

SAMPLE CLUB STORY

West Valley Altrusans Support Adult Literacy

Maria wanted desperately to complete high school since she had to drop out early. Then she learned of the G.E.D studies program at her local community college in Surprise, Arizona. She determined this would be the best way for her to finish her high school education. So she gathered her courage and walked into the Rio Salado office and enrolled in the program. Within a matter of nine months, working days and going to school by night, Maria was able to earn her G.E.D. in 2013. Toward the end of her program she learned that the Altrusa of the West Valley was offering test fee reimbursements to students who took the G.E.D test and passed it. She filled out the application, sharing her story and her goals for the future. She was selected, but due to her work schedule, she was not able to come to the reception, so her check was mailed to her.

Fast forward five years to 2018, Maria is working with Benevilla in a program that provides daily activities and services to patients with Parkinson's and other mobility issues. Dawn Mortellaro, the president of the West Valley club is a Physical Therapist who also provides services to the same group. One day they were talking, and Maria realized Dawn was part of the group who had honored her for earning her G.E.D.! Dawn told her the club would be issuing awards to a new group of students on May 3. Maria asked if Dawn would like her to come and share her story, and how she felt valued by her community to receive the award. We were all moved by what she shared. Afterward, a new recipient came to us to volunteer to return next year and share his story! Maria has helped us start a new tradition!