

## **Ballinger woman struggles, endures, and now, succeeds**

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After 37 years, one Ballinger woman proved that hard work, regardless of timing, pays off in the end.

Lebecca Davis was named for a great-grandmother, Rebecca. Davis' mother wanted to honor her grandmother, but not use her exact name.

"To this day, I don't know where she came up with 'L' instead of 'R'."

After spending her first few years in Ballinger, Davis moved to San Angelo with her mother and step-father, which was an environment not conducive to a healthy upbringing. During her sixth grade year, Davis was removed from the home and placed into foster care with a family in Abilene.

As a rebellious teenager, Davis said she was a "...tough little cookie."

"When they first got me, I was intent that nobody was going to touch me. I had walls up like you would not believe. I used to beat the daylights out of my foster sister. I used to carry a Bowie knife to school," Davis said.

Davis said she first learned the meaning of family love after a mishap with her foster family's vehicle. While out joyriding, Davis wrecked the station wagon. Expecting to be "beaten", Davis was surprised when her punishment was to pay restitution and fines. They treated me so much differently than what I expected to have been treated. They showed me what it meant to be loved."

Despite an ideal living situation, Davis was placed in another foster home, where she remained until her eighteenth birthday. At that time, she and a foster sister dropped out of school and moved to Albuquerque, New Mexico.

After earning a G.E.D., Davis and her foster sister joined the Job Corps. Davis initially wanted to enter the welding program, but a long wait list sent her to another program, where she completed a course in small electronic appliance repair.

Davis returned to Ballinger after an illness and the eventual passing of her maternal grandfather.

As the years passed, Davis was married, divorced and now has two sons, a 16 and 11-year-old, who both attend Ballinger schools.

After many failed jobs and attempting to be a good mother, Davis made the decision that she needed to do something that would provide her children with more stability.

Enrolling at Howard College to study accounting, Davis worked at Shoppin' Basket. "James (Pechal) was awesome with my schedule. Always, always, always, regardless of what my (school) schedule was, he worked with me."

One semester prior to graduation, Davis changed her major to business management. Juggling family, school and work caused Davis to take four years to complete the two-year Howard program.

Now the manager of Town and Country in Ballinger, Davis says many people have contributed to the success in her life. The first is Becky Horton at Beefmaster Steakhouse.

"That woman pushed me and pushed me. The reason she was doing that was to make me better."

The second was her foster mother in Abilene.

The third is Lou Lux, her college advisor. "He was my rock through college," Davis said. "He had coins made up to give to students as special rewards. I received two of them."

One of those coins remains in Davis' pocket to remind her that she can do anything.

Grateful to many others who have supported her, including her uncle Dale Brewer of Coleman, Davis encourages the public to visit Town and Country and say hello.