

Living HER *Dream*

Determined to obtain a college degree, Kathy Williams turned to Schoolcraft to accomplish her dream. She enrolled in Schoolcraft's Small Business Management Program, and received experience that went well beyond academics. Kathy recalls, **"Schoolcraft not only polished my business sense, it also built my self-confidence."** Her time at Schoolcraft changed the course of Kathy's life.

After graduating in 1993, with a Small Business Management Associates Degree, Kathy started climbing the corporate ladder. "My degree enabled me to continually reach higher." Eventually, she found herself employed as a high-level auto executive. The job was riddled with stress but Kathy adapted and prospered.

Then, in 2008 her world turned upside down.

Kathy lost her job, but even more devastating, her father passed away, adding heartbreak on top of career issues. With teenage children dependent on her and a major steadying influence in her life suddenly gone, the former executive was in a tailspin.

Kathy's father's death was also a significant emotional event for her children. She started writing inspirational materials to help her family cope. Kathy quickly found the work to not only be therapeutic for her family, but also for herself.

She decided to launch her own business using her inspirational writing and art to help others dealing with emotional crises. "I'm not especially religious," Kathy insists, "but I'm very spiritual." She credits this spirituality for giving her life—and career—a new direction. However, it was her Schoolcraft experience that convinced Kathy a drastic career change was possible. "During my years at Schoolcraft, my professors helped me build self-esteem which strengthened my confidence and motivation."



Her career change has led to other opportunities. In addition to volunteering her time as a caring voice on the crisis line for SafeHouse, Kathy has penned 90 articles for Examiner.com as their Detroit Healthy Living Examiner. The success of her column coincided with the release of her first book, *What Can I Say When Words Escape Me*, late in 2009. Since then, there haven't been any thoughts of returning to the corporate world. "This is where I want to be," she says with conviction.

Reflecting on how far she has come in such a short time, Kathy is quick to credit Schoolcraft for preparing her for where she stands today.

"Without Schoolcraft, I'm not sure I would have found my way to the inner peace and joy I feel today, finally living my dream as an entrepreneur and working as an artist and author."

Looking forward, Kathy intends to use her creative talents to develop a program to give back to the community. Her company, Lifetime Art Impressions, is one more step in this direction. As the word spreads about her company's compassionate mission, Kathy hopes there will be even more opportunities to help people in their times of need. It's a mission that in many ways echoes the support she received during her time at Schoolcraft College. ●

To learn more about coping with grief, visit Kathy William's web site at www.lifetimeartimpression.com