



Adult Education Connection  
By Karen Gent

Jim Hill, of Lebanon, Virginia, says that when he was young, he thought he knew everything, but he says he came to the realization that he didn't know as much as he thought he did. Due in part to some rebellious behavior and the negative influence of some of his friends, Jim decided to drop out of high school and join the workforce. He later regretted making that choice.

Jim now says, "Education is very important in the workplace. Without it, you're going to be working for minimum wage or whatever you can get. You won't get anywhere." That's why Jim agreed to appear on a billboard emphasizing that education works and the importance of the GED credential. Jim is currently employed at Discount Tire in Lebanon.

Last year, Jim decided to try to complete his high school education by earning his GED. He began attending an evening GED preparation class taught by Vivian Smith, which he found to be a very positive experience. He wondered at first if he would be able to accomplish his goal, but after attending the class for a while, he soon realized that he still had the ability to learn and even had fun in the process.

Jim says that the instructor created a relaxed, enjoyable atmosphere in the classroom. He was able to make new friends and learn with others. The members of the class would prepare together and then go to the testing center together to take the tests.

He says that with this kind of support, he didn't feel alone in the task.

It was Jim's wife who inspired him to continue his education and stick with it. He also had encouragement from friends Steven and Susan Lester.

After several months of preparation, Jim successfully passed the complete battery of tests to earn his GED credential. He says that he was "overjoyed" to accomplish this goal. He even missed going to class after he had completed the program. He believes that having a good teacher made it possible for him. Jim now feels that one is never too old to learn. He knows that other opportunities are available to him, such as attending college, if he chooses to pursue them. In conclusion, Jim says, "I finished something I should have finished to start with."

If you didn't finish high school and need to improve your employment status, call Southwest Regional Adult Education at 889-5424 or 1-866-581-9935 for information about earning a GED certificate. The GED is the stepping stone to new opportunities in the workplace.

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.