

With Support from the Library, This Mom Proves It's Never Too Late to Keep Learning

Despite not finishing high school as a teen, one woman's determination helped her earn a high school diploma through a self-paced online program, called *Gale Presents: Excel Adult High School*.

When Christina Ingram became a mother at a young age, she was forced to leave high school to care for her son. Despite her best efforts, she was unable to go back to school and earn her high school diploma. Attempts to earn her GED through night classes didn't work either. Ingram has a learning disability that made it hard for her to keep up with the fast pace of the classes.

SEEKING A SECOND CHANCE

Regardless of the many obstacles, Ingram was determined to earn her diploma—and when she stopped at the library one summer, that opportunity finally came. Ingram was visiting her local branch of the Boston Public Library when she saw a flyer for *Gale Presents: Excel Adult High School*.

Offered through the Boston Public Library by Gale, part of Cengage Group, the program is both flexible (100 percent online and self-paced) and highly supportive, connecting students with success coaches, tutors, instructors, school administrators, and library staff who care about each student's success.

SETTING STUDENTS UP FOR SUCCESS

The program's 21.5-credit curriculum is aligned with national standards that prepare adults for success in college or the workplace. Learners can select from more than 100 core academic, elective, and college-level courses that are offered entirely online, with new courses added regularly. Learners have 24/7 access to their courses as well as unlimited access to live, one-on-one tutoring and support from success coaches. For English language learners, standard courses can be translated and read aloud in their native language.

"The benefits of this are just astronomical," says Jess Elias, community learning supervisor for the Boston Public Library. "One of my favorite things to do here is talk to students about this program. It's a pathway to something that is really life-changing."



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I thought it might be too advanced—or that I wouldn't succeed. But I pushed myself. When my son went to sleep, I stayed up studying and taking tests. . . . The program means a lot to me. It literally changed my whole life.

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—Christina Ingram, Graduate
Boston Public Library

Initially, Ingram was worried the program wouldn't work for her. But she didn't let those concerns stop her. After researching *Gale Presents: Excel Adult High School* and speaking with a library staff member about the program, she started to believe it might be the right fit for her learning needs. Ingram was awarded a scholarship to the program by the library.

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Between caring for her children, looking for a job, and trying to volunteer, Ingram had her hands full. But that didn't deter her.

The program's self-paced nature allowed her to learn on her own terms, when it was most convenient for her. The one-on-one tutoring and support kept her moving forward even when doing so was difficult. The caring and committed library staff and instructors pushed her not to give up.

"I was so busy, but I had to get my high school diploma because my main goal was to teach my kids that no matter how old you are, you can do it," Ingram explains. "They knew I didn't graduate. I push my kids all the time [by telling them]: 'School is very important; get your diploma and go to college.' I'm 39, and I'm showing them that you just don't give up."

A BOOST OF CONFIDENCE

While the program gave Ingram an opportunity to earn her high school diploma, the experience gave her something equally valuable: confidence in herself and her abilities. She expressed gratitude for all the support she received from the library and *Excel Adult High School*.

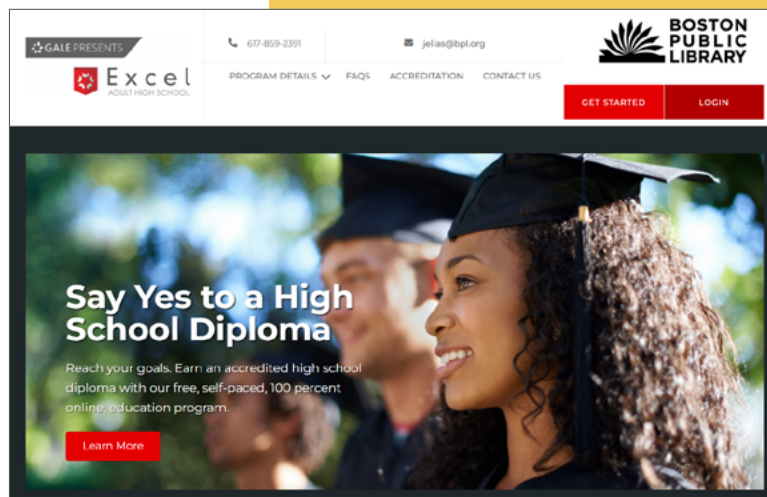
"Before, I had such low self-esteem about not having my education. Now, I feel really good about myself. Without this opportunity, I'll be honest: I probably never would have gotten my high school diploma."

Ingram is encouraged by the opportunities before her. She's planning to attend community college and no longer feels nervous when applying for jobs because she doesn't have to indicate that she lacks a high school diploma. She encourages other adult learners to explore *Gale Presents: Excel Adult High School*.

"Go for it. It's worth it," Ingram asserts. "I can honestly say this program saved not only my future but my kids' future as well. I couldn't get a good job to provide for my family. Now, I have the opportunity to do that."

Ingram concludes: "*Excel [Adult High School]* is a game-changer for anyone who's struggling to get a high school diploma."

Massachusetts residents, 19 years and older, who are library cardholders or are willing to get one are eligible for the program. [Learn more and get started today!](#)



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