



Deborah Torres
Job Seeker of the Month
May 2010

Cornelia native Deborah Torres is no stranger to hard work. While raising four children to grow into strong, intelligent young adults, Deborah often had to put her own career and educational pursuits on the back burner.

Deborah encouraged her eldest son to earn his GED to improve his job opportunities. Having never received her own high school diploma, Deborah and her son went through the GED test preparation course together, and later took the test together. Both scored so well they were invited to join the National Adult Education Honor Society. Deborah's son now works as a paramedic-firefighter.

"Encouraging my son to improve his educational pursuits has made me very proud," said Deborah. "Receiving our GEDs together strengthened our relationship because we encouraged each other to get through the test and better ourselves."

Having spent most of her adult life working as a machinist in the aerospace industry in Toccoa, Deborah was faced with having to find a new job after the company experienced layoffs. She turned to the Georgia Department of Labor as her first step in pursuing new employment opportunities. Through her local WIA center, Deborah learned about Georgia Work Ready and saw the numerous Georgia companies that prefer or require a Work Ready Certificate as part of the application process. She took the assessment and earned a bronze certificate.

"Taking the assessment validated my skills and showed me areas where I could improve or even add additional skills," said Deborah. "The certificate showed potential employers that I would be a valuable part of their workforce with the skills needed to do a good job."

Over the next six months, Deborah continued her job search armed with her Work Ready Certificate and other job interview and resume resources she found online. She found a temporary assignment as a machine operator with Elring-Klinger in Buford through Axiom Staffing and later was able to move into a better position as packing inspector. Though her temporary assignment with Elring-Klinger has ended, Deborah is confident that having a Work Ready Certificate will give her an edge in finding a new employment opportunity.

Deborah encouraged her sister, Judy Cole, to take the Work Ready assessment too; Judy earned a silver certificate.

"Having a Work Ready Certificate has given my family the confidence to strive for a better future," said Deborah. "I have always struggled to stay on my feet and never give up. People should know that Work Ready benefits them – the more knowledge you acquire and the more things you can do to improve yourself, the more success you will have in the long run."

Deborah plans to complete Work Ready skills gap training to improve her certificate level, and has encouraged her youngest son, an artist, to take the Work Ready assessment as well.