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Essay Contest

Carl D. Perkins Job Corps

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My Life in Correlation with Carl D. Perkins Job Corps

I can't give you a story where I missed up severely and then realized that I needed to make a change. What I can give you is a history where unexpected events caused a toil for my life from the very beginning. At a very young age I was stuck in a home full of abuse, neglect, and a mess of very crazy situations. Sometimes when I look back on my life, it seems to be bits and pieces of a dream.

I grew up in this lifestyle for the first ten years of my life. At first I thought this was what home was supposed to be like. It seemed like there was nothing wrong, and everything was normal. I guess that's what my normal was. Every day it was my responsibility to make sure Nana got up for work, that Mom wasn't too sick from her drugs to take a shower and eat, and to make sure I got to school on time. I cooked, cleaned and took responsibility of the other children to the best of my ability. This continued for years to come. These responsibilities may seem harsh to a few of you reading, but the harsh parts of this reality were the constant pressure to submit to the drug-infested activities and the need to protect the ones I loved, that need consisting of untold nightmares.

All of this is a brief summary of the first bit of my life. At nine years old I was struck with the most devastating event that I could have ever imagined. My Nana and my Uncle Anthony passed away one night. It's not needed to say what happened; no reason for you to bare the pain I have, but the reason I give you the vague idea is this is where it all changed. I got adopted six months later. Life seemed great, different from what I used to but definitely better. Hard ships came and went for the first little bit, but it all turned for the worst. I was sent away to group homes and the like, due to family troubles. The abuse in my life, which I thought was gone, shifted to the mental sort.

It seems that I never really did escape these troubles and this abuse until I was finally at Carl D. Perkins Job Corps, a total of seven years later. Here, I was able to become myself. Honestly at first, I went a little bit wild

because this was the most freedom I'd ever had. Then, I gained control and put my advanced maturity back in the driver's seat. It was, a sense, a lot like everywhere else I had been: dorms, roommates, chores, jobs, school, and a lot of new people. The people, I learned, were the hardest thing about any place. It wasn't the rules, the schedules or even the structure. That was normal for me, but the people, that was where you always have to use instinct. Observation is key when it comes to constantly being introduced to new peers and staff. Of all the places I'd ever been placed, Carl D. Perkins was the best. And I'm not just saying that because I'm competing in an essay contest, but truly from the heart. They cared about the new kids, assigning people to help them along, classes to help them adapt to the rules and friendly staff and students to show the way. As I've been here, I have found life-long friends and a loving husband. I have completed a trade in something I love to do as well as cross train in another field of my interest. I have met staff who treat me as one of their own. This place has helped me grow even more into the woman I am today. I'm not going to say it's all rainbows and butterflies, there's definitely trash and thorns all throughout this program. One must look past the hardships to appreciate the beauty in life.

With the completion of my trade, I'm now on the journey towards my new life. My new life consists of moving into an apartment with my husband, going to college and learning to stand up on our own two (four) feet. At the moment, we're working our way up the harsh scale of the world through occupations, but don't worry we'll get there. We know that life is now a partnership for the two of us, rather than a solo concert. Together, we will take everything we have been taught and use it to become better contributing members of society. But as soloist in a duet, I have figured out what this place truly means to me: a fresh beginning. Carl D. Perkins, helped me find my soulmate, adapt my unreal dreams into reachable goals, and long to pursue my own identity without any restrictions.