

Student appreciative of scholarship that helps her continue to pursue her dream



Sheika Miner

Sheika Miner was sure of her dream to earn a Gateway Technical College degree and better her life and career.

There was only one thing of which she was unsure: whether she could continue to pursue that dream.

A lack of finances had stalled Sheika's efforts, and she faced the reality of taking off one – or maybe two or more – semesters to save up to pay for her college costs. She didn't want to take off that time,

worried it would take her even longer to earn her degree and enter her career.

Her academic counselor suggested a solution: Apply for a Gateway Technical College Foundation scholarship. She did. On the brink of having to cancel her classes for the semester, Sheika found out the answer to her application and marked it with tears of joy.

"I honestly don't know if I would still be enrolled at Gateway now without the scholarship," she says. "It helped me to continue on and pursue my dream."

Sheika was selected for the Joseph and Shirley Madrigano Human Services Scholarship.

Sheika says she decided she needed to earn a degree to gain a solid career. She attended in 2006, but left when she became pregnant. The shock of her brother's death in 2008 made her realize she needed to return and seek a career.

Even though she worked while she took classes, she still received Financial Aid – but realized after four years, she could

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not receive any more. She would have taken off time from college to save up for college.

"I said 'I can't take off, I just can't – I have to finish my degree and enter my career,'" she says.

The Foundation paid for a class and a book needed for the class – and kept her in college and on track to graduate in December 2014.

"I am just so appreciative that I received that scholarship," says Sheika. "I didn't want to stop. I was worried if I did ... I thought I could come back in a semester, but who knows?"

Her journey began with tragedy. Her brother was shot and killed in 2008 and "I knew I had to do something, I knew I had to do something with myself, and the best way to do it was at Gateway."

"I knew if I wanted a better job, I needed a college education," she says.

Sheika chose Gateway. She says the instructors were encouraging, the training rigorous and the college offered many ways for her and other students to succeed.

"Several of my instructors have tried to help me to be a better student," she says. "The tutoring center helped me with some of the tougher classes. I tell everyone and anyone that Gateway is a great place to start your education and career."

She says she chose Human Services because she likes to help people. She's glad the Foundation helped her, too.

"I am just so appreciative," she says. "That helped me with my education and career."