

Student Success Story

Angelo Reali

Chawanakee Adult School



Angelo's challenges began at an early age. In addition to being diagnosed with cancer at age seven and again at age ten, his family life was difficult, leading to depression and suicidal thoughts. As he got older these struggles grew, contributing to severe social anxiety and obesity, and causing him to drop out of high school. His anxiety kept him confined to his house for four years.

At the age of twenty, Angelo committed to changing his life. He weighed 550 pounds and challenged himself to lose weight through diet and exercise. After one year, he had lost 100 pounds and was walking two miles per day. As the weight came off, he gained motivation, strength and self-confidence. Those first steps gave him the courage to enroll in Chawanakee Adult School high school diploma courses. Angelo states, "Going back to school was one of the most important decisions I ever made. The most important foundation for the support I needed was offered by Chawanakee Adult School teacher Mrs. Cheryl McGibbon, who encouraged me and told me I could graduate with my high school diploma. She also gave me rides to attend school when I needed them."

Angelo graduated with his high school diploma from Chawanakee Adult School, giving a speech at his graduation ceremony. He has lost over 250 pounds, and is working on his health, educational, and financial goals. Angelo shares, "I am more optimistic about my life and future. I no longer have social anxiety issues. I have more self-esteem and confidence, and I am comfortable talking about my struggles. Five years ago, I would never have thought that I would be achieving this today."

Angelo is currently attending Clovis Community College.