THE DIFFERENCE YOU MAKE:
When You Believe in a Single Mom’s Potential, She Will Make THIS Happen!

Last year was a big one for Climb graduate Marissa, culminating in the moment she stood on stage at the University of Wyoming’s College of Agriculture and Natural Resources.

Marissa says that 10 years ago, she definitely wouldn’t have seen herself there. She was working at a fast food restaurant. When her kids got sick, she couldn’t be home with them or had to forfeit a paycheck, and the family was on public assistance.

Fast forward to today…and Marissa is an Office Associate in the University of Wyoming’s Molecular Biology Department, where she was placed after graduating from Climb’s Office Careers training in 2012. She’s had hard-earned promotions along the way and taken on more and more responsibility for the department.

“I hadn’t done any accounting before this job,” says Marissa. “Now I’m navigating the University’s new accounting system. I have an eye for detail. Numbers just work for me. The people I work with say I’m a problem solver. That I’m smart. They’ve told me that I know how to fix a problem before it becomes a problem.”

“It’s amazing how my initiative to learn computer skills has changed (my kids’) lives.” – Marissa

And that’s why she stood on stage last year: to accept the College of Agriculture and Natural Resources’ 2017 Outstanding Staff Member Award, for which she was nominated by her colleagues.

Having reached such a critical career milestone, what’s next?

“I want to watch my kids grow,” Marissa says. “I’m now able to give them a back yard to play in, my girls are in swimming, one is in the school orchestra, and another takes piano. It’s amazing how my initiative to learn computer skills has changed their lives.”

Watch a video of Marissa sharing her Climb story at climbwyoming.org.
With its dashboard of buttons, levers, and hydraulics, the forklift is a machine that takes hours of technical training to master. At the latest Warehouse Inventory training in Casper, participants practiced lifting and moving large boxes and tires up to 30 feet in the air. They also practiced backing up and maneuvering around cones to fine-tune their footing and maneuvering around tight quarters and cones to fine-tune their driving skills. They also practiced lifting and moving large boxes and tires up to 30 feet in the air. They also practiced lifting and moving large boxes and tires up to 30 feet in the air.

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The recent Intro to Construction Trades training in Cheyenne was action-packed with technical skills, including how to use welding torches to cut and connect complex electrical piping and fitting systems. The moms also earned their Commercial Driving certifications and received OSHA, technical math, and forklift training. Starting wages after this program are as high as $21 an hour with a wide range of employers, including the Union Pacific Railroad.

Familiarity with QuickBooks software can jumpstart careers in bookkeeping and accounting... and lead to higher wages! This skill is increasingly sought by employers in the Teton Area and was a focus of the recent Office Careers training there. In addition, moms who take this type of training learn to use the Microsoft Office suite of programs and have even taken apart computer hard drives, something that builds expertise and makes the machines less intimidating to operate.

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Aaron Hone, Halliburton Field Service Quality Coordinator, was looking to diversify his workforce at the company’s cement operations in Evansville, Wyoming. He says hiring two recent Climb Wyoming graduates brought different perspectives to his job site, and that’s a win for business and families alike.

A PARTNERSHIP, AN OPPORTUNITY
Hiring more women into our organization is really important for us to drive a culture that’s diverse and inclusive. It’s an opportunity to truly strengthen our organization and makes us a more diverse company.

STAND OUTS
I was very impressed from the get-go with Tonja, Halliburton cementing bulk material operator, and Noel, cementing operator assistant for Halliburton. I could tell immediately that the Climb program matched their skills and strengths to what jobs they applied for, so in that way they were already ahead of the curve. Out of the last 20 interviews I conducted, Tonja and Noel stood out immensely.

WORKING TOGETHER
We’ve continued to have follow-up meetings with Lesha, Climb’s Program Director in Casper, and each employee. It’s been a way to accelerate their learning and a chance to talk about what’s going well or iron things out. For Climb, it’s not just ‘here’s an employee,’ it’s more of an ongoing conversation about how we all work together to have the employee grow and be successful. From the very moment that we connected with Climb, it feels like a true long-term relationship. The responsiveness and openness and willingness to work together has been truly helpful.

HIRING PROBLEM SOLVERS
It impresses me that Tonja and Noel have taken steps in their lives to get ahead—it says a lot about their character. These jobs are a commitment, and that’s a huge task for any single parent. But they’ve gotten right to work and jumped into things in such a responsible way.

INVESTING IN FAMILIES
At Halliburton, we want to invest in highly trained professional workers who are looking for long-term employment. It’s good to know that we’re helping these women support themselves and their children; that’s important for our business but also for our community. It’s all a win in my book.

—Aaron Hone
Hello Climb!

I never thought this is a letter I would be writing to you! I never thought that I could make it this far. You ALL changed my life more than I can ever express.

Attending Climb was the first time I started AND finished something! I haven’t stopped since. I wasn’t sure I wanted to be a Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA) when I went through the Climb program, often doubting myself and my needs.

I have since discovered I have a LOVE, a PASSION, a DESIRE to care for people. I have worked as a CNA since finishing Climb in 2013. It wasn’t until 2015 that I decided I wanted more—I wanted to do more and be more.

So I did something I never thought I would do. I started traditional college, but I did it in full force, taking up to 22 credit hours some semesters. I graduated in 2016 with my associate’s degree in science. Then I applied and was accepted into a Bachelor of Nursing program! I am more than exuberant to announce that on May 5, 2018, I—the single mom who never finished anything, who never thought she could be more—will graduate nursing school!

My oldest child was only a year old when I went through Climb, and my youngest child was born in the middle of my toughest semester. He is now nine months old, and I can say BECAUSE of Climb, I knew I could make it, and I have. I am almost done! You all sparked a fire in me that I’m not sure will stop with a bachelor’s. Now I have my eyes on a Certified Registered Nurse Anesthetist (CRNA) program!

So you took a broken, unsuccessful girl and made her into a bold, adventurous, eager-to-learn, successful woman. I will never be able to say thank you enough for all that you have done for me and my little family!

Sincerely,

Jesseka

YOUR GIFTS
AT WORK...

THANKS TO FRIENDS LIKE YOU, CLIMB GRADS ARE DOING WHAT THEY NEVER THOUGHT POSSIBLE!

This Mother’s Day, you can help more moms like Jesseka create brighter futures for their families. Thanks to a group of generous donors, your contribution to Climb will be matched! If you make a donation in someone’s name, we’ll send them a recognition card.

Look for your invitation coming soon!

Your gifts at work…

Thanks to friends like you, Climb grads are doing what they never thought possible!
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