



Meet Jessica

The crowd cheered as Jessica walked across the stage to accept her college diploma, but Jessica scanned the room looking for one person – her daughter.

“It felt amazing to know my family was there watching me cross the stage,” Jessica says. “I love knowing that my daughter was in the stands and she was watching me graduate. She loves to tell people, ‘My mommy graduated from college!’”

A few years ago, Jessica was struggling to balance school, work, and motherhood and felt like she was failing at all three. The United Way Young Mother’s Child Care Scholarship gave her the help she needed to succeed.

The United Way Young Mother’s Child Care Scholarship empowers young moms to continue their education by providing child care scholarships that allow them to access child care while they pursue secondary education.

That’s exactly what it did for Jessica. The scholarship allowed Jessica to focus on school without having to worry about her daughter, Kylie. She knew her daughter was safe and being well cared for, whether Jessica was in class or studying. Being able to devote time to school made a huge difference for Jessica.

Jessica found an unexpected benefit of the scholarship, a built-in support group, to be one of the greatest benefits. She loved receiving encouraging messages and knowing that people believed she could achieve her goal and were out there cheering for her. She also got a lot of inspiration from the other scholarship recipients. There has been a feeling of camaraderie among the group and Jessica says that knowing they were all in it together and all going through similar things motivated her to keep going – even when she was studying at 2am.

“The scholarship helped me go further in my education because it allowed me to know that my daughter was in a safe environment,” Jessica says. “The scholarship has allowed me to follow my dreams.”

Jessica received a bachelor’s degree in communications from Sam Houston State University. She was one of the first Young Mother’s Child Care Scholarship recipients to graduate from college and is the very first in her family to graduate from college. With the example Jessica is setting for her daughter, we know she won’t be the last.