

# Youth Success Story

## A Letter from Patrick Downing, HiSET Graduate

“For years I’ve been putting off getting my GED/HiSET, probably just because of lack of motivation. Dropping out of high school has always been one of my biggest regrets. I was in the senior year and just got wrapped up in the wrong stuff and decided to cut school out of my life. I know I should have gone right away for my GED/HiSET but I just was simply lazy. So I figured it was about time I started making moves and taking action in getting my life back on track.

When I relocated to the Worcester area because of the Young Adult Program that I am currently in, I knew it would be the perfect time to step up and go for my GED/HiSET. After about a month in the program, I talked to my case manager Sonia Summers about wanting to go back to school for my GED/HiSET. She set me right up to come down to WCAC and take the locator test to enroll. I am so grateful for Sonia, she really is the best and sincerely cares about my future. Once I did my practice test Linda and Michelle both got me started right away. I wouldn’t have been able to actually achieve this without Linda and Michelle’s support and help through the process. I am extremely grateful and thankful for the opportunity they gave me.

This program, I think, is extremely different from high school. For me, I really like the one on one attention I get, and I like how I am able to go at my own pace. Being in a big class environment can sometimes be distracting and challenging for me. With the WINGS program, the struggle is not real anymore. I’ve flown through all the different subjects with ease. Also another thing I really like about the WINGS program is that since it is like a small class setting there isn’t any of the big high school cattiness which always makes it hard to get a good learning experience. This program is extremely different from high school and all in better ways I personally think.

My views on education have changed a lot since I’ve enrolled in this program. I always knew I wasn’t stupid but I guess I kind of lacked the confidence I have now in knowing that I am capable of killing it in school. I guess in the past I never took it fully seriously and just was doing it because it was something I was told I had to do. Now though, having been in the WINGS program for a while, I have a different look at things. I know now that it’s not hard to succeed and as long as I’m really motivated, I will do well. Before, I never really seriously considered going on to college, but now being back at school for a little bit I’ve been looking into different schools and have even gone on a tour of QCC. I realize now that I have so many different options and can go to school for something I really want to do. I have just come to realize that school isn’t always a giant bore-fest, and that it can really help me shape out my future.



I am very thankful for being able to be a part of the WCAC WINGS program. I can finally see a bright future for myself. I've come to realize there are so many possibilities for my future and none of this would be possible without this program and without my HiSET degree. I look forward to finally getting my life started and making something real out of myself."

*Patrick is 19 years old a recent graduate from the WINGS program at Worcester Community Action Council (WCAC) funded through the CMWIB's WIA Youth Programs.*