

This story was filmed and recorded during early February 2006 for ‘Hear all about it!’

This campaign is a wonderful selection of inspiring adult learning stories told by the learners themselves. The highlights from Amanda’s interview which can be watched and read; this is the transcript of the whole interview. The on-line learning champions would be delighted if Her stories were used to promote learning in your organisation, college or charity. You can link you webpage to the West Midlands Learning Directory – Hear all about it! page www.wmld.org/pages/hear_all_about_it/.



Amanda’s story –

“I’m working part time at the weekend, I work outside in the week as an outdoor plants assistant I am also studying part time at Solihull College during the week.

At school I got pretty average results, so I left and have worked full time since then until last year when I lost my job. So I needed to do something so that’s why I wanted to do something completely different. And the job I wanted to do, was hoping to go into the teaching working as a classroom assistant. And I needed to get to further qualifications really. The grades that I had weren’t enough, so that’s why.

I needed the qualifications for the job, the career that I wanted. The qualifications that I had just weren’t enough and it’d been such a long time since I’d been in a learning environment.

I’m studying adult literacy and numeracy at the moment at Solihull College. In numeracy it’s basic Maths up to Level 2, which is equivalent to GCSE. And Literacy, that’s also just Basic English, also up to Level 2. I wasn’t worried about going back, I think I was more excited than anything. I knew I’d probably be the oldest person there, but I wasn’t so worried about that as I’m usually the oldest anyway. I still enjoy it. It’s nice to mix with other people.

The people I usually meet there, I sort of meet them there and that’s it. Even though we get on, we don’t really socialise. At the moment I’m on a Classroom Assistant course, so it’s working towards that, and hopefully next year move on to the Teachers assistant course and that’s when I’ll need Level 2 in both Literacy and Numeracy.

I think I just need to do something completely different to factory work and I like the idea of working in school with children. In a few years time I’d like to see myself working in a school as a teacher’s assistant.

Before when I used to go to work, I’d just go to work day in and day out and it just felt really boring and monotonous. And I feel like I’m working towards something now, something a bit better and rewarding.

My family are very supportive. When I lost my job, I didn’t know what to do, and my daughter came home from school with a letter about a part time course for a classroom assistant and it hadn’t even occurred to me. And so I went on the taster course and I realised that I needed to improve my

qualifications. And that's when I searched and found the course at Solihull College and enrolled on the numeracy and literacy course. When I lost my job I wasn't too upset, but I was hoping to do something because I was in such a rut and so it was a blessing in disguise really, otherwise I'd still be there working away in factory and I'm not. So I feel it is positive and a move forward."

This project was managed by jo.knight@niace.org.uk - who can be contracted for more information. She works for NIACE (National Institute of Adult Continuing Education). Birmingham and Solihull Learning and Skills Council funded the project.

