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I just got out of the Navy in 2004 or 2005 and was working at Best Buy. I was waiting on Lear to call me. They called me to work, and I built seats for the Ford Explorer. It was a new line. Pretty much it was a combination of second and third shift. And so I worked there. I did a whole lot of overtime, too, usually just by choice.

I was making good money. I loved working there and the people there. I thought I would be there a long time. The thing I didn't like about the job was that we'd get laid off a lot, but not for a long period of time. There was always that fear of getting laid off for a long period of time, which is what ended up happening. They laid off 500 people.

I'm married and have three kids, the youngest and oldest are girls. The middle one is a boy. Wife works. There is a lot of pressure to provide.

In 2007, I was on unemployment after being laid off from Lear. I think I might have had maybe two months left on my unemployment, when I learned about the available money for school. The counselors at the Kentucky Career Center helped me get enrolled at Spencerian and then followed me through school as I studied to be a radiologist. I hadn't been in school in a long time, so I was kind of nervous.

I always tell people it's like a circle. My father retired from Ford. Even when I was young, he had a time where he got laid off for a long time. You go to a factory. You can make good money, then they lay you off. It's just a bad cycle.

Eventually, I would have had to do some kind of education. Without going back to school – I was a graduate of Western High School – I just would have only been able to get a factory job.

Out of all the career choices, radiology was the one that caught my attention and was what I really wanted to do. I now work for a company as a mobile x-ray tech. I drive to different nursing homes in Kentucky and Indiana along I-64 and take x-rays. I have a computer and everything I need in my car, which they provide. I also work at University of Louisville Hospital. It's part-time as a radiology tech.

I really feel good. I wasn't the best of students in high school and all through grade school. So for me as a grown person to make it through college, especially looking around me and seeing all the people that didn't make it, and all the people who were straight-A students in high school and they didn't make it through the program, it kind of just makes me poke my chest out.

I would just say that if you believe you can do something, just try it, just give it your best. That's all you can do, you know? But, don't let your fear be the reason you don't take the

shot at opportunities given to you. Especially with this program, because, you know, it's a life-changer.

I tell a lot of young people. The difference is one's a job, and one's a career. A job is interchangeable: salaries are interchangeable; the need for that specific thing is interchangeable. But when you have a career, you have a piece of paper that qualifies you for something. You're licensed to do something. Like in my job field, there are just so many opportunities!