

BridgeValley

SUCCESS STORIES



The first thing I noticed was how much the faculty was engaged. They had an inclusive environment and were passionate about what they did.



Before BridgeValley, I was in transitional housing through the Veteran Affairs. I had been doing networking administration at ITT, and when they closed mid-semester, I wasn't sure what to do. I happened by a BridgeValley table at a Veteran's Resource Center, and met some representatives who were engaging and great to talk to. They really drew me in, and I signed up to go to BridgeValley right there. It meant I had to move which would be a big change, but I made it happen.

The first thing I noticed was how much the faculty was engaged. They had an inclusive environment and were passionate about what they did. I noticed that everyone seemed so happy! As I went on, I also noticed I could always find help when I needed it.

As a student, I got involved with everything I could, like the Veterans Club, Student Government and Computer Club. BridgeValley is

made up of such a rainbow of students from many different backgrounds, so it was refreshing to be able to be myself. Being over 50 years old made me a non-conventional student. Since I have so many life experiences, many students gravitated to me. I loved being able to encourage younger students and help them think through their problems.

Sometimes it seems like there is never enough time! I'm not as strong as I used to be or have as much stamina, so succeeding boils down to willpower. I ended up learning computers from scratch, because failure is not an option. So many people encouraged me during my time at BridgeValley, like the Department Chair for Information Technology Bob Hayton. Dr. Farrow at the Student Success Center was an inspiration for me to see her and observe her attitude, because she is an African American with a doctorate. BridgeValley has given

me so much, which grew into other things, like the opportunity to spend 6 weeks in Norway studying. I met my fiancé there!

If you're considering going to college, my best advice is to never give up! Don't ever, ever, ever give up.

If you're considering going to college, my best advice is to never give up! Don't ever, ever, ever give up. When I was growing up, I went through many difficult things. I learned that the key was to never give up and to never lose hope. Right now, I still have a lot to learn! There are eight to ten certifications that I need to be employed in cyber security. I'm following my own advice too – I'm not giving up either!

**- Robert Wilson,
Cyber Security Network Engineering,
2019**