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My name is Amie Williams; I graduated from Western Dakota Tech in December of 2010 from the LPN program. It was challenging, but well worth it.

I was married and had my first son when I was 16 years old. I grew up very fast, and did it with minimal assistance. While I was "growing up" I made some embarrassing mistakes, but I was determined not to let that stop me from pursuing my dream of becoming a nurse. I tried to go to school when I was 18, but unfortunately; I was just not ready. So I worked at a couple different places to continue to provide for my family. I had my second child in January of 2005, moved to Rapid City in August 2006 and then had my 3rd child in March 2007. The jobs were good, but did not have the meaning that I was looking for. The entire time I worked I always knew I was meant to be a nurse. I just didn't know how to make it work. I didn't think it would be possible, but then I decided I was willing to do whatever it took to succeed. I had made some mistakes in my past but did not want them to define me.

So, I put my application into WDT. I started school about 4 days later, finishing 2 general education classes I needed to. I then started the nursing program in January of 2010. For most of the time, I worked 2 jobs, and took care of all 3 of my kids, not to mention my husband and home. I worked very hard and maintained on the honor roll. I know it was in part to the great guidance and encouragement that I received from all of the nursing staff. And, because I was so passionate about what I was learning about, it was easy to stay focused and make sacrifices in my personal life. I grew more and more excited about nursing every day, especially when I was doing so much hands-on training at such amazing clinical sites. I could not wait until it would be my turn. Graduating in December 2010 was a very exciting and proud day for me as well as my family. It also meant so much for me to be able to speak at the pinning in front of my peers; I knew how hard they had worked and how much they had accomplished. Having my children pin me was a truly amazing and emotional experience. I had accomplished something I had been dreaming about for years.

I continued to work at the job I had before starting school, I wanted to wait for the "right" job to open up. I also wanted to make sure it was a position that would work with my family, both financially and logistically. After a few months, I started thinking it might not happen. Then I received notice of a position at Regional Health. They were looking for a LPN to fill the Clinical Research Assistant position. I met with both directors and started in August 2011. I have no doubt this is where I am supposed to be.

Every day I am excited to go to work, I get to work with great people in a fun environment. I learn more and more about Research every day and get a great feeling of accomplishment. My days are never the same, which I love. Some days you can find me in my office doing data entry, other days I am in the lab spinning and processing samples, and some are just full of patient visits but most days I do it all! I have never in my life felt like I had found a career versus a job until now, and it is a feeling that is so worth all of the hard work I have put in to get here.

My dreams don't stop here. I hope to start the RN program soon and keep going from there. And knowing that I have accomplished so much so far, I know I can accomplish anything I put my mind to.