

**Cortney at Community Action Project of Tulsa County
CareerAdvance®**

Cortney is a sweet and peppy young woman who works hard to achieve her goals. As a single mom to four-year-old Jaiden, she knows the importance of an education that allows her to obtain employment with a life-sustaining wage to improve her daughter's future. When Cortney saw the CareerAdvance® flyer in Jaiden's Head Start center and attended an information session, she knew that CareerAdvance® would give her this educational opportunity.

Cortney applied to CareerAdvance® and was accepted as part of its Health Information Technology Track. The track would allow her to meet her goal of working in a physician's office or hospital by becoming a Medical Assistant, then a Medical Coder, and then a Health Information Technologist. This situation seemed perfect because she had been searching for the right opportunity to go to college. CareerAdvance® training fit with her daughter's school schedule and also helped with childcare expenses when classes or clinical days were required outside of Jaiden's regular school hours.

Soon after she began her CareerAdvance® classes at Tulsa Technology Center, Cortney began to have a series of medical issues. When she first discussed the health situation with her career coach, she was nervous and discouraged because she thought she would be unable to continue with the CareerAdvance® program. After several discussions, she was relieved to know that the CareerAdvance® staff would work with her through these concerns.

Scheduling surgeries over the school break gave her opportunity to rest at home. Cortney was at her weekly partner meeting the Monday morning following spring break. She was in quite a bit of pain and could barely walk, but she was determined not to miss any classes or meetings. After her full recovery, she was back into the swing of her regular routine. Cortney completed the Medical Assisting program in July 2012 with a 3.90 grade point average. She successfully passed the Registered Medical Assistant and Phlebotomy exam in August 2012.

Currently, Cortney is pregnant with a baby girl due in December of 2012. Her initial goal was to work as a Medical Assistant, but since she has had additional medical issues, her doctor has recommended that she postpone working until after the baby is born. She plans to work then and to continue her next educational step, medical coding, in August 2013.

This past year has been very challenging for Cortney. There have been several times that she has thought about giving up, but through all her strife and struggles she remains positive and driven to complete her education, not only for herself but also for her two daughters. This mom's story is an inspiration to everyone who is working toward a better life.