

# Brenda Archie Johnson



I returned to school to pursue my degree in Sociology out of frustration with my job. I felt that at my age I was not where I needed to be and as a mother of two adult children, I wanted to be an example of all of the things I had taught them to be and to be an example for my future grandchildren.

One day at work I found myself in total frustration, so I began googling and researching for a training program or schools that I could attend. For some reason, UNC-Charlotte Adult Services kept appearing in my search. I decided to click on the link and from there I found a phone number. I called OASES and Dr. Cynthia "Cricket" Bonnetaud answered the phone and answered all of my questions. She then invited me to come see her but I explained to her that her office would be closed by the time I arrived. She told me she would be there until 7pm and encouraged me to come speak with her.

During the meeting she gave me so much confidence that I could finish my degree at UNC-Charlotte. I went home that night and immediately completed my application. I waited a few months and then I received the great news of my acceptance and began school literally within weeks of my acceptance. All classes were full by the time I registered, but my daughter encouraged me to email the professors to allow me in their class. Viola, it worked - and the rest is history!



UNC-Charlotte was a good fit for me because of the close proximity to my job and because they offered evening classes I could attend. The best part of my academic journey at UNC-Charlotte was meeting other adult students who had the same or similar interests. This enabled me to build a network within the university so I wouldn't feel alone as a student. The transition back to the university was someone challenging. I hadn't had any type of formal learning in 27 years so I was somewhat fearful of returning to this type of arena, but my very first professor was there to

encourage and guide me through the process. I took full advantage of the University Center of Excellence Tutoring Program. They had tutors available on weekends so I didn't have to take time off my job to seek help. I also took advantage of the OASES Adult Student scholarship program while I've been at UNC-Charlotte. OASES was very instrumental in helping me to procure scholarships that enabled me to continue my education without the added financial stress. As a recipient of three scholarships I was able to focus on my studies instead of focusing on paying my bill. For that, I am forever grateful to OASES!

My experience at UNC Charlotte has prepared me by opening my mind to new and innovative ideas and teaching me concepts of critical thinking. I've met students from all over the world and my concepts of other cultures have heightened.

My advice is to keep pressing forward no matter how dim the light may seem. Yes, there will be times when you feel like giving up but keep going. Surround yourself with peers who have the same desire and passion of completing school. Study hard and pray harder!! My next step for my career is to study for the GRE and applying for graduate school and major in either Health Administration or Public Administration.

---

As she nears Graduation, we wish Brenda the best of luck on the GRE and her future graduate school aspirations! We hope you've enjoyed reading more about Brenda, one of our many talented adult students. If you are interested in sharing your journey or success story with us, please visit:

<http://oases.uncc.edu/student-information/student-success-stories> to learn how.