Sac State’s Katrina Currie wins Hearst Award

The path to a college degree is never easy. For Sacramento State’s Katrina Currie it was an especially rough road, but one that has paid off in more ways than one, most recently with the honor of a William Randolph Hearst/CSU Trustees’ Award for Outstanding Achievement.

Currie is one of 23 students from the California State University campuses to receive a $3,000 scholarship. All of the students will be honored at the Tuesday, Sept. 18, meeting of the CSU Board of Trustees in Long Beach.

Abused at age 12, addicted to alcohol and drugs as a teen, and a runaway from home, Currie became a single mother at age 15 and again at age 17.

Then, one day at a park, her young son fell and broke his arm. Even though Currie was not there and her son was under the care of one of Currie’s relatives, the incident sparked a turnaround in her life.

"I finally realized I needed to focus more on my children and take a more active part in their lives," she says.

She got her GED and then started college.

Her initial goal was to get an Associate Arts degree in nursing. But she kept going beyond that. She came to Sacramento State, twice winning the prestigious BEL Foundation Scholarship and earning a bachelor’s degree in gerontology. And she’s still going, coming back this fall in the master’s of education, curriculum and instruction program. During all this, there also has been an internship at the UC Davis Hospice program, plus volunteer work at the Senior Safe House.

Eventually, Currie plans to become a consultant and educator to get care facilities to offer a person-centered care approach to those with dementia.

“If I would have seen myself becoming like this seven years ago, I would have said it was impossible," Currie says.

Currie says no one ever encouraged her to go to college, and one of the best things about her new life is serving as a role model for her children. Her daughter, now 17, is already on her way, and wants to become a special education teacher. “If I made it this far, they can,” Currie says.
For more information on the Hearst Scholarship, visit www.calstate.edu/foundation/hearst/. For media assistance, call Sacramento State’s Public Affairs office at (916) 278-6156.

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