

## Women's Perspectives: An Annual Journal of Writings by Adult Learners

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### Student's Reflecting on Their Participation

I have started my second semester at the Medicine Hat College and I love it...I can't say how excited I was to receive the award from WE LEARN last year. I still am sitting on Cloud #9. It meant a great deal to me to be recognized and have my family honored at the same time. I hope other women will believe in their dreams too. I plan to fit in some more writing when I can, and perhaps look into taking it more seriously in the future.

--Kathlene Steel, Medicine Hat, AB, Canada

Kathlene's writing was published in 2007 *Women's Perspectives #2, Women Who Dare*. Kathlene has since joined the *Women's Perspectives* selection committee.

I had the opportunity to go to Boston to read my essay at the WE LEARN conference [in 2007]. Now WE LEARN feels like a part of my family. -- Diana Hunter, San Diego, CA

Diana has writings published in both 2007 *Women's Perspectives #2, Women Who Dare* and 2008 *Women's Perspectives #3, Women & Money*. In 2008, Diana was elected to be on the WE LEARN Board of Directors.

I recall clearly the day my Colchester Adult Learning Association (CALA) instructor Matt Taylor said "Betty Ann, there is a writing contest for women being held, maybe you should submit something." The days following I sifted through the information provided and silently wondered if my experiences could possibly be interesting enough for others to enjoy.

Our program coordinator called me at home before classes one morning to let me know my entry had been chosen for publication. If memory serves me correctly, I called every

friend, relative, and neighbour to share with them my accomplishment. A handful of strangers were also given the details of my newest achievement. To put it mildly, I am rather proud of this new found corner of my life.

Although, many areas of my life give me joy and pride; two beautiful children, the ability to keep a functioning single parent home and maintaining a few solid friendships all represent me. This, though, this is a very different sense of pride. This is about me. Me as a woman, and as an achiever. I believe I hold my head a little higher, stand a little taller, and feel as though I am part of a special group of women who are steadily moving towards a brighter tomorrow, together.

-- Betty Ann Childs, Truro, NS Canada

Betty Ann's writing was published in 2008 *Women's Perspectives #3, Women & Money*.

Going to the conference was a once in a lifetime opportunity for me. It was a big step for me because I had to read my personal story before a large audience. This is something I never would have had the courage to do before. It was a turning point in my life. I'm working hard to change my life and overcome my fears. It was a great experience for me. I got to hear another woman's experience overcoming hardship, which pushed me to say my part. Receiving the honors award for my writing and having the chance to read my story at the conference was a big surprise to me because I struggle with low self-esteem, and I underestimate myself sometimes. My story was very personal, and I felt validated because people were affected by listening to me. Being recognized for my writing made me stronger.

-- Wanda Garcia, So. Boston, MA, 2008 Honors Award Winner in Issue #3, *Women & Money*