

Success Spotlight: Claudia Cilien Pierre

Claudia Cilien Pierre and her husband arrived in Indianapolis in 2017 on a travelers visa from their native Haiti and ultimately were granted asylum.

Claudia spoke multiple languages—Haitian, French and Spanish—but now wanted to learn English after becoming a U.S. citizen. She did so by enrolling in English Language Learner [ELL] classes at Indy Reads. Pierre also earned her High School Equivalency [HSE] through the Metropolitan School District of Washington Township’s adult education program.

Both Indy Reads and Washington Township are adult education providers for the Indiana Department of Workforce Development (DWD), whose mission is to help improve lives by building literacy, English language, and job-readiness skills.

“I could speak English and I could understand some things and make conversation, but when I go to work it was very hard for me to understand everything,” Claudia said. “I can say it helped me very well. Now I can make any conversation with anybody.”

Claudia worked numerous jobs before receiving her HSE and completing ELL classes. She then enrolled in a Certified Nursing Assistant program through the Warren Township Adult Education program and got a job as a CNA at a local nursing home. She since has received a promotion.

Claudia credits her HSE and improved English for her success in the workplace.

“I’m very, very confident about how I talk and about how somebody can understand me,” she said. “Two years ago I couldn’t speak English like that.”