



Head Start Program Success Story La Crescent- Hokah Head Start

My Head Start Story

By: April Wright

Eight years ago I found out that I was pregnant and I was only 20-years-old. As a kid still myself I had no idea what I was going to do. All I knew was that in 9 months I was going to have a baby and I needed to grow up fast! April 1, 2006 at 21-years-old and working at a hotel I gave birth to a beautiful little girl. Fast-forward 18 months from that date and I had a second child. Raising two children by the time I was 22-years-old I knew that I wanted a future for them and I knew that to do that I needed to change my future.

As a child I came from a low-income family who lived off the county and the state to survive. I wanted more than that for my family. I wanted them to be proud of me, and I wanted them to never have to be embarrassed about getting food stamps from the county, about having to go to the food shelf because we still didn't have enough money to buy groceries, or about the fact that they had medical assistance. I knew that I was the only person that could make this change for my family.

In 2010, my first child was ready for Head Start and at that time I felt it was the perfect opportunity to better not only myself, but my kid's lives as well. My oldest daughter got the privilege of attending the Hokah Head Start and I was headed off to my first day at college. That's right, at 24-years-old I decided that I needed to go back to college and get a degree so that I am able to provide for my family and they will not be embarrassed to get help. My daughter attended the Head Start program for

two years and during that two years I plugged along at my college career. I am now 28-years-old with three children and still a full time student at Winona State University.

I have helped out my community in so many ways to help pay back all the help that I have received while going to school and bettering not only my life, but also my children's lives. One of the ways that I have helped out my community was I volunteered to sit on the Policy Council for Semcac Head Start as secretary for two years. Another way I have helped out my community is that I have volunteered my time to the Applefest organization in La Crescent, Minnesota. I am now serving another year on the Applefest board and I will be holding the position of treasurer this year. I have also volunteered my time for the past two years at the United Methodist Church teaching 3rd and 4th grade Sunday school. All of these opportunities that I have had to volunteer in my community has given me an opportunity to feel like I have paid back the state and my county for the help and the support that they have given to me. Without my community's help and support I would not be able to accomplish my goal of obtaining a teaching degree from Winona State University. I will graduate with my degree on December 2014 with a Bachelor's degree in Elementary Education and a minor in middle level mathematics. No matter how much I volunteer in my community the appreciation and the gratitude I have for the support, emotionally and physically, will never be enough.