

## **Hope Restored**

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When I started the enrollment process at IVCC, I had no idea that my life would actually be changed. I was at my lowest point when I submitted my application in 2019. I was a newly divorced mother of five, the owner of a tiny trucking company now without its sole driver. For the past 11 years, my world had been defined by my role as wife and mother. I was proud of that role. I had earned it, and then suddenly, it was as if I was approaching a dead-end street without a GPS signal. I felt defeated, like a failure. The life I had worked dutifully on for years was fractured. I felt hopeless.

I was unsure of how much I would be able to accomplish with a high school diploma issued 14 years ago, limited employment history, and a struggling small business. I had lost a part of myself while growing our family. Bits and pieces of who I once was had become obscured in the daily operation of motherhood. My goals were marginalized to make room for my husband's. I was terrified at the notion of starting over, yet I knew that moving forward was the only way back to the real me -- the person with hopes and dreams beyond the title of wife or mother.

Acceptance into IVCC did just that. It reignited a spark of hope in me that I hadn't felt in years. Walking through the glass doors on campus to meet my counselor and choose classes for my first semester, filled me with certainty and determination, and I knew I was making the right choice.

Everybody that I have met, from the instructors, and advisors, to the security guards that directed me to the bookstore, have been kind, caring, and helpful. Becoming a student at IVCC has changed my life immeasurably in a mere matter of months. It has restored my sense of purpose and with that, my self-worth. IVCC has placed me on a path that is lined with attainable goals that will help shape my future and ensure my success.

Enrollment at IVCC offers me an abundance of opportunities and all of the necessary guidance and encouragement to thrive. I know I am in the infancy of my earning my degree; however, I have never felt more driven or confident in my own ability to create a better life for my children and myself. IVCC has given me that confidence back. It has become the catalyst for my reclaimed hope.

Knowing that I have an entire school behind me, aiding in and supporting my decision to redirect the course of my life is overwhelming. IVCC is the cornerstone of my new journey. It has offered me a second chance at life, and all it asks in return is that I flourish. My story is nowhere near finished, but I know that because of IVCC these next chapters are going to be some of the best ones yet.

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