



The Foundation for Reading Area Community College

“It has given me a chance to see that I’m worth much more than what I previously thought and that anything I set my mind to I can achieve.”

Alicia Diaz-Cruz, RHS/RACC Opportunity Scholarship Recipient

The Foundation for Reading Area Community College

supports the development and maintenance of the facilities and programs of RACC in order to broaden educational opportunities to its students, alumni, and all residents of Berks County. The stories you will read here are just a few examples of the impact giving has upon RACC students' lives and futures.

“It has given me such confidence and drive toward my future, which I may have never had if I didn't have the support of all of you. ”



Alicia Diaz-Cruz

(pictured on cover)

RHS/RACC Opportunity
Scholarship Recipient

This scholarship, to me, means more than just free tuition and fees. It has given me a chance to see that I'm worth much more than what I previously thought and that anything I set my mind to I can achieve. It has given me such confidence and drive toward my future, which I may have never had if I didn't have the support of all of you. ●

“...making the decision to return to college has proven to be one that is teaching me a new profession, new life skills and the ability to find who I really am.”



Cheryl Turbett
Berks County Tuberculosis
Society Scholarship

I have been attending RACC for three years working toward my degree in Respiratory Care. Returning to college at mid-life has not been an easy decision and has stretched me greatly at times. When my home life started to deteriorate, I was forced to make a decision to provide for myself and my four, school-aged children. I had been a stay-at-home mom for the past 12 years. Although it has been a difficult road, making the decision to return to college has proven to be one that is teaching me a new profession, new life skills and the ability to find who I really am.

I am very grateful for the scholarship funds that I have received from the Foundation for RACC. The funds have enabled me to attend RACC without acquiring significant debt. It has been a tremendous relief knowing I would have one less bill to pay upon graduation. The support from the Foundation is important as it helps students attain new skills and a hopeful future. The college community is blessed to have such wonderful support. ●

Throughout my childhood my family struggled both financially and with addiction. At the age of 15, I made the decision to quit school and work full-time to help my family. As I grew older I realized this wasn't my only option, but felt it was too late to make a change. When I was 17, I started to work for a local moving company and quickly worked my way up the ranks.

However, as I was living my life and working hard, I encountered my own problems with an addiction to alcohol, which led to serving

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Ismael Rivera, Jr.
Irvin Persky Scholarship and
Golf Tournament Scholarship

three months in jail and extensive counseling. I didn't know where my life was heading. I found a job as a supervisor at a local company but was laid off after two years. As I applied for other jobs, I had managerial experience but was lacking the education. In September 2009, I decided to take GED classes at RACC and passed my test in December. I scrambled to file my financial aid on time for credit classes, but was denied. I called to cancel my placement test because I didn't think there was any way I was going to be able to start

college that semester. I didn't want to give up, so I called one of my GED teachers to see if there was any other help. Within 15 minutes she called and told me to call the Foundation. I was given a scholarship and attended my first class one week later on January 25, 2010.

I am currently working on starting my own business (Direct Relocation Services) and have been sober for 4 years and 9 months. ●

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Last year at this time, I was scrambling to buy books for my first year at college. I was nervous, exhilarated, eager to study hard and yet unsure how many other non-traditional students I would find on campus. When I decided to go back to college at the age of 37 with all of my four children in school, RACC was an easy choice. I was excited about attending a community college that was close and affordable—and sure with a family of six that I would receive significant financial aid. I was wrong. I ended up scraping pennies and taking out two loans to pay for my first semester.



Twila Ramirez
Jay Sidhu Scholarship

During that time, I applied for a Foundation for RACC scholarship and was notified that

I would be awarded a scholarship for my spring semester. It was a breath of fresh air! I recently applied again and received the Jay Sidhu Scholarship for the fall and spring semesters. I was beyond elated when I opened the award letter, and immediately felt some weight lift from my shoulders. The Foundation for RACC has been such an encouragement to me through the scholarship opportunities it has provided, and has made it easier to stay focused and do well.

Studying at RACC has been such a positive experience, and has transformed me into a diehard

community college advocate—a title I intend to carry well beyond graduation from the Pre-law/ Public Administration Program. With this career path, I hope to be part of the positive, lasting change that I believe is coming to Reading’s streets. Despite the negative talk, I do not believe Reading is going downhill. Not only will it survive, it will prosper once again. And with it, so will RACC. I am optimistic that my education will open up doors to continue serving in government within the City of Reading and Berks County, and I am so grateful to the Foundation for RACC that has helped to make it possible! ●

“...it has helped me focus more on college work and less on paying for college expenses...this scholarship helps me get one step closer to my future career.”

I am a graduate from the Reading High School Class of 2010. I attended Reading-Muhlenberg vocational technical school for nursing and from that experience I learned that I was interested in the human body and bone structure. I knew in my gut what I wanted to do, and that was to be a radiographer. My family and friends supported my choice and I knew that this was something that I would enjoy doing for the rest of my life.

I wanted to further my education no matter what it took, to pursue my career goal. I applied to RACC



Emanuel Baez
RHS/RACC Opportunity
Scholarship Recipient

because it had the classes that I needed, it was convenient for me, and it would save me a lot of money when I transferred to a four-year college. After RACC, I would love to attend Thomas Jefferson University to become a radiographer and earn my bachelor’s degree in radiology.

I knew I would need financial help to attend school, pay my bills and provide just the essentials even though I increased my work hours. I was awarded the Reading High School/RACC Opportunity Scholarship and it has helped me

focus more on college work and less on paying for college expenses. I’m truly grateful to the Scholarship Committee and RHS for bringing this great opportunity to my attention. In all honesty, this scholarship helps me get one step closer to my future career. ●



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