

Sunday Smarty Share from SHARE Charlotte: ANSWER Scholarship Endowment

By Kimberly Paulk, SHARECharlotte.com, a free, easy and local website that makes it easy to learn about and engage with our local nonprofits.

“Education is not filling a pail but the lighting of a fire.” ~ William Butler Yeats

Life tends to get in the way. Certainly that's the case for moms who decide to go back to school for a college degree. SHARE a Group picture of graduates

The obstacles can seem overwhelming. They wrestle with finding childcare, making time to do homework (usually long after the kids are in bed) and managing on even less sleep than moms normally get, all while holding down a job (or two) in the process.

ANSWER Scholarship Endowment provides a helping hand. They provide financial support to women age 25 and older who are raising school-age children (grades K –12) and are working to earn a two-year nursing degree or a four-year undergrad degree in the field of their choice, with preference given to single moms.

The scholarship helps with the financial side of the equation, but that's only half the battle. To help students stay the course on what can be a long, difficult road an ANSWER mentor develops a relationship with each mom to help her weather the tough times and celebrate the successes. Mentors understand exactly what their mentees are going through, because each one walked a similar path, going to college as an adult and often raising children in the process. The program works: since 2006, ANSWER has awarded 60 scholarships to 33 women, with 23 graduations so far.

Participants in the ANSWER program say the rewards of getting a college degree – particularly as “nontraditional” students – are big. Not only does it fulfill their dreams of a college education and put them in a stronger position to provide for their families, it demonstrates to their kids the importance of continuing their own education.

If you know someone who would benefit from the ANSWER program, applications for scholarships are due March 15th (applications are online , just search for the to help, check out the opportunities noted here, and you can always visit [SHARE Charlotte](http://SHARECharlotte.com) for more information.



Advisory Board Member – Board members must have a passion for women and education, have 2-3 hours a weeks to serve, make a financial commitment and be an ambassador for ANSWER in the community.

Mentors for Mom – Mentors must have gone to college as an adult, preferably while raising children. Mentors will meet with their mentees at the monthly Saturday work-shops and have communication with their mentee during the month as well.