



Adult Education Connection
By Karen Gent

Does this face look familiar? You may have recently spotted Bethany Williams on a billboard or on a T.V. commercial emphasizing the value of the GED credential. Ms. Williams notes, “The 19th century English philosopher, Herbert Spencer, wrote, ‘The great aim of education is not knowledge but action.’ Taking the GED means taking action.”

Bethany Williams, of Lebanon, Virginia, was educated through home-schooling. Before entering college, she earned her high school credential by passing the GED tests. Bethany relates that she prepared to take the tests by familiarizing herself with GED material and by taking the Official GED Practice Tests to see what would be expected of her. She emphasizes, “The GED opened doors for me because I took action and took the tests. That’s all I needed to get into school and get on with my career.”

Bethany then enrolled at Virginia Highlands Community College where she completed two years of general studies with a focus in English. Bethany was inspired to study English by her love of literature and by some great English instructors at the college. The next step for Bethany was transferring to Radford University where she continued her studies in English and graduated with a Bachelor of Science Degree in English Education.

Ms. Williams now teaches English at Honaker High School. She says, “Many people believe that the GED is for quitters who just couldn’t finish high school, but the GED is not for quitters. It is for people who are ready to take control of their lives, their education, and their careers.”

When asked what she believes contributes to the high drop-out rate, Ms. Williams responded by saying, “Young people are dealing with more than they should be, and education often comes in second place. They get behind and feel like they can’t catch up.” As an educator, Williams feels strongly that no teacher wants anyone to quit school, and says that if a student will simply ask for help, most teachers will do whatever they can to help that student succeed.

Regarding those who have dropped out of high school, Ms. Williams says, “For some people, getting the GED will be hard work and time consuming; for others, it will be an easy task they will be able to quickly complete. Whatever the amount of work, time, or ability, the outcome will be the same- a ticket to a better life where people can have more control and dream bigger dreams. If education is action, then the GED is the starting line.”

If you’re ready to take action and prepare to take the GED tests, call Southwest Regional Adult Education at 889-5424 or 1-866-581-9935. To register for GED testing in the four-county region, contact Joyce Presley at the Buchanan County School Board Office at 935-4551, Cindy Stanley at the Dickenson County Career Center at 835-9384, Glenda Breeding at the Russell County School Board Office at 889-6507, or Toni Tester at the Tazewell County Career & Technology Center at 988-6037. You must register prior to the testing date.