

Preparing for college in high school Local student shares College Credit Plus experience

As a 4.0 GPA student at North Adams High School, Madison Richey knew she had a bright future, but she wasn't feeling academically challenged in a way that would prepare her for higher education.

With a little guidance from Southern State Community College, Richey enrolled in College Credit Plus, a program that allows high school students to earn college credit while in high school at no cost. Now, she feels challenged and confident in her future — and she's on track to graduate high school with an associate's degree that will prepare her for her dream of entering the marketing field.

"I didn't find much challenge in high school," Richey said. "I was already a 4.0 student, so I wanted to try something new. I took a 14-hour semester, and now that I am in it, it has been a challenge for sure. But it's been good for me."

College Credit Plus is a flexible program allowing students to complete just a few classes, an entire first year of college, or more. Students like Richey, who complete an associate's degree before graduating high school, find themselves prepared for further higher education while significantly reducing the time and cost of attending college after high school.

Richey said the coursework has given her opportunities to build confidence in new skills like public speaking.

"I'm in a speech class right now. I went to a convention and ran for state president, and I won. It's really helped with my confidence," Richey said.

Richey said without College Credit Plus, her life would be missing the thrill of academic rigor.

Richey recommended College Credit Plus to high school students with similar academic needs and future dreams.

“I would definitely say it’s a great thing for people who want to go to college,” she said. “It challenges you and makes you a better person, and you make a lot of friends and connect with a lot of professors.”

Richey said she’s grateful to Southern State for helping her find a path to a new future.

“I just want to thank everybody at Southern State for helping me get to where I am now,” Richey said, “and I really encourage people to try it out.”

Students who desire to participate next year must notify their high school before May 1.

For more information on College Credit Plus, visit sscc.edu/CCP or call 937-393-3431.

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