

SSS Grad Helps Others Find Path to Success

As a single mother caring for a six-year-old daughter and ten-year-old twins, Sheila Cole Conner realized she needed to make herself more marketable so she could support her family, so she enrolled at Southwestern. “When I enrolled in and completed Southwestern’s Certified Nursing Assistant program I decided to continue



Sheila Cole Conner attending her son's graduation from Southwestern during the spring semester.

on to earn an associate degree.” Having been out of school for several years she realized she would need assistance in nearly all of her classes. “Although the instructors were very helpful, especially Mary Bradley, I needed something extra.” Sheila was referred to the Student Support Services program that coordinated free tutoring services for SCC and eventually after much encouragement from SSS advisor and tutor program coordinator Laurie Butler she became a tutor. “I became the one helping other students achieve their goals. “Laurie’s smiling face and positive attitude was always welcoming and helpful to me.” “SSS

always has an open door policy and are willing to answer any questions that you have. They present free scholarship workshops, as well as outdoor and cultural enrichment activities.”

After completing an Associate in Arts Degree Sheila transferred to Western Carolina University and graduated Summa Cum Laude with a Bachelor of Social Work Degree. Currently she is employed at the NC Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) located in Sylva as a Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor for Macon County residents. "Our program works with individuals who have disabilities or impairments; which may cause an impediment to employment. We attempt to help them have a successful transition to job placement. The inspiration I receive from seeing a positive outcome of our clients working at a job is absolutely rewarding.”

ADVICE FOR STUDENTS

Sheila suggests students always have a backup plan and to not give up if they have to stop taking classes because of life events. “You can always return later and finish.” She recommends volunteering in the field of interest before starting a degree to help ensure that it will be a rewarding fit. Sheila also believes that practicing good time management, not over committing, and always asking for help when needed are critical to be successful as a student.

“Student Support Services is a huge reason I was able to be successful at SCC. I would encourage anyone considering going back to school to choose SCC and take full advantage of Student Support Services.” One person she encouraged was her son who graduated from Southwestern during the spring semester.

Double your chance
of graduating!

Student Support Services participants graduate at twice the rate of the general student body at SCC.

Services Include:

- Academic Co-Advising
- Financial Literacy & Scholarship Workshops
- Tutoring
- Transfer Initiatives
- Supplemental Grant Aid
- Academic, Personal and Career Counseling
- Volunteer & Civic Involvement
- Cultural Enrichment
- Resource Loan Program
- Referral Service

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SERVICES