

## **UWO program helps adult learners get degrees**

**by Jennifer Monroe - Thursday, July 12, 2012**

<http://www.uwosh.edu/today/19918/uwo-program-helps-adult-learners-get-degrees/>

When Lisa Baltes was considering her return to college, she said she felt as though she was standing on the edge of a cliff thinking about taking a jump. She said she knew there would be challenges, but she also knew there would be rewards.

One leap of faith and two semesters later, Baltes is on her way toward earning her Bachelor of Liberal Studies at the University of Wisconsin Oshkosh.

Baltes first learned about her program at a UW Oshkosh information session called Start Here, Start Now™, which is geared for adult students. The annual event connects adults who are interested in returning to college with a variety of student service offices, including admissions, financial aid, advising and career services.

“What I really liked about the information session I went to is that you can go and talk with all of the different departments. The one-stop-shop atmosphere is really helpful for busy adults,” Baltes said.

While Baltes began her current journey to her degree with Start Here, Start Now™, like many adult learners, it wasn't her first experience in higher education.

“I went to college right out of high school, but after I ran into financial difficulties, I had to stop out,” Baltes said.

Baltes also attended UW Oshkosh in 2000, but found it difficult to balance work and family with her education.

“At that time, I was enrolled in a traditional business program. Having to be on campus during the day didn't work for me, so I left that program. The Bachelor of Liberal Studies is online, and I find it's easier to balance my other responsibilities with my coursework,” Baltes said.

Baltes' main motivation to earn her bachelor's degree is because she wants to be able to move up in her field.

“I do feel very lucky that in this economy, as a high school graduate, I do have a good job. But I know that in order to move up, I need to get my bachelor's degree,” Baltes said.

Currently working as a medical products buyer, Baltes also said that she hopes having a bachelor's degree will prevent her from being laid off if her company were to downsize.

“Right now, I'm taking a statistics course. The other day at work I recognized a graph that was similar to what we're doing in class. It was so great to see it and know exactly what it was showing,” Baltes said.

Baltes said she also enjoys getting to spend time with her two daughters when they have family study sessions.

“We all sit down at the same time. Sometimes we go to the library, even,” Baltes said. “It is really important to me that I am able to encourage my girls to continue their education. I want to lead by example.”

Baltes’ oldest daughter will be a high school junior, and she’s also considering UW Oshkosh.

Baltes said she recommends UW Oshkosh and the Start Here, Start Now™ program to her colleagues.

“I just tell them—it’s so important that no matter your age, you continue learning,” she said. “Start Here, Start Now™ is great place to get the information you need in a convenient setting that is specifically for adults.”

The next Start Here, Start Now™ information sessions will be July 18 at 8:30 a.m. and July 19 at 5:34 p.m. on the UW Oshkosh campus. To register, visit the [Start Here, Start Now™ website](#).

Learn more:

- [Start Here, Start Now™](#)
- [Lifelong Learning & Community Engagement](#)