

Why get the GED?

Like many teenagers, Gary didn't finish high school for a variety of reasons. He was bullied and beaten up by the football players at his school. The principal would call him into the office and yell at him. His self-esteem was very low.

When 55-year old Gary lost his job he decided it was the perfect time to pursue his General Educational Development (GED). His schooling would be paid for and he had time to study.

"When I was young I didn't see the correlation of success and hard work. When you are out there for 30 years you see what you need in life and education is one of those things. If what you do is going to stand for something you have to work for it."



Gary Walter

Gary's work paid off. He completed his GED and proudly owns his high school equivalency diploma.

"The only way someone can fail the GED classes is to quit coming."

*- John Wagner
Iowa Valley Grinnell
GED instructor*



Lucero Solis

"It is very important to be able to communicate and speak English in my community," says Lucero, a student at the ETC. "That's one of my biggest challenges. I need to be able to help my children and to help me get a better job and for my personal growth."

Lucero is now taking intermediate English. She took the pre-certified nurse aide (CNA) course and is now enrolled in the CNA classes. Her next goals are to complete her General Educational Development (GED) high school equivalency and to learn to use

computers. She puts everything she is learning to work in her community. Lucero loves to help people in her church, at cultural events, and at the ETC.

"More education is better for everyone. We need to use all opportunities. If you want (something), you will (do it)! I used to feel I was too old to learn but now I know I can do it and I will do it!"

Lucero wishes more people would take advantage of the ETC classes. "If they don't take advantage of these classes now, in the future they will say they should have done it sooner."

For more information:

Marshalltown

Iowa Valley Education & Training Center
106 E. Church St.
Marshalltown
641-754-1348

Iowa Falls

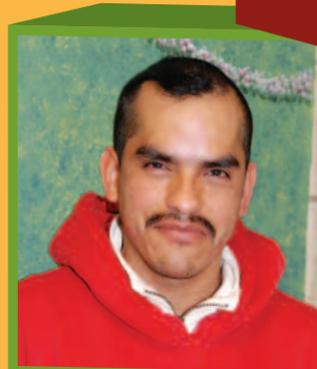
McClure Hall, Room 103
Ellsworth Community College, 1100 College Ave.
Iowa Falls
Sherilyn Hitch
641-648-4611, ext. 8644

Other Communities

Contact:
Sandy Supianoski
641-844-5780 or
1-800-284-4823 or
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Success Stories

Adult Literacy Program



IOWA VALLEY
CONTINUING EDUCATION
Iowa Valley Community College District

What is General Educational Development - GED?

GED Tests provide adults who did not complete a formal high school program the opportunity to certify their attainment of high school-level academic knowledge and skills.

The GED Tests cover five areas:

- Language Arts, Reading
- Language Arts, Writing
- Mathematics
- Science
- Social Studies



Martha Navarro

With four children and a full-time job, Martha told herself she didn't have time to take ESL classes at the Education & Training Center. "For 10 years I worked a very hard job. Now I think, why didn't I take advantage of the classes back then, even if I was tired," says Martha. "I realize now how important English and education are in this country. I need to be able to help my children in school and to get a better job."

Martha started with the ESL classes then began working on her Spanish GED. She recently completed her CNA training. Her next goal is to complete her GED so she can then pursue a degree in nursing at the community college. She already has the people skills she will need in health care. She is active in the Hispanic community, encouraging others to get involved, and finding ways to help her community.

"I'm learning and working toward a better job in this community in the future."

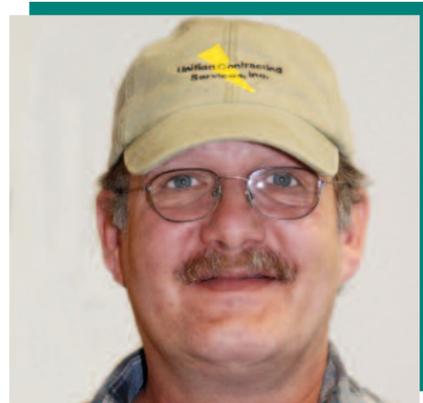
Roger says he may hold the record for the number of times he started working on his GED and then quit. But this time he is determined to complete his diploma with the help he gets at Iowa Valley's Education & Training Center in downtown Marshalltown.

"I wish I hadn't waited so long. I've been out of school for 30 years."

"I want to be here now, that makes the biggest difference. I've learned from experience, just like giving up drugs, you have to want to stop or you are wasting everybody's time. It's the same here; you have to want to learn. And I want to do it."

"I've worked at this so long and so hard; I just can't describe in words how it feels to succeed."

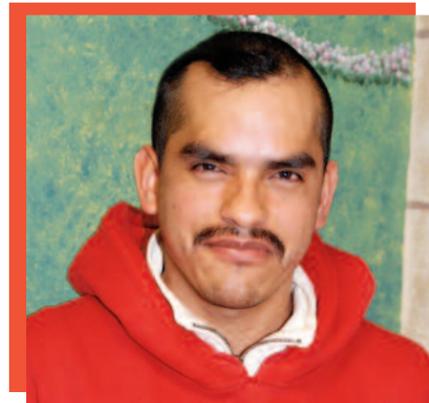
"I like to help others. It gives me a good feeling to help someone else learn or understand. I tell others, don't feel bad if it is hard; it's not just you. When I help someone else, it helps me learn, too. Now if I get frustrated, instead of quitting I switch to another book and then go back to what was hard at another time"



Roger Waltemeyer

- **When a student moves from one level to another they earn a Basic Skills Certificate. From July 2007-June 2008, 313 basic skills certificates were awarded to students within Iowa Valley Community College District.**

- **Working age adults with college degrees earn twice as much in a lifetime as someone with a high school diploma.**
- **During 2008, 158 adults passed the five GED tests and earned high school equivalency diplomas.**



Francisco Juarez

Francisco came to the U.S. six years ago from Villachuato, Mexico. He spent time in Marshalltown then went to Minnesota for three months where he searched for a place to learn English. He found a class offered - one hour a week and wondered why he didn't take advantage of the classes at the ETC in Marshalltown. When he got back to Marshalltown that's exactly what he did.

"I would try to say something that others didn't understand, so I came to improve. I'm not the best student, but little by little the classes are making a big difference. I'm learning so much here - not only English, but about this country. This is the first time I've ever been to school. There are such great people here to help you."

Francisco knows that to learn you need to keep coming and using what you learn. "I encourage others to come to the ETC. If you think you can't do it, you'll see that if you really want something you can do it!"

What is Adult Literacy Education?

Adult Literacy is an education program serving adults, 16 years of age and older, who are functioning below the high school completion level with emphasis on Reading, Math and English skills. Adult literacy educators work with each adult student to design an individual learning plan that responds to the student's needs and goals such as:

- To get a job
- To help their children with homework and be successful in school
- To get off welfare and achieve a good family income
- To learn the English language, understand US culture, and participate in society
- To complete high school or obtain a GED
- To attend post secondary or other training and education programs

- **Adult Literacy Programs play a role in the success of many national initiatives, including job training, keeping our nation competitive, improving the academic achievement of our nation's children.**

- **GED Credentials are issued by the State of Iowa**

- **Iowa has a GED pass rate of 99%, the highest in the nation!**

- **Iowa adult literacy programs are delivered through the state's 15 community colleges.**

- **Last year, literacy students participated in 158,000 hours of instruction.**

- **Classes are offered in Iowa Falls, Eldora, Tama, Grinnell and Marshalltown.**
- **Nearly all colleges and universities accept the GED**
- **Most companies accept a GED credential in place of a high school diploma.**

Nearly 15 years ago Becky left behind drugs, alcohol and homelessness and turned her life around. Last September she decided it was time to get her high school diploma through the GED program at Iowa Valley Continuing Education in Iowa Falls.

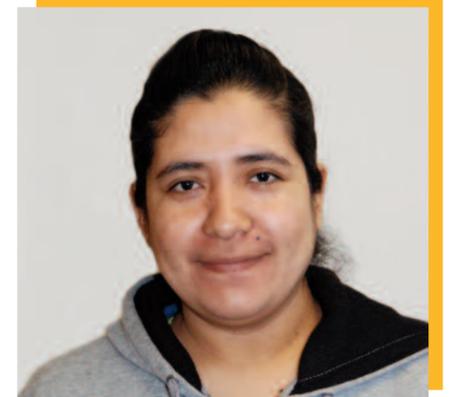
"I went to see the instructor, and she told me I'd already done the hardest part - coming in to class. The classroom was warm and inviting and she was wonderful. She encouraged me constantly. That made the biggest difference to me. If I'd had teachers like her when I was in junior high, I would have made it (to graduation)."

Becky wasn't satisfied with getting her GED. She wants to give something back to her community so she took a certified nurse aide course and plans to pursue a nursing degree at Ellsworth Community College.

Earning a GED opened the door to a better future for Becky.



Becky Wallace



Guadalupe Maldonado

Guadalupe's two children are her greatest encouragement to learn English and to improve. Even though it was very scary to go to the Education & Training Center (ETC) in Marshalltown the first time, Guadalupe knew it was the place to find the help she needed.

She enrolled in English as a Second Language (ESL) and before long joined the Family Literacy group, took a sewing class, enjoyed the cook-n-eat classes, and enrolled her children in 4-H Club - all at the ETC.

"When we moved to Marshalltown I wanted to help my children learn the English language. I wanted to be able to communicate without interpreters. If I can't help my children with their homework, who will? It was very difficult when I had to tell them that I couldn't help."

- **Individuals with a high school diploma/GED are more likely to own a home than high school dropouts.**

- **Over a working-age lifetime, someone with a high school diploma/GED will earn over \$300,000 more than a high school dropout.**