

Senate Health and Human Services Committee

Oregon State Legislature

900 Court St. NE

Salem OR 97301

When I moved back to Oregon from Washington in 2006, I knew I would need to work on getting my Master's degree in order to renew my teaching license. (This has now changed). However, I was not planning on doing this on a single income with two young children.

I remember contacting universities in the area and finding out how much a degree would cost. I felt trapped because I really didn't want to have additional student loans, but I didn't see any other way to get my degree. If I didn't have the degree, I wouldn't be able to keep my teaching license and would be unable to teach when my children were older.

This is where the IDA came in. I had heard about it but did not know what all you could use it for. My sister had used one to get a business started and encouraged me. My Family Self Sufficiency worker encouraged me as well.

I was overjoyed when I was able to start. Six months and I would be able to use the account to start paying for school. I worked full time, raised two boys and headed back less than part time. Because I took one maybe two classes at a time, I wasn't able to qualify for many scholarships. The IDA was it.

The IDA did not just provide money for school, but it also provided support as I went to school. I was provided encouragement when I questioned "what was I thinking?". The accountability of a savings plan helped me work on budgeting as well. The small deposits were doable with my income.

Four years later, I received my Master's degree in Elementary Education with an emphasis in reading. Not only was I able to do this without taking additional student loans, but I was able to show my boys that it is possible to work hard and achieve your goals.

I was so pleased with the IDA that I started another one to help purchase a house. This program enables people to face the insurmountable, overcome challenges, and thrive.

Jenny Anderson
IDA Saver (X's 2)