

Achieving an Education

by Ross Sinks

I am a GED graduate. I would like to share with you how I went about graduating from the Adult Education Program. As with anything important in life, there were sacrifices to be made and obstacles to overcome. But I made it and so can you. Here is what I experienced in earning my diploma.

When I first decided to attend the Adult Education Program I was a high school dropout. I just could not get along in public schools. So I dropped out. For the next year I hunted and fished every day. Then I realized that in order to get a decent job, I had to have a diploma. I checked out the local Adult Education Program and decided to enroll. I knew I would be giving up a lot of my independence but I felt I had to do it.

At first it was a struggle, giving up my hobbies of my own free will in order to get an education, but that was a sacrifice I realized I needed to make. Soon after enrollment, I discovered I liked the program and was learning a lot. The teachers were very nice and always willing to help anyone who asked. Still, even

though I knew it was important, there were days I would wake up not wanting to go to class, just wanting to skip to hunt or fish. I hung in there and, with the help of my teachers, graduated with my GED.

After graduation, I wondered, what now? I really didn't want to spend a few more years of my life going to college because I never was big on school, but I wanted a good job so I decided to go ahead and continue with my education. I applied for a grant and registered for school. When I registered, I was scared that I wasn't good enough because I only had a GED under my belt. I blocked that thought out and tried anyway. It's like my dad always said, "It is better to try and not succeed than not try at all." To my surprise, I am doing well. I am in the Electromechanical Technology - Industrial Controls program preparing for a job in maintenance for Georgia Pacific Corporation.

Now that I have completed the Adult Education Program, received my GED, and am enrolled at UAM College of Technology - Crossett, I look back and think about things I gave up and realize that it was worth every bit of it. I would encourage anyone who thinks they aren't smart enough or who just doesn't want to try for whatever reason, TRY IT! You might find you like it and that an education is a good thing to have. But do it for yourself, and don't let anyone bring you down. You can succeed! I am!

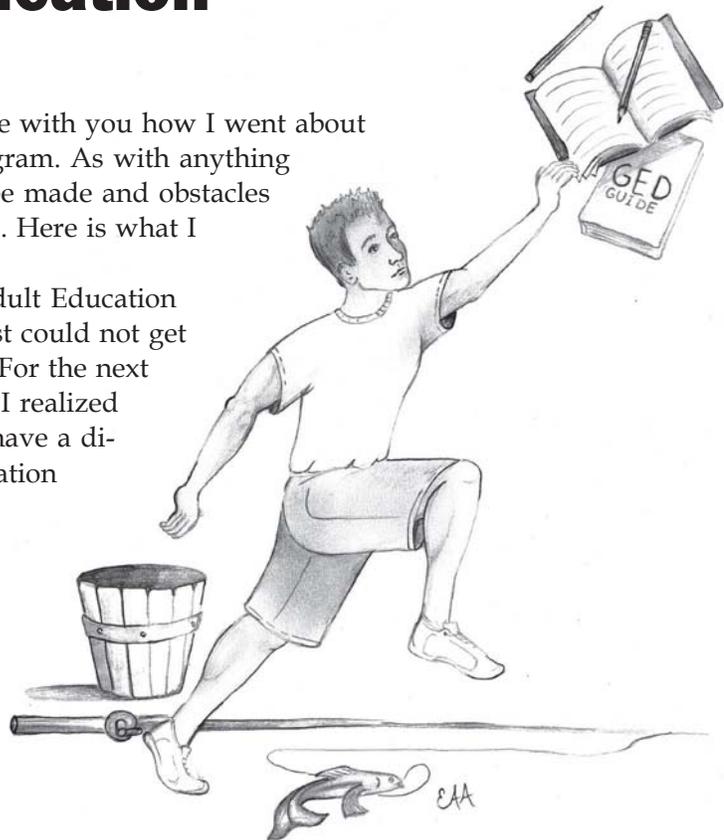


Illustration by Beth Ammons

Ross Sinks is 18 years old and an avid hunter and fisherman. He lives in Arkansas.