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School was always a challenge for me. Both my parents had to quit school by 7th grade, so they weren't able to help me and I was too embarrassed to explain my family situation and ask for help. I *did* finish high school but then, like my mother, I got married at 18.

After a bitter divorce, I supported my two children on a minimum wage job and when that didn't cover my family's needs, I worked **two**. Even then, I often had to turn to churches and support centers for help to make ends meet. So, in 2010, I decided to make a huge leap of faith and apply to Arkansas State University.

The following January, I was enrolled as a freshman and I was **terrified!** The fear of wanting to do better for my family verses the need to bring home a weekly paycheck was overwhelming. But then, I applied to my local Single Parent Scholarship Fund and was accepted.

I do not know how I would have made it this far without the scholarships and the helpful advice from amazing role models. I was the **first in my family to attend a University** and, soon, I'll take an even *greater* step when I **apply to graduate school!** I'm inspired to give back to this organization that has helped me to escape from poverty, one that has *accepted* me, *assisted* me, and *educated* me. I am so grateful to be a student and I hope I can be a role model for others one day very soon! **Thank you so very much.**