

Submitter: Shawn Massingale
On Behalf Of:
Committee: Joint Committee On Ways and Means Subcommittee
On Education
Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB5514

Good Afternoon,

I have worked for UCAN Head Start/OPK for 30 years. The year before I started, my oldest daughter enrolled in class. I was able to bring my younger two children and attend school with her by riding the bus. I was a single mom of 3 children under 5 with no transportation. Being able to be around adults who saw me, taught my children skills and fed us all 1 meal a day reminded me that I was more than just a mom and that I could get out of poverty and make a difference in families lives. Before I had my first child I had been going to college to be a high school agriculture teacher. With that first pregnancy all those plans went by the wayside. After being involved in the Head Start program I knew this is where I was meant to be. The next year after applying several times I was hired as an emergency hire. I worked Jan through June and by this time knew I wanted to become a teacher. The next year I worked in a classroom as an assistant and started working on my Child Development Associate Certificate. After receiving that and working another year as a temporary hire assistant I was hired as a teacher. Years went by and the mandate came down that teachers had to have degrees. So while working full time and raising 6 children (I was married to my second husband by this time) I completed my associates degree. I went on from there to become a Child Development Supervisor and then the mandate came down to get a Bachelor's degree. So back to school I went, still while working full time, volunteering on the local Babe Ruth board and raising my family. I continued to work my way up the ladder and on my degrees and today I hold a Masters Degree in Early Childhood Administration, am the Early Learning Director in our program and I teach Early Childhood Education classes at Umpqua Community College and did at Southern Oregon University for several years too. If I'm not a success story I don't know what is. However more important than me, is that all 3 of my daughters who went through the program are now wives and mothers who are over income for Head Start. One of them is a Media Technician at a local elementary school, one is the Office Manager for a large medical/surgery office and one owns her own business. Thank goodness we had Head Start staff in our lives who believed in me and helped me avoid following my boyfriend into a world of drugs.

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