



### **Lisa Morris: Never too Late to Start a New Life**

During a tour of Zane State College's Cambridge Campus in 2010, then-Governor Ted Strickland met Medical Assisting Technology student Lisa Morris, a non-traditional student from Cumberland who had just completed her first year at the College.

"Quite frankly it touched my heart, brought tears to my eyes," said Governor Strickland of his meeting with Morris. "She talked about having a job where she felt unappreciated and disrespected and she said, 'I'm better than that.'"

Morris, who told Governor Strickland she felt she was treated poorly because she didn't have a good job, said she enrolled in college on the spur of the moment. "One day, I drove home in tears," said Morris. "I was passing Zane State College and I put my vehicle in reverse and I asked myself, 'Should I?' Then I thought, 'I'm already at the bottom of the pole so I may as well try something different.'"

When she met with Konrad Akens, Director of the Learning Resource Center, Morris relayed her fears about being too old to go to college. Then 43, the mother of two children—ages 16 and 20—had graduated from high school 25 years ago. Akens assured her that Zane State College students range from teens to well over 60 years old.

Morris' other concern was about paying for college. "When I was young I remember my mother and father arguing over money," Morris said. "They couldn't afford a car. I didn't feel like I could ask them for money to go to college. I wish I had known about resources like financial aid. Back then I thought college was only for rich people."

Today, with the support of her husband who works full time to cover the household bills, Morris relies on financial aid and student loans to help her finish college. Emboldened by receiving nearly all A's in her first class and plenty of attention from her caring instructors, Morris quickly felt at home at Zane State College. She is particularly happy that she can study with her 16-year-old daughter who attends Mid-East Career and Technology Centers with plans to become a registered nurse.

"A 45-year-old and a 16-year-old doing their homework together," Morris said, smiling. "It will be a happy memory in my heart for the rest of my life."