

Adult education has shown me a new side of America. I moved to the United States in 2006 from Asmara in Eritrea and it took me a long time to adjust. I came with my oldest son who was only four years old. My husband came in 2002 to start a better life for us and that was the American dream people talk about. When I first got here everything felt new and confusing. My main focus was taking care of my son and helping him get used to this new place. Because of that I did not spend much time learning the language or understanding the culture. I often felt nervous because speaking English was hard and I worried that people would not understand me.

After some time I started working in different jobs to help my family. My first job was in a hotel and that taught me how to talk to many kinds of people and stay patient. Even though my English was not strong I tried my best every day to learn new words. Later I worked in a restaurant in the airport. It was a fast and busy place and I had to talk to many travelers. This helped my speaking skills and helped me feel more confident. I also worked in home care where I helped people in their homes. This job required kindness and good communication and it made me feel proud to support people who needed help.

Even with all these jobs I knew I needed to improve my English and my education. I wanted to understand things better and feel more independent. That is why adult education became so important to me. When I joined the classes I did not just learn academic skills. I also gained confidence. The teachers helped me feel comfortable and I learned that it was okay to make mistakes because that is how you learn. Little by little I saw myself improving and that made me proud.

Adult education changed my life in many positive ways. At work I became more confident when speaking to customers and coworkers. I understood instructions better and felt more prepared for new tasks. This helped me do better at my jobs and opened the door for more opportunities. Outside of work I felt more comfortable doing everyday things like talking to teachers or helping my children with school assignments. I no longer felt lost when reading forms or trying to explain something.

Most important of all adult education helped me believe in myself. For many years I focused only on supporting my family and I forgot about my own goals. Now I feel like I am finally growing and becoming stronger. I want my children to see that learning never stops and that it is never too late to make your life better. My journey from Eritrea to America has had many challenges but adult education gave me hope and confidence. Today I feel more at home in America and I feel proud of how far I have come.