

AmeriCorps Success Story

January 2013

In 2009 when I made the decision to apply with KCR/AmeriCorps as a tutor, it was at a time in my life that I not only wanted, but needed, to rebuild myself as a person. I was proud that I could be there for my children as we all adjusted to life in a single parent household. However, I had become mom, and not much other than that. I had lived my life supporting those I loved in whatever it was they wanted to achieve in life, and that had been enough for me. I had purpose and meaning and it felt good to support others. I had ideas about what sort of career I might pursue, but being available to my family was always more important.

Wanting to focus on myself and the things I desired in life left me feeling greedy. I felt like I was abandoning my children, and as a single parent, that was difficult. However, I applied as a tutor-mentor in the KCR/AmeriCorps program, having known a lot of people who had served within the program in the past. I thought that this would be an opportunity for me to make changes in my life. I would have a job that would allow me to explore a career option I had been interested in most of my life (teaching), as well as a little look into something I had been interested in for a shorter amount of time (social services). Furthermore, I could do all of this while also earning money to further my education ...and that ultimately would be the key for me to move forward in life once the decision was made about what path to follow. I could do all of this at the same time that I was offering help and support in the lives of others. THIS was the part that made it seem "OK" for me to "TAKE" something for myself.

My first term of service was everything I had hoped it would be, and more. I looked forward to serving a second term, and hoped to be placed within the same host site I served in during my first term. I anxiously awaited the news following my interview the second time around. I was successful and did serve a second year within the same host site. After exiting the program from second term, I found out that I could return for a third term with KCR/AmeriCorps. I applied, held my breath, and did a little dance when I found out I was offered the same position. At the end of the third term, I was once again THRILLED to find out that there was funding available to serve a fourth and final term. Still, I held my breath and waited. I never took for granted that I would be offered a position.

While I am still very strongly considering pursuit of a teaching degree, I think I have found that I am very "service oriented". I feel that I may be happiest working in the role of Para-educator. I would still be teaching children, but getting to work much more closely with them. I am motivated by the amount of satisfaction I can gain from the work that I do. THIS is the part of me that has followed me through four years within the KCR/AmeriCorps Program.

I entered into this adventure looking for possible direction involving a career choice. I will exit the program for a final time knowing that I will be happiest if my career choice can still offer me a "life in

service". I now know that this is where my own happiness resides, in providing for others. I smile bigger and sleep better at the end of a day when I KNOW I have helped improve the life of another.

-By Andi Moe-Fletcher; January 2013

Those who have worked with Andi have made the following comments:

- "Andi has made a big difference to the students she has taught at the school. Our students are very lucky to have Andi with us for several years." – Teacher at Esquire Hills
- "When a student works with Andi, I know his or her time is well spent. She keeps kids engaged and they all love working with her." –Teacher at Esquire Hills
- "Her efforts, care, and compassion really made a difference for the staff and students that she worked with." –Teacher at Fairview Junior High