



This past year has thrown many challenges at all of us. It's in times of adversity that our true character is revealed. I am a 40-year-old single mother of two, who grew up in the foster care system. To this day only eight percent of single mothers who are enrolled in college graduate, and only six percent of adults that were once foster children obtain a college degree and only seven percent of commercial Airline Pilots are women. This past Spring, I graduated SUNY SCCC with my Aviation Science Degree and Pilot License. During this time, I also became a two-time New York State Vanguard Award Winner, the most prestigious award given by New York State Education to those who are pursuing a non-traditional degree in the study of a STEM field.

I am beating the odds and I couldn't have beat them alone. Those who achieve success always have a strong support system. This is a lesson I learned from The Women's Fund of the Capital Region. It takes great courage to invest in a student you have never met. I attribute a huge part of my success to having the support of the Women's Fund of the Capital Region. The scholarship provided the support I needed to focus on my education and family, in one of the most trying times in history!

Supporting the growth and empowerment of the women in our communities is a catalyst that becomes global. Not only do these awards help the recipient but the support they provide has a rippling effect that reaches far beyond to future generations. To those who support the enrichment of women in our local communities, thank you for helping us beat the odds, for being the change we wish to see in the world.

Betsy Feiden