

“ACE was a huge part of my journey. I cried when I got my certificate.”



Like many Georgian students, **NANCY**'s journey wasn't direct from high school. Education was important in her family but school was tough for her. "I was smart, but I struggled," she remembers. "I struggled with math and English so much I would cry. It was so bad I was bullied over it."

Nancy took an alternate stream and went to a trade school. "I worked in the school store, in horticultural, did the chef training program — and got a basic high school diploma."

Afterward, she decided against further formal education and pursued her passion instead. "I raced motorcycles. Eventually busted myself up racing, broke my leg in a zillion places," she explains. "Then I was running my own specialized cleaning company."

But, after two knee surgeries, Nancy had to stop her cleaning work. Then, at 41, she learned that she had colon cancer.

With treatment, Nancy recovered and eventually found work. She had dreams of becoming a nurse — but had been turned off of because of struggles with math.

She decided to face her fear and contacted Georgian College's Owen Sound Academic Upgrading program (Academic and Career Preparation).

Signing up for ACP was big for Nancy. "My foster kids were both in the ACE program," she notes. "I always encouraged school, but it wasn't for me." She'd tried going back to school once before, at a different college, but dropped out after struggling like she had in the past.

In her ACE Math course, Nancy discovered that she had testing anxiety. In spite of her anxiety, she achieved 100% on her first test — and began to feel a whole new way about school.

Nancy became a keen student, eager to take advantage of every available opportunity and support, like writing tests in less-distracting places. "I realized that if I needed something, I just needed to ask," she says.

She earned a 95% in math and eventually completing her ACE certificate. "ACE was a huge part of my journey. I cried when I got my certificate."

After ACE, Nancy entered the Practical Nursing program. And she proved that it was the right decision. She visited the Campus Welcome Centre after her most recent semester to let staff know that she'd made the Dean's List.

In spite of recurring health issues, Nancy manages to keep a positive mindset. "I'm gonna pull this off," she declares. "I'm waiting on cancer results right now, but I'm still moving forward and doing my thing."

—Gregory Shanahan, Georgian College Academic Upgrading