

Dear Sheila Richardson,

I'm glad you e-mailed me. I've been trying to figure out the easiest way to thank you and Toledo telephone.

Since I started the BTOP program, I have been on an incredible journey. Four months after the program began, in September, I enrolled in Centralia College, taking a full load of credits. I am working toward my Associates degree in Applied Science. I am now in my third quarter, and am holding a 3.6 GPA. After I reach this goal, I will enroll for my Bachelors degree in Applied Science in Management. The BASM degree is new at Centralia College this year. Since all of the homework is on the computer, through Angel learning, Math XL, and Dragon naturally speaking voice recognition system, without a basic knowledge of the use of a computer, it would be impossible for me to study. Therefore, I would still be on permanent Social Security disability. However, within the next year, I should be able to secure employment in the Energy Industry. The starting wages for the positions I will apply for is \$60,000 gross annually. So, you see how important it is, and it's all because of Toledo Telephone and the BTOP program.

As part of my disability, typing is not only painful but is very hard to do considering I cannot feel the keys on my fingertips. Using the Dragon speech recognition system, I can now type upwards of 120 words per minute, and soon I will have close to 98% accuracy. In my opinion, that is incredible. That will surely look good on any resume. Also, my back cannot stand the pressures of working in the jobs that I have previously been trained to do. At my age, this could be devastating. However, with these new tools (computer, Dragon, and education), I now have a new lease on life. Further, I will not have to sit on my keister and watch my wife work her tail off trying to make ends meet. Not that she is having troubles, but it should not be necessary, as I have a good brain and I can use it instead of my body to help us live comfortably.

I have been invited to join the honor roll at the college, and I will be able to use that to my advantage. From what I've been told, being on the honor roll will open more doors for me i.e. employment, scholarships, etc., and will look good on a resume as well.

So you see, what you and this program have done for me is more than I could ever hope for, and I am eternally grateful. If there is anything that you folks need, if it is within my means, all you have to do is ask.

Sincerely, Robert Smith

PS. I used Dragon speech recognition for this entire e-mail message.

RS