

Student Stories: Christine Lynch

[MUSIC PLAYING]

CHRISTINE LYNCH: This program has been an amazing gift, in my opinion, to me. To be able to work full-time, raise a family, and get my degree finally at 40 was amazing.

CHRISTINE'S DAD: As a dad, I got to say she inherited my gene. Her children have learned a lot through this, also. This isn't just something for her. The whole family has learned.

CHRISTINE LYNCH: Well, I would say for my children to be able to see that hard work pays off and that even though I took a break from obtaining a degree, I was still able to do it, they learned how to study right along with me. We would all be doing homework together at the table. Mom would be doing hers. The kids would be doing theirs. They learned what it means to have a goal, set it, make milestones, and actually achieve it.

CHRISTINE'S DAD: You think as you raise kids, you don't know if you've done the right thing or not until you see the lessons that they pass on to their children. It's OK to start on something and it's OK to take a break. But go back and finish what you started.

CHRISTINE LYNCH: Well, I had started my degree right after I graduated from high school, just like most kids do. I went to Tacoma Community College, got my two-year degree, was funding it with myself and my parents' support, went on to the University of Washington in Tacoma, funded that same way, working hard, working full-time, and I literally ran out of money and took a break. And once I got into the career path that I'm in now, my boss really encouraged me to go back and finish so that I could have a promotion at my job.

I am a director at a drug and alcohol treatment center in Olalla. It's called Olalla Recovery Centers. I already received the promotion and I'm in line for the next promotion, which would actually be to be the general manager of the company.

CHRISTINE'S DAD: What I really, really hope is I hope that Nicholas and Olivia see that instead of waiting until you're 40 to get your degree, that they get their degree before they're 30 so that they'll have an added 10 years to develop their careers.

CHRISTINE LYNCH: Highly recommended-- I tell everybody I know the best way to get a degree is online, if you can't go sit in a university. If you're 18, go sit in a university. I think you need the discipline. If you're a working person like myself or raising a family, definitely the way to go. You'll get it done and you'll get it done well. You'll actually probably, I think, do better because you set your own schedule. When I researched, I wanted an accredited school, a real school that had buildings and walls and real people and this was it.

CHRISTINE'S DAD: As a father, I would like to see her go on and get a couple more degrees.