

Profiles of Hope



Dawn Sanford was a single mother of two young children when she made the decision to leave an abusive marriage and start over. She was scared and defeated, and daunted by the challenges she faced once she was on her own. Dawn had no college degree, a part-time minimum wage job and vague dreams of working in the field of law. She approached Project Self-Sufficiency and immediately felt welcome.

Dawn discussed her short and long-term goals with her case manager and discovered that going through a divorce had reawakened a dormant interest in pursuing a career in the field of law. However, she lacked computer skills and confidence. Dawn immediately registered for every computer class offered at Project Self-Sufficiency, and worked her way through an introductory computer skills course, as well as classes in Microsoft Word, Excel and Power Point. Through the Higher Opportunities for Women program, Dawn obtained an externship at the Sussex County courthouse.

Dawn knew that the only way she could become employed within a court setting was to go to college. She enrolled at Sussex County Community College and simultaneously applied to take the Civil Service exam. She graduated from SCCC on the Dean's List and as a member of Phi Theta Kappa, with a High Honors Associates Degree in Criminal Justice. Dawn achieved these remarkable milestones while holding down an early morning job delivering newspapers and interning at the Prosecutor's office. Six weeks before she graduated, Dawn was offered a job at the Sussex County Courthouse.

"Without the support and encouragement I received from Project Self-Sufficiency, I would have accomplished none of what I have. Their support has changed my life, and changed the lives of my children as well."

Dawn Sanford
46
2 children

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