

Marilyn Lupo
Student Support Services Project EXCEL
Lyndon State College
2002 - 2007



In 2002, when I entered Lyndon State College, I wasn't sure which direction I was headed, what I wanted to do or who I was. I met a family with a daughter in Upward Bound. They referred me to Rick Williams and he referred me to the Excel program at Lyndon State College. I met and worked with the Counselor Angie Ryan-Williams. There isn't a week that goes by, a challenge that is conquered, or a success that is enjoyed that I don't owe some gratitude to the Excel program.

I entered college with a GED and I did not think I was going to be able to match the level of intelligence of students that had graduated from high school. I had dropped out of high school so that I could support myself and became an emancipated minor at sixteen. I was in an abusive situation at home and college was a way out for me.

I met Angie at the Excel program. The program helped me academically with tutoring, a laptop lending program and she worked with me personally to develop a sense of confidence that I was lacking. She believed in me (something I had not experienced from a background with no parents around and moving from couch to couch) and she made a point to encourage me during the many times I wanted to give up. It is with Angie's help I was able to graduate college with a Bachelor's Degree in Business Administration.

I was the first in my family to graduate from college. Since then my brothers have gone on to graduate from college as well. Even though we thought we didn't have the financial resources to go to college, through grants and loans it was possible for them to attend just like I had.

Since college, there have been many challenges adjusting to life and being around some of those who hurt me many years ago. It is the skills that I was taught by Excel both personally and professionally that have helped me persevere every time.

I am currently a full time fiscal specialist at the New York State Department of Education, a job that my Bachelor's Degree has qualified me to have. I oversee the grants and procurements that the state provides. I also currently own two businesses. One business is a deli, named Kanters Deli, located in Albany, NY on one of the busiest streets near several colleges. I have 3 staff and the deli earns several thousands of dollars weekly. The other business, Superior Servers is a traveling catering and staffing company. These two small businesses have managed to each capture a small niche in the area. They are very well known because of the great service and passion I have. I had worked in the food industry for years to pay for college and it has always been dream of mine to own my deli. I don't believe I would I have accomplished all of this without the support of the Excel program, I learned the life skills and learning strategies to help me graduate from LSC.

Thanks to the Excel program at Lyndon State College and Angie I have been able to reach out to those youth who may have been going down the same path I was headed. I can be a mentor and a glimpse of hope for them during times they may feel trapped. I am able to donate to agencies that assist those in need. I look forward to the times when I am able to pay forward what Angie has done for me.