

Margaret (Peggy) Larkin

Peggy is a domestic abuse survivor. She endured abuse at the hands of her husband for a long time, afraid to leave because she was scared he would physically harm her. As a stay-at-home mother she had no idea how her family would survive if she left. Everything changed the day that he attempted to choke her. She and her children managed to escape.



While still married, her family struggled to make ends meet; but she became completely impoverished when she left her husband. No longer having any source of income, she went to the local food shelf monthly for food, went on public assistance and shopped for clothing at thrift stores. During those destitute times, she was determined to change the course of her life to improve her family's future and improve the plight of victims of domestic abuse in her community. She decided to pursue higher education by any means necessary.

Being poor, on welfare, 10 years out of high school, with no one in her family ever going to college, the odds for Peggy to succeed in college were definitely against her. Peggy happened to walk into the Student Support Services/TRIO office at North Hennepin Community College. It changed her life forever. Through the help of the TRIO Program she was able to gain the confidence and skills to be successful in her course work.

Peggy completed two degrees at North Hennepin Community College, (Associate in Science Paralegal & Associate of Arts). Peggy transferred to Augsburg College and earned her Bachelor's of Arts degree in Psychology by participating in their weekend program. She graduated summa cum laude in the spring of 2009.

This fall she was accepted to Hamline University's prestigious Law School and received the "Wendy Watson 1 L Scholarship" which pays her full tuition for the first year. Peggy works full-time as a judicial clerk in the criminal division of the Hennepin County District Court. She was chosen (one of only 14) by members of the court to join the Emerging Leaders Network, to participate in leadership development and professional trainings.

Peggy's dream is to finish her law degree so that she can become a criminal prosecutor and help battered women.

Peggy currently volunteers at Home Free Battered women's shelter as an advocate and is raising her two daughters. She attributes her success to the

TRIO Programs. "Without TRIO, I know I would still be living in poverty - TRIO helped me and I am forever grateful!"