



MEDIA RELEASE

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Practical math class helps change one virtual school student's life during COVID-19 crisis

COLUMBIA – Kily Oster has faced uncertain times for much of her life. The Cyber Academy of South Carolina senior is facing another one now during the COVID-19 crisis.

But thanks to being enrolled in a virtual school, she has been able to overcome her latest obstacle.

Due to family complications, Oster has been living on her own for the past year. In addition to being a straight A student and on track to graduate a year early, she also worked a full-time job to support herself. That was until last week when she was informed that her employer was closing its business due to the virus outbreak.

“It was tough to accept,” Oster said. “It was income for the roof over my head, food, everything.”

Like any situation she has been faced with over the years, Oster responded.

Last fall, Oster enrolled in Josh Strickland’s Discrete Math course. The course, also known as practical math, teaches students about applying math to the real world.

“In my class, students learn how to budget, pay taxes, stabilize income,” Strickland said. “It is a course I would recommend to any student.”

Oster said it was one of the most important classes she has ever taken. Because of what she learned online from Mr. Strickland, she was able to save enough income to support herself through April while searching for her next job.

“Mr. Strickland taught me how to budget my money,” Oster said. “I am so thankful for Cyber Academy because of opportunities like this. I am hopeful I’ll find my next job soon, but at least I have obtained the tools of what it means to stretch a paycheck.”

Cyber Academy serves approximately 2,400 students across the state of South Carolina. Head of school David Crook says that stories like Oster’s is one of many reasons why virtual education should exist.

“For some of our students, this is their last chance at an education,” Crook said. “Cyber Academy of South Carolina puts its students and families first and always will. We are so proud of everything Kily has accomplished to this point, and know she is destined for success in the future.”

“Virtual education is a great opportunity,” Strickland said. “It is not for every student, but we are impacting a lot of lives. That’s what keeps me going each day as a teacher. Knowing that I can have an impact on one makes the difference.”

While Oster currently has her mind focused on finding her next place of employment, she is also hopeful for the future.

“Without Cyber Academy, I never thought I would have the opportunity to graduate. I never thought a diploma was possible,” Oster said. “Now I can say it will happen and happen a year early.”

Oster plans to study programming, mechanics, and engineering in college, with hopes of building her own vehicle someday.

“I’ve just always had an interest in cars and how they are made,” Oster said.

Knowing the resolve Oster possesses, there could be many behind the wheel of her invention soon.

For more information on Cyber Academy and other charter schools authorized by the Charter Institute at Erskine, visit www.erskinecharters.org.

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