

## **SVCC Middle College: A Second Chance for Kristi Shotwell**



When Southside Virginia Community College opened its third Middle College site at the Southern Virginia Higher Education Center in November 2005, it opened the door for many 18 to 24 year olds to have a second chance at success. One such student, Kristi Shotwell, took full advantage of this opportunity.

Kristi began the program in February and attended GED preparation classes daily for 8 weeks. By March 31, 2006, she had received her GED, successfully completed a two-credit Preparation for Employment college class and received a Silver Level Career Readiness Certificate. In the fall of 2006, she will become the first person in her family to go to college as she pursues a nursing degree.

Halifax County will also be a beneficiary of Kristi's accomplishment. "Because she's sharp, determined and dedicated, Kristi will be a successful college student. These same qualities will also make her an excellent nurse," stated Anne Hayes, Middle College Instructor. "Halifax County needs educated and skilled workers. Our program is designed to help young people complete their GED and prepare for a career they can be successful in and enjoy."

"I do a lot for other people but coming to classes and getting my GED was for me and my 2 year old son. By being the best student and person I can be, I know that Calvin will follow in my footsteps and want to learn," Kristi explained.

Hope Harris-Gayles, Kristi's Workforce Investment Act Case Manager, believes that Kristi is the ideal Middle College student and WIA client. "Our young people, like Kristi, are intelligent and full of potential," Harris-Gayles explained. "Often they just need a little assistance to help clarify and meet their goals. Kristi exemplifies what our students are capable of when they tap into resources that are available."

Kristi offers this advice for new GED students, "Have confidence in yourself, do the best you can and never give up. College can be a part of your future too."

If you are 18 to 24 years of age and want to improve your life, contact the Middle College and WIA Out-of-School Youth offices at 434-572-5454 or email [middlecollege@svhed.org](mailto:middlecollege@svhed.org).