

switch and spotting seals. It was the best feeling I've had in awhile.

After Reversing Falls, we went to Quoddy Head State Park in Lubec. I never thought we had such a gorgeous place like this not too far from where I live. I took pictures of the huge and beautiful lighthouse near the beach. The lighthouse and the clouds made it look like you were in a beautiful storm. We hiked to a place called The Bog and it was so magical. There was five layers of moss and all kinds of plants



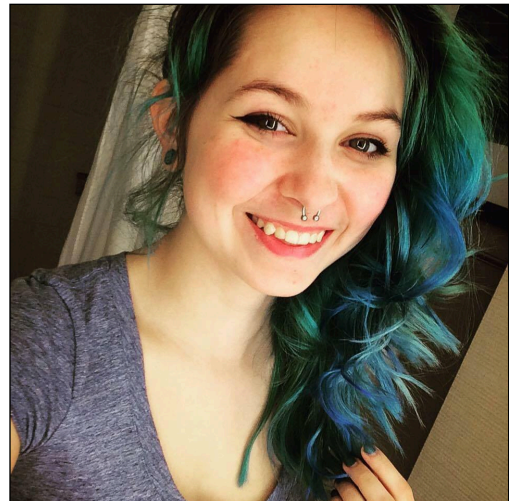
with a boardwalk going around it. I loved how peaceful the place was. After The Bog we went to the beach. It was amazing to see the waves crashing on the big rocks. I saw a big rock that looked over the beach, so I climbed it even though it was really windy. I went up there just to get a few

photos and to enjoy the satisfaction of actually climbing it and getting the photos I wanted.

I did this Passage because I love the outdoors and I love to get away and to feel peaceful. I take pictures to remember all the cool hikes I did and to capture all the nature around me that you might never know. I would love to be a photographer. I like the exercise aspect of hiking, but I also like the chance to stop and hear things. When you are standing still in the forest, it comes back alive. Sometimes it might even forget you are there and allow you the opportunity to see it more as it is when you are *not* there.

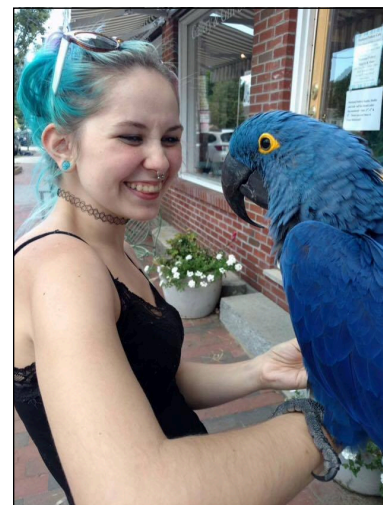
Katerina Guernsey

Warren

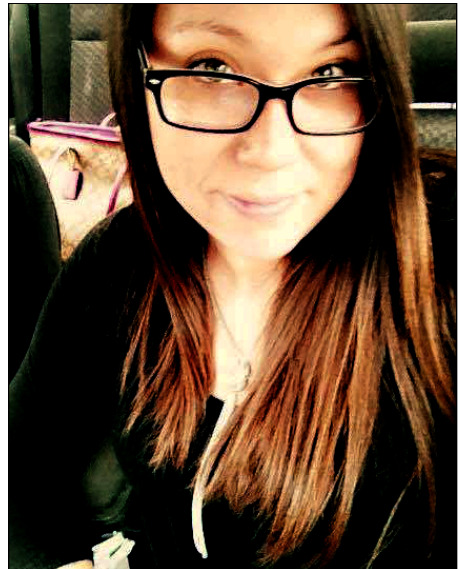


Passages has helped me get through a lot. I applied when I was pregnant after struggling and fighting with my public school to stay in. They didn't help me or seem to care, but the Passages program greeted me with a warm smile and a piece of pie. I felt happy going into this program, though my situation kept me to myself during workshops.

At the end of my first year in Passages my teacher showed me so much compassion and helped me into a safe place in my life. After the struggles of court and loss, an old light slowly



came back and this, my second and final year, I improved, made friends, and broke out of my shell. I never could have done that without Joy. At the end of this year Joy was on vacation, and returned to a bunch of texts and work from me from out of nowhere. She was surprised, but on board. We made it work and I'm graduating! I am so thankful and so happy for this program, the teachers, and friends I have due to this program. I am thankful for new experiences, ideas and the warmth that started with a piece of pie.



Hydee Newell

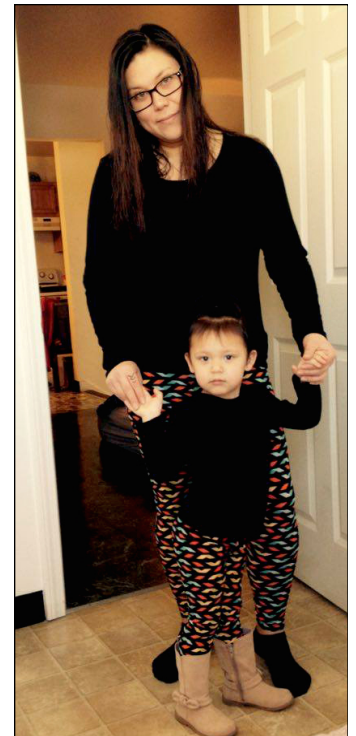
Pleasant Point

I'm finally done! Finished. I don't know why it took me this long, but I'm pleased with the end result. With the support of my team I was encouraged the whole way. Thank you to everyone who joined my journey.

My Passage :

Paint With Me

For my final Passage project I painted with my son's second grade class after school in the gym. The whole class wasn't able to attend, but I did get ten students and they loved it. A couple students asked when I would be back to paint again because they said they loved art. I would like to do this again in the



“Make the most of yourself by fanning the tiny, inner sparks of possibility into flames of achievement. “

- Golda Meir

future knowing that the students took great interest in my chosen project.

When I first decided to do something that involved children I was a little hesitant. Not all children are well behaved and I didn't want to babysit rather than do what was planned, but I can say they surprised me. Each student had fun. They had some spare time before the bus arrived to take them home and they organized a game of 'Duck, Duck, Goose' and played well together until it was time to leave.

The turnout was fantastic. I'm very pleased with my team. Everyone that showed up to support me was very much appreciated!



Kaitland Elizabeth Pendleton

Eastport

My experience in Passages has really been great. I love the teachers and how much they care. I love how they give you so many opportunities to learn new things by all the different workshops! Honestly, if it weren't for Passages I don't think I would have ever gotten my high school diploma. It's great how the teachers come to your house, but if you need any extra help when they aren't here, you can just message them and they will help as much as they can that way. All of the teachers are super supportive. They just want to see you succeed! If it weren't for my teacher, Ann, pushing me and encouraging me to complete everything, I don't think I would be graduating this year! So, I thank and appreciate her for that!

I promise you that once you graduate, you will have learned so much about yourself and you will do things you probably never would have pictured yourself doing before! This program really helped me to get out of my

"It's time to stop pretending you're this average person, you've got BIG work to do."

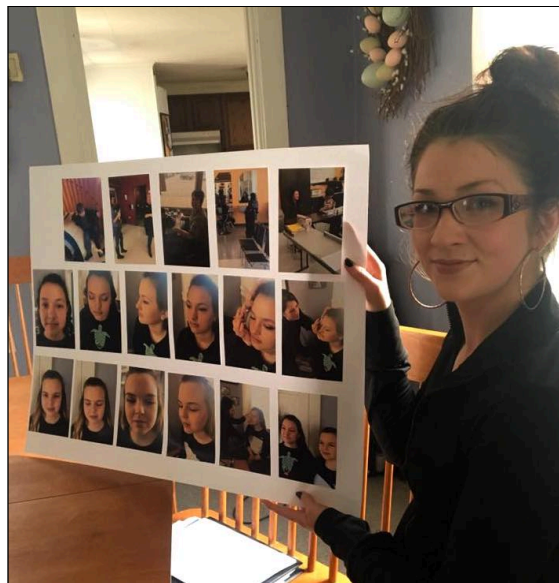
- Tiffany Han

comfort zone, and do things that needed to be done!! I got my permit, shadowed at my dream school, the Empire Beauty School in Bangor, and put in my application to enroll there. I got my First Aid/CPR certificate, got to go to some really amazing workshops, set up my FAFSA, and of course now I will be getting my high school diploma. This has been an experience I will always remember, and be thankful for. Thank you Passages!

My Passage : *Getting Ready for Cosmetology School*

I've always been interested in doing hair, makeup, and nails, since I was in third grade. I've been dying my own hair since I was in grade school. In grade school and in high school whenever my sisters had friends over, I'd always ask them if they wanted me to do their hair and makeup. Of course they would always say yes! I really enjoy it. When I was in high school, I'd do girls' eyebrows in the bathroom during lunch. I remember when I was in fifth grade my mom's friend, Micki, said that that's how she started and that she had a good feeling that I was going to be a cosmetologist too, because she saw a lot of her young self in me.

I have been exploring the Empire Beauty School in Bangor, Maine. I made an appointment to tour the school. When we got there they were busy, and so they gave me a free manicure while I waited. That was cool.



After that they showed me what the school provides for supplies. In the kit was high-end makeup, hair tools, wigs, stuff that kills the germs from the hair tools, a tablet, and supplies for nails. The school has a really cool scholarship where they will give you \$1,000 for your continuing education!

I spent the day shadowing at the Empire Beauty School in April. When I first got there I was told that I would be watching one of the girls on the floor and then spending time in the classroom. I watched her do someone's hair. She gave her a trim and made her roots the same color as the hair that was dyed and then she got rid of her highlights and evened it out so it looked pretty much all the same, but with a little bit of a lighter brown towards the end. I was upset that I didn't get to see what it looked like when it was completely done. Her hair was naturally really pretty and curly so I'm sure it came out awesome.

The classroom time was the most fun for me. They were testing, but I really loved the teacher. She made learning seem fun and she had a really awesome personality! She was singing and dancing around the classroom. It was a very chill atmosphere! For the test the students had to do one acrylic nail "perfectly." - Well, up to the teacher's standards! The girl I sat next to was really friendly, so it made the time there more enjoyable! I didn't learn as much as I wanted too due to them testing, but I still had a great time. I can really picture myself going to school there!

Lacee Edwina Phinney

Lubec



I have been in Passages for 6 years. I started in 2011. It is an awesome program that helps a lot and is flexible with my everyday life. The teachers have worked hard with me the whole time. Passages was my only hope for a high school diploma. I was working through my drug addiction which began when I was 14 and having babies later in my early 20s plus working at full-time jobs and raising 4 boys. I love them with all my heart. Isaac, James, Ashton, and Aimsley. They push me to want to better myself.

Through all the good times and the bad times my school and my family and my teachers have been there for me and fought for me the whole time. I am blessed to be a part of Passages. I believe that this program does a lot of good for teens and young families. It did for me.

My name is Lacee Phinney. I am 26 with 4 boys and have been settled down since I was 18. I have ADHD and from a young age had a lot of problems in school and was medicated. I was told I would never get a high school diploma. In my Canadian school I made it to grade 12, but dropped out. I wasn't going to get a diploma anyway - just a leaving certificate, and I partied more than I should have. I gave up on myself and I went to get my GED. I scored so low that it felt like it was not possible to get my GED.

Next I lost my CNA certificate, because of not having a high school diploma. I could not work with just my CNA. I felt hopeless and like I had no chance for a real diploma or a real life, but I have had a lot of jobs and have worked at the Cobscook Community Learning Center as a cleaning lady for almost 3 years. I really love it there.





Jacqueline Louise Riethmuller

Milford

My time in Passages has been an experience that probably lasted longer than it should have. I have been in the Program since March of 2015. My teacher through it all has been Erica Gates. She has definitely done her fair share of helping me get through earning my high school diploma. It has been a huge struggle to finally get to the end.

I started when I was pregnant with my daughter Aerial. Through the first year I thought that I was going to finish when I needed to, but with life getting in the way it took me a lot longer than I had planned. I also moved three different times within the first 8 months after having Aerial.

When Aerial was just 8 months old, I found out that I was pregnant again. So that made me work harder until that baby got here.

My son was born in the end of June in 2016. Having two kids was definitely a struggle while trying to find time to do school work and balance life. I tried my hardest to find that right time of the day that I could get something done for school, but then life happened again. A big event happened and the father of my kids went to jail. With that I had to really figure out



how to care for two kids on my own. Times were tough and I didn't have a lot of space to think about school work, but once I did, I was right back to getting school work done.

Then a huge tragedy happened to me and my family. My son passed away, which has been the biggest struggle that I have ever had to deal with in my life. Learning to deal with that and keep moving forward has definitely not been easy. I think that the only reason I am graduating this year is because in the last couple of months all I could think about was that I was so close and there is no turning back now. I know that everyone, including my son, would have wanted me to this. So these past couple of weeks have just been pushing to

finish for everyone including myself, because once my daughter gets to the point where she doesn't want to go to school, I will be able to tell her that it's easier to get it done now while she has the chance than it is to have to go back to it and try to finish later.

Passages has helped through this the whole process. If it wasn't for Passages and my teacher, Erica, I would not be graduating. I probably would have never gotten to this point in my life that I can say even after having two kids I am going to be getting my high school diploma.



The Passages Program requires a final graduation project. For mine I chose to learn more about how to become a preschool/daycare worker. I am learning what courses I have to take to get my certifications. For my final presentation I am going to have a handbook ready to be able to show potential parents. I also have a meal plan and a list of a couple activities that I could do with the kids. I am grateful for this project because if it wasn't for Passages I might not have been able to know the steps I have to take to have my own daycare one day.



Jade Lynn Smiley

Indian Township

While in Passages I accomplished a lot of things. The most important one is graduating. I've been in the Passages Program for three years. I definitely had my ups and downs, but pushed through to accomplish my goals.

My Passage: *A Traditional Family Meal*

For my final Passage project I chose to cook one of my family's traditional meals and serve it to my Passage team at my house. Not only is this meal one of my family's traditional meals, it is also one of the cultural meals that we might serve at a social or a small gathering. This a meal my family would cook to celebrate a successful hunt. After the moose is brought home we hang it, skin it and then let it hang for a few more days before we butcher it.

My sister has helped me find 3 different traditional recipes. We made: Tuhmasis (fried



bread), potatoes, moose meat and deer meat, plus strawberries and Cool Whip for dessert.

My sister, Tia helped me prepare the meal for my Passage team. First we started off cooking the moose meat. We had to boil it 3 times and let the water evaporate each time.

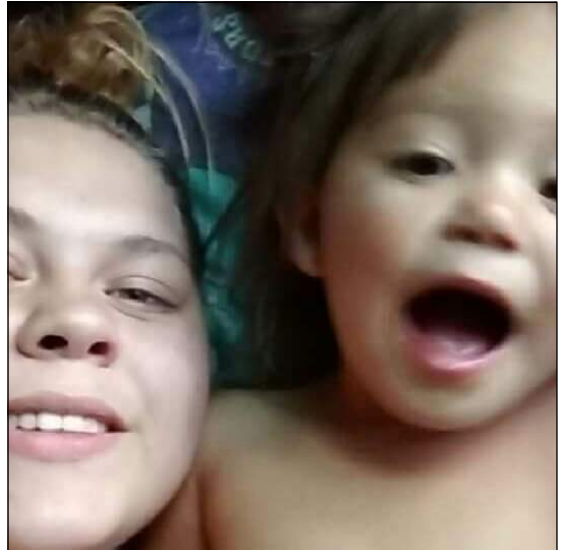
After the moose meat was done boiling, we put it in a frying pan with some seasonings and cooked it with the deer meat. Next, we peeled and diced the potatoes and onions. While Tia watched the moose meat cook, I made the dough for the fried bread. Once the dough was done, I heated the oil and started to cook each fried bread. Once that was done we smashed up some fresh strawberries and added a little bit of sugar. We used the strawberries for a dessert to have with the fried bread.

We served my guests their meal while I explained the recipes. Then I invited my guests to ask questions about the meal.

I thought my Passage went very well. Everyone loved the food. I'm glad my Passage was a success. If it wasn't a success or if

someone didn't like the food I would have felt bad.

I like cooking and this is the career path I have chosen. I am currently working on my certification for ServSafe and cooking at Wabanaki Take-Out. In the future I would like open my own restaurant.



“I can't think of any better representation of beauty than someone who is unafraid to be herself.

- Emma Stone



Barbara Turner

Auburn

Hello, my name is Barbara Turner and I have been in Passages Program since 2012. I became a young mother at 15 years old. I had my first born in June of 2010. In 2011, I became a single mother and also a victim of abuse. That was when all my problems started . . . never thought I was good enough and didn't care about my life or how I was going to live it. I



started getting really bad anxiety. I dropped out of high school going into 10th grade. I did try to go back and it worked for a couple months, but I dropped out again. Then I went back and

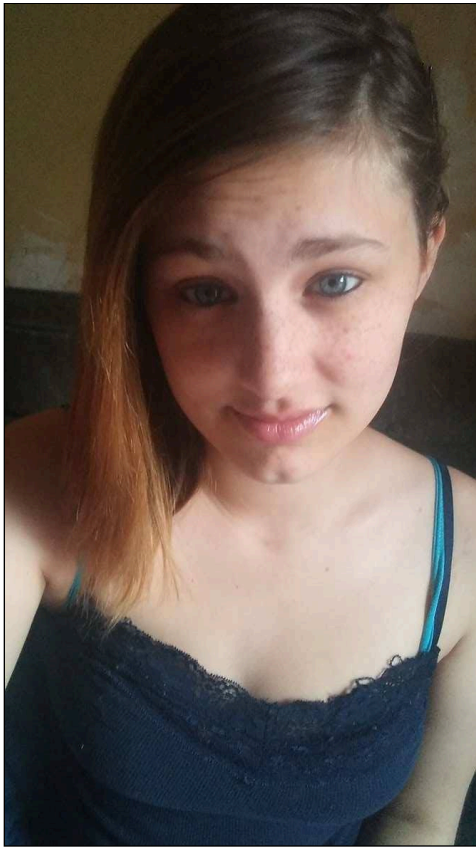
finished 11th grade and started 12th grade. That is when I found out I was pregnant with my second child at age 17. I knew that I couldn't do it anymore.

I remembered, while living in the group home, hearing about a program for mothers and fathers like myself called Passages, and decided that I would give them a call. That's when I met Stephanie. She was there through thick and thin with me. When I needed to tell



her something she was my go-to person. I felt like she was more of a friend than a teacher, but also my light at the end of the tunnel. She was always telling me that everything was going to be okay and that I was going to make it no matter what happened.

I threw Stephanie a lot of curveballs in my many years as a student, but here I am today! I am finally graduating from Passages. It has been the biggest, life-changing experience for me other than being a mother of three children. It has made me realize no matter what the challenge is. . . if there is a will, there is a way!



Amber Lynn Wahlstrom

Bowdoin

My Passages experience started when I first heard about Passages. I was in Richmond High School at the time, and my friend had disappeared. She was about five or six months pregnant, so after not seeing her at school for a few days I was beginning to worry. I asked around to see where she went and was told she started some homeschooling program [Passages]. Well, within a week or two I found out I was also pregnant. At first I wasn't going to drop out, then after a couple more weeks I started feeling uneasy, and uneasy turned into mind-blowingly sick. I couldn't leave my bathroom to sleep in my own bed, let alone go to school. I ended up dropping out in September and I started Passages in December of 2014.

In December of 2014 I found out I was going to have a baby girl. Within my first week I was in the program I went to my first workshop. I met some friends that I still remain in contact with. I was beyond nervous, and when I got there it got worse. I was the only one who was pregnant, and I was very obviously pregnant. I felt like I didn't really belong, but I ended up having the greatest time meeting people and I got to play with a little girl named Sophia all day. That is my first Passages memory.

At first I wasn't sure how to feel about my teacher, Joy, who, if anyone has met her, knows she's sweet and would help anyone. Through the years Joy has seen me through some of the hardest times of my life. She's seen me through motherhood, losing loved ones, homelessness, and motherhood again. She's never lost hope with me, never let me lose my motivation, and has helped me through the hardest things I've ever had to go through. Within almost four years of being in Passages she's become a very big part of my and my kids' lives.



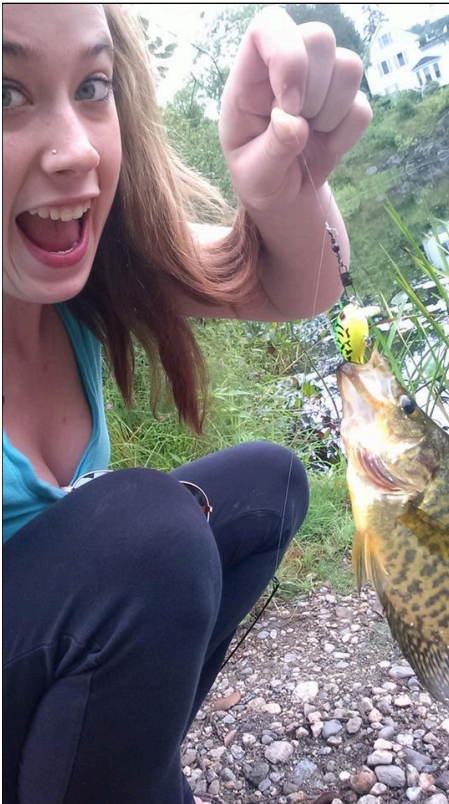
Passages is amazing. You learn so much about children and yourself during the process. From Pregnancy to Early Childhood Development, the courses help you learn a lot.

Some give you a chance to gain life skills. You learn about driving and car insurance. You also get to learn CPR and First Aid, which in my case changed my entire life, because I'm going into the medical field now, when previously I was going to be a teacher.

I don't know where I'd be or what I'd be doing right now if I had not started Passages. I would've gone through a lot with no support or help. Passages has changed my life in so many ways, I can't possibly put it all into words. I will always love the bond I have with other students and the teachers, and the bonds my children have with the other students, children, and teachers.

Kayla Christine Wing

Bath



First, I want to say that this program has helped me accomplish a lot of things, not just school, but in becoming the best mom I can be for my children and getting to know myself. Thank you so much!

This program has helped me learn more than the basic skills in school: it has taught me how to deal with real life, like how to apply for jobs and a lot more. This program has also helped me be a better mom. When I need advice or help with my children they were there to support me and to help me research things.

For example, at one point I needed help finding a parenting group to join and needed help learning how to discipline my child in a healthy way. My teacher helped me and we were able to incorporate it into my schoolwork.

I also like how they have workshops. They were my absolute favorite because I was meeting new people and moms. I also was learning a lot from the



workshops. There was one workshop that stuck out to me and made me so happy. When I first began the Program, we went to an elderly home with my son. The women and men there were so happy to see the children and I loved talking to them and learning about their lives!

Passages never gave up on me, nor did my teachers. This was one of the best programs I have known in my life and will forever have the people all involved in my heart! Thank you, Passages Program, for everything!