

# Sampson County Dislocated Worker receives the North Carolina College System Academic Excellence Award

*Spring 2013*

Steven Vernon, a Sampson County resident, is a hard working individual that worked at Energy Conversion Systems before he was laid off from his job in May 2009. After the plant closed, Steven decided that he would return to school to pursue his dream of becoming a Teacher. He entered the Trade Adjustment Assistance Program (TAA) and enrolled in Sampson Community College's Early Childhood program in hopes that it would lead to new and better career opportunities.

With two quarters left to complete his studies, Mr. Vernon had exhausted all of his TAA funds and Unemployment Insurance benefits, and was no longer eligible to receive any additional funds from the Pell Grant. Determined to complete his goal, he spoke with his TAA representative and was referred to the WIA Program. Due to his layoff in 2009, Mr. Vernon qualified for the Dislocated Worker Program. With the help of WIA, Steven was able to complete his final two quarters of school and find a position as a Teacher's Assistant in the local school system.

During his studies, Steven consistently made the Honor Roll, and had the distinct privilege of being chosen as one of the Sampson Community College recipients of the North Carolina College System Academic Excellence Award. He was honored at a luncheon celebration at the Raleigh Convention Center last Spring. After completing his training in December 2012, he was referred by his case manager, Gloria Morrissey, to the Sampson County School System for a vacant Teacher's Assistant position. He was awarded the job and began working on January 16<sup>th</sup>, 2013.

"I love my new position and I am thankful for the WIA program and all it did to assist me and others like me in the same situations I encountered," Mr. Vernon stated.

