



Jennifer says her life isn't at all like she envisioned it as a little girl. At that time her father was an over the road truck driver in order to provide for the family. Mom's drinking problem left Jennifer, at age nine or ten, the one to take care of her two younger sisters as well as her mom. It wasn't until years later when Jennifer was in high school that mom got help from AA and life got better.

After taking care of everyone else, Jennifer married young, right after high school, thinking a husband would take care of her. Again life just didn't work out as she had expected. She divorced after ten years, but came through that experience with two beautiful children. A second marriage brought true happiness, the birth of another child and the addition of two wonderful step-children. She worked at a variety of jobs she enjoyed, most still focused on helping and caring for others. However, in that scenario she felt something was missing. She wanted a degree.

With the support of her husband and family she began at Ivy Tech in the spring of 2015 in the health care arena. At first her focus was medical billing and coding, but somehow she knew that nursing was the career she had always wanted. She has now finished all her prerequisites, is taking the TEAS test, hopes to be accepted into the nursing program this fall, and eventually wants to earn her RN.

Right now Jennifer works part time as a receptionist at a hearing office in Monticello and does home health care through an agency several times a week. Balancing family, work and classes is a big challenge but she still makes time for learning activities outside the classroom. She has become a special role model to her oldest child, a daughter now just graduating from high school, who hopes to pursue a nursing career as well.

Jennifer is embracing all of life and says, "I have found that waiting until later in life to pursue a career has been a blessing. I strive to get all A's in each and every course, unlike when I was younger. I have met some wonderful instructors and made some great friends along the way." Despite her husband's full time job and her part time work, it is still a challenge to make ends meet. According to Jennifer this Rotary scholarship will definitely help as she puts it toward tuition and book fees.