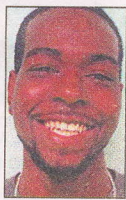


## “I’m more responsible, and I know I can accomplish my goals. Not having anything has pushed me to strive for something.”

A few weeks ago, I earned my GED, and life is looking a lot more hopeful than it used to. I’ll admit I have made some bad decisions. I left school in ninth grade. My grades were low. I wasn’t focused. I didn’t take it seriously. After I left school, I took adult education classes and online courses, but eventually I couldn’t afford those classes.

A few years ago, we were having financial problems, and my mother and I moved in with my grandmother. I was getting older, and I had to do something. I was watching my life pass me by.

I knew I wanted to get my GED



Karl Yeldell

just to open the door. I went to the St. Vincent and Sarah Fisher Center’s program, the Education Experience, which has a campus at Focus: HOPE. I received help in math and writing so I could pass those portions of the GED.

I ended up learning that I’m good at math. That has made me want to be an engineer, or a designer of video games or websites.

I’ve started to look for jobs, and it’s going pretty slowly, but I’m

looking into other programs, like Focus: HOPE’s Earn and Learn program, which may be able to help me find work.

My mom is trying to rebuild herself, too, and just finished going to school to learn how to drive a truck.

I have a greater understanding about life. I’m more responsible, and I know I can accomplish my goals. Not having anything has pushed me to strive for something. It pushed me to study hard. Now I just want to keep going. I don’t want to stop.

— **Karl Yeldell**, 21, of Detroit, as told to *Free Press* assistant editor Jewel Gopwani