enforcement.

Penny worked hard in school and continued to work at McDonalds all through her college journey. She graduated with her Associate of Applied Science in Criminal Justice in December, 2019, but continued to take classes toward her Associate of Arts degree so she could transfer to SAU to continue her education in criminal justice.

However, Penny no longer works at McDonalds; she was sworn in as a police officer and works for the citizens of El Dorado now. Penny's advice to others is "to see what help is available to you and then use it to get the education that you need." She is very appreciative of all CPI has done for her and encourages others to take advantage of the CPI program.

KRISTERICA S.

Kristerica S. first applied to CPI for assistance in January of 2010; however, due to personal circumstances, she withdrew from CPI in December of that year. She did come back to CPI in August, 2018, and became the epitome of a successful CPI student. She is a single mother of 2 sons, and she has always worked hard to show her sons the importance of education. She not only attended college full-time and cared for her sons, she also worked full-time as an administrative assistant to the high school principal at Strong High School.

Kristerica completed her Associate of Applied Science degree in General Business and her Technical Certificate in Accounting in December of 2020. She had already completed her Certificate of General Studies in May, 2019, and her Technical Certificate in General Business in May, 2020. She completed her Associate of Arts degree in May 2021, and plans to transfer to Southern Arkansas University to complete her bachelor's degree. She continues her position at Strong High School. Kristerica's advice to others is, "Stay positive and look for ways to achieve your goals. There are people and programs that can help you."

KYLA D.

Kyla D. was a single mother with 2 children in her home – a 15-year-old daughter and a 2-year-old son – and a son in college at the University of Arkansas in Fayetteville – when she came to CPI. She was interested in majoring in General Business Administration. She immediately got all of her paperwork and documentation turned in and began working on the employability requirement and our CPI orientation. Her goal was to have all the CPI requirements completed so that she could get assistance for the 2017 spring semester.

She began her spring semester in 2017 taking a full load of business and accounting classes and had a very successful semester with all As. She continued this trend and received her Technical Certificate in General Business Administration at the end of the summer semester in 2018. Kyla graduated from South Arkansas Community College with her Technical Certificate in Accounting and her Associate of Applied Science in General Business Administration in May, 2019.

After graduation, Kyla was employed in a couple of different positions. However, she decided to apply to SouthArk when a position in Student Services opened. She was successful and is working here at SouthArk as a financial aid analyst. Kyla is excited about her new position and is pursuing her 4-year degree while working.

TIFFANY W.

Tiffany W. enrolled in Career Pathways in September of 2018. She majored in General Business Administration, and her plans at the time she enrolled were to get her Associate of Applied Science in General Business and then finish her Associate of Arts degree so that she could transfer to SAU in Magnolia and complete her bachelor's degree there. She is a single mother of two sons, and she is determined to achieve her educational goals so that her sons can see what determination and hard work can do.

Tiffany graduated with her AAS in General Business, her Technical Certificate in General Business, and her Technical Certificate in Accounting in December of 2019. She graduated in July, 2020, with her Associate of Arts degree and her Certificate of General Studies. She is currently enrolled at SAU and taking online classes while working here at SouthArk in the Testing Center as "extra help". She continues to demonstrate her determination and her work ethic each and every day.

When asked for advice to share with others, Tiffany said, "Identify your goal and keep it in front of you as you work toward it. Your hard work will pay off."