

Phillips Murrah legal assistant overcomes breast cancer and graduates paralegal program



Darci Gregory holds her Legal Assistant Certificate for completing the University of Oklahoma's Paralegal Program.

It's never too late to learn something new, and Legal Assistant Darci Gregory embodied that mantra when she decided to further her education.

"After being in the legal field for a couple of years, I decided that I really didn't know much," she said. "I started researching paralegal programs and found the perfect match with OU's Paralegal Program."

[The University of Oklahoma's College of Law Legal Assistant Education](#) program can be completed in two years by taking three Saturday classes each semester for a total of 23 credit

hours.

"It sounded perfect for a full-time employee and mom of three," Darci said. "So, in August of 2010 I applied and was accepted into the program."

After getting into the program, a visit with her doctor unveiled an unfortunate diagnosis.

"Just a few short weeks later, I was diagnosed with Stage 3 breast cancer," she said. "Knowing that there was no way I was going to be able to take classes, have the necessary surgeries and go through chemotherapy and radiation, I decided to put the whole idea of furthering my education on hold for a while."

Darci then underwent a series of treatments: two surgeries to remove the cancer from her lymph nodes and breasts, six rounds of chemotherapy, seven weeks of radiation, and subsequent tests to make sure the cancer had been eliminated.

About a year after she was diagnosed, Darci was given a clean bill of health and was ready to get started on her paralegal journey again.

"Little did I know that by going and spending so many Saturdays I would learn as much as I have," she said. "The program taught me how to use the enormous law library, dissect legal problems and apply the law, learn about contracts in ways I never thought were imaginable and so much more."

The road was long and drawn out due to scheduling conflicts with classes and the ability to mentally get through the program after having chemotherapy, Darci said.

Despite all of the challenges, she was able to complete the program in five years and celebrated her graduation on August 8.

"Graduating, in general, can mean so many things to different

people,” she said. “To me, graduating from this program showed my determination to not only finish what I started, but it was also a reminder of the journey I have taken along the way.”

Darci will celebrate five years being completely cancer free on September 3.