

Kathy M. Verna

Social Services, 2005



Kathy Verna, executive director of P.R.O.B.E. (Potential Reentry Opportunities in Business and Education), is a HACC success story. Verna, who stayed at home for 17 years to raise her four sons, found herself a client of P.R.O.B.E. in 1995. Today, she serves as the chief executive of the nonprofit agency that enables displaced homemakers, single parents, dislocated workers and people in transition to enter and remain in the workforce.

While raising her family, Verna spent 15 years as an accredited La Leche League leader, working on the local, state and regional levels in a variety of capacities. Feeling lost when her youngest son started school, Verna ended up on P.R.O.B.E.'s doorstep where she was encouraged to go to college. Once at HACC's Lebanon Campus, she found her wings. She earned an associate degree in social service at HACC and bachelor's and master's degrees in social work at Temple University.

She has worked at P.R.O.B.E. for 17 years. In the past year, she and her staff have provided career development services to 117 people, assisted 76 people in finding employment, provided one-on-one money management counseling to 54 clients and sponsored 28 community financial literacy workshops. P.R.O.B.E. often takes clients on a tour of the Lebanon Campus and encourages them to apply.

Active in her community, Verna served on HACC's Human Services Advisory Council until recently and serves on the Advisory Committee for the Lebanon Campus, where she gives input and provides connections. She is a board member of Pennsylvania Women Work, the treasurer for the Lebanon County Money in Your Pocket program and is active on the Lebanon County Coalition to Prevent Homelessness. "The epitaph I'd like on my tombstone is 'One person can make a difference,'" she once said. "I don't expect to make an impact on the world like Mother Teresa, but if I can help make one person's life a little better, then I made a difference in their world."

HACC Impact

"One has a vision of what college kids look like, but at HACC you see people who are the same age range or ethnic background as you. You feel like you belong. At HACC, I always had the sense that the instructors were willing to do what was needed to help you succeed."