

Profiles of Hope



Maxine Swentzel dropped out of high school when she was 15 years old. Although she obtained her GED at the age of 18, Maxine was fearful about taking the college entrance exam, so she never attempted to pursue an advanced degree. She married and had three children, managing to hold down part-time jobs all the while. Her fear of failure kept her from fully participating in her family's financial situation, causing overwhelming tension in her marriage. Five years ago, Maxine saw an article in the newspaper about computer classes at Project Self-Sufficiency. She picked up the phone and changed her life.

After meeting with a case manager, Maxine was persuaded to enter Project Self-Sufficiency's Higher Opportunities for Women program. From there, she moved into the Campus to Campus program and started taking classes at Sussex County Community College. She is now certified as a medical assistant. She has dreams of becoming a nurse one day. In the meantime, she is pursuing an Associate's Degree in Health Sciences at SCCC. She has a part-time job, with benefits, in a physician's office. She has also started the process of getting a divorce.

Maxine notes that making that initial phone call to Project Self-Sufficiency was one of the toughest decisions she had ever made. But, she adds quickly, that phone call was the beginning of every positive change she has made since then. She recommends Project Self-Sufficiency frequently, "The HOW program helps women to get the necessary skills they need to get back into the workforce. My fear of failure kept me out of school for so long and that first step changed my life. It just takes a phone call and the rest can be history."

Maxine Swentzel

54

3 children

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