

Taniesha Knott's Graduation Speech

Good evening. I am Taniesha Knott and I want you to know my story. It is, in many ways, similar to the stories of other students. There are many reasons people don't finish high school. Whatever the reason, the East End Adult Education Center, part of Aspire, is there to help us get back what we lost...a high school education.

I didn't finish high school because I got pregnant at the age of 17 and dropped out of school. As I got older, I wanted to get back in school to earn a GED. My ultimate goal is to go to college for a Mortuary Science degree.

I began my GED journey in 2013. It has been a very challenging 5 years because I have worked full time as a Nurse's Aide and have raised 3 children...a son who is now 16 and twin girls who are now 13 years old. My son is a junior at Withrow and the girls are in middle school at Schroeder. I wanted to get my GED diploma for myself and for my family so they will know the importance of finishing school and going to college.

I have really liked the East End Adult Education Center because they are so friendly and the tutors are so willing to help the students better themselves. I had many wonderful tutors, but Sister Mary was especially great. She even helped me over the summer when school was out. She was a blessing and the sweetest lady. There were days I wanted to give up, but because of the encouragement of the tutors and teachers, I kept on going.

I finally passed my final test on March 27th ! Marty Walsh, the lead teacher, is helping me research my options for Mortuary Science schools. You see, even after graduation, they are still helping me. Thank you for having me here tonight to tell my story. I want to thank my teachers and tutors at the East End Adult Education Center, but I especially want to thank my mom and my kids for believing in me and for the love and support they give me everyday. I want to thank Lee, my love, for the prayers, love and encouragement through all the ups and downs. Thank you all again, friends and family. This really means a lot!