

shared dream, shared success



For Tamara and Josie, their shared goal of becoming nurses sparked a transformative journey through the Academic Upgrading program and into the Practical Nursing program at Sault College.

Tamara had long dreamed of becoming a nurse – but put that goal on hold to raise her children. When the time finally came, self-doubt crept in. “I started to talk myself out of nursing, telling myself it was a ‘silly dream,’” she says. Meeting Josie, who shared the same goal, gave her the confidence to begin.

Josie had also dreamed of nursing but faced discouragement from teachers and peers. Life led her to work as a Personal Support Worker while raising children and caring for her parents. Encouraged by her sister-in-law and inspired by Tamara’s support, Josie decided to pursue Academic Upgrading.

Both women needed to meet the entrance requirements for the Practical Nursing program.

Academic Upgrading offered a flexible, supportive and cost-free alternative to a full academic year in General Arts.

Tamara found the program’s self-paced structure empowering. Now in her second year of nursing, she sees how well the program prepared her. “I’ve used the skills I learned in chemistry and dosage calculations many times.”

Josie describes the program as “wonderful” and highly recommends it to others. “Returning to school later in life can be intimidating, but the welcoming environment and support helped me realize my dream was possible.”

“After being out of school for over 20 years, I had to relearn how to study. The staff’s encouragement gave me the confidence to move forward,” says Tamara.

Beyond academics, the program brought unexpected personal growth and a deep friendship. “The biggest surprise was the growth in my self-confidence and the bond I formed with Tamara,” Josie explains. “We supported each other through it all.”

Tamara encourages others to embrace discomfort as a sign of growth. “If you understand your ‘why,’ it will keep you going when things get hard.”

Josie’s advice is simple but powerful: “Believe in yourself and take that first step. It’s never too late to chase a new dream.”

— Heather Ferguson, Sault College