

# The Jones

Choose a job you love and you'll never work a day in your life.

Heather and Brian Jones had often heard that well-known adage throughout their lives, but they had never experienced it. Until this year.

Heather, 36, a stay-at-home mom while their four children were growing up, is finding her niche while pursuing a career as a Phlebotomist in the health care field. Brian, 45, an Army Gulf War veteran and former police officer, discovered he has a real knack for computers and is enjoying every minute of his newfound career as a Computer Technician and Webmaster for Spartanburg County School District 2.

Retraining at Tri-County put the couple back to work in jobs they love and provided the financial stability and benefits they need. Even the one-hour commute from Clemson to Spartanburg can't erase the smile from Brian's face, Heather notes. "It doesn't bother you if you are driving to a place you like," Brian said.

Neither had talked seriously about college during their eight-year marriage. Money, or the lack of, and time were the main stumbling blocks. "We never thought college was an option until Tri-County provided a starting-over point for both of us," said Heather.

Brian's Computer Technology degree, coupled with Heather's Phlebotomy certification, will change the family's lives and they are quick to point out that it wouldn't be possible without scholarships provided to Tri-County by the SC General Assembly for short-term job training programs through the Corporate and Community Education Division (phlebotomy for Heather) and a VA scholarship for Brian. Tri-County received \$335,000 for in-demand, QuickJobs training in the areas of manufacturing, health care, transportation, and logistics.

Scholarships of up to \$2,000 per student were granted to successful applicants like Heather. "Without it, I wouldn't have my certification. We finally are going in the right direction," she said.

Not long after Brian graduated in 2015, he was offered a job in Spartanburg School District 2. "My employer is impressed with the job I've done. That's a reflection of what I was taught at Tri-County," he said.

"Tri-County has been a blessing to us. We could still be scraping by with dead-end jobs, but Tri-County opened doors for employment," she said.

"It's a whole new ballgame when you enjoy what you do," he added.

