

Education to Careers

News about learning and earning

Education and Workforce Development Cabinet

Volume 1, January 2009

The Green Team

One teacher is taking green technology and making it part of the lesson plan.

A New Career

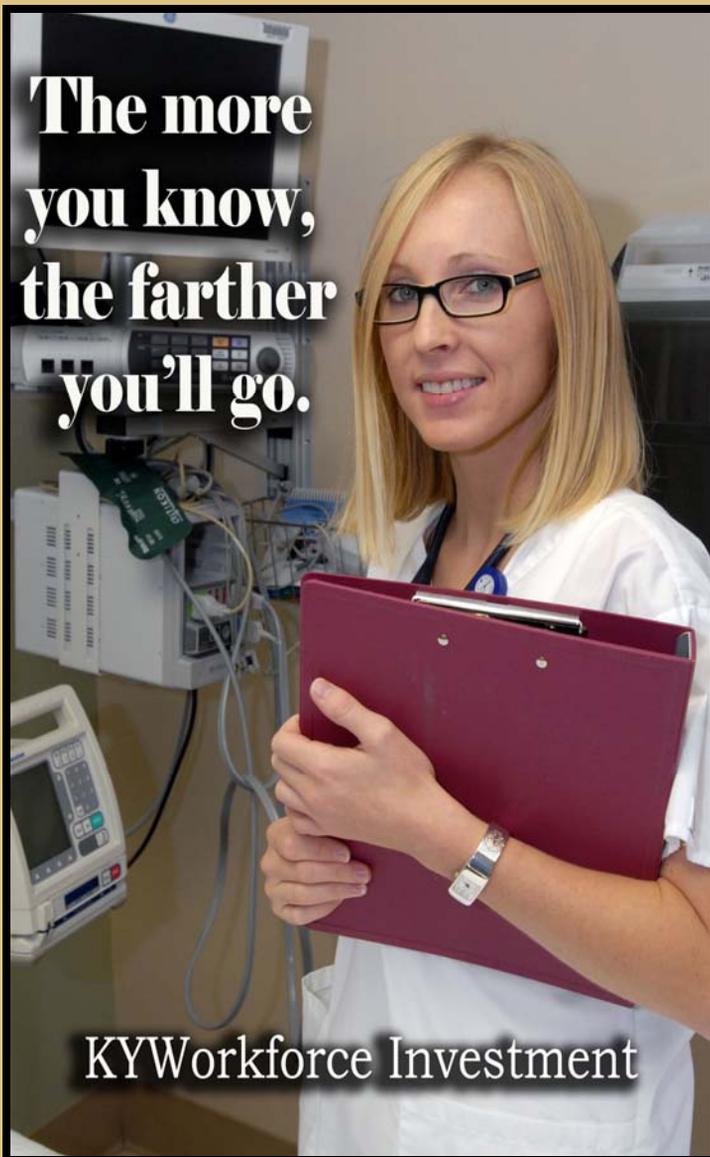
Now is the time to get more education and learn something new.

Champion

Meet a student who gives a different meaning to the word.

Plus: A message from the Secretary

**The more
you know,
the farther
you'll go.**



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A message from the Secretary

Greetings and welcome to the first edition of ETC, Education to Careers Newsletter. I think the name truly is indicative of what we do in our cabinet – educate our citizens so they may find a rewarding career.

It is especially important in these tough economic times to know what our options are when it comes to career opportunities and to see just what magnificent things our teachers, students and agencies are doing to make these opportunities a reality.

I hope you enjoy the articles and learn something new from each issue. This newsletter will go out to our workforce, education and industry partners, so feel free to contact us if you have an interesting story to share.

Please know that your hard work and dedication don't go unnoticed, and we hope tools such as this newsletter can communicate the great things that you are doing to better yourselves and the people with whom you work and serve.

Sincerely,

Helen W. Mountjoy, Secretary
Kentucky Education and Workforce
Development Cabinet



Secretary Helen Mountjoy

Wind and Solar Power Energizes School

RUSSELL, Ky. – The need for alternative energy sources is becoming more of a necessity these days as the cost of traditional energy has skyrocketed over the last few years, and no one is more aware of that than Doug Keaton.

Keaton, an electrical technology instructor at the Russell Area Technology Center in Greenup County is doing something about it by integrating alternative energy projects into his classroom activities and creating ways to save the school money on its energy bills. And so far, the students are making the project a success.

“If you have students willing to go outside the normal parameters of education other people will follow,” said Keaton. “We’re showing the community real education and integration. Our students have taken over this project and it has become part of their persona. You can’t find that in a book; it’s not a technical skill, it’s a life skill.”



Pictured: This solar panel house at the Russell Area Technology Center is flanked by a wind turbine that sets atop a 60 foot tower. Both are part of an ongoing energy project conducted by electrical technology students at the school. The house contains batteries that hold the power generated by the solar panels and the wind turbine which is then used by the school to save on energy costs. Kameron Smith, left, and Derrick Colt discuss the solar array.

The idea began as a collaborative effort funded through a Tech Prep grant with Russell High School physics instructor Joe Aldrich.

Tech Prep is an educational program consisting of a sequence of courses and requirements that identify both academic and technical education courses that lead to a specific associate's degree or degrees in a career-technical education.

The two instructors worked with students on both academic and technical aspects of the projects providing the means to take it from the text book stage to the real world stage.

"I have found that my honors students have gained a deeper respect for students taking vocational classes. It has also opened their eyes to possible future careers that may or may not necessarily require going to college. These types of projects help to motivate my students to want to learn more. It makes teaching fun and exciting," said Aldrich.

The Russell project is designed around a three-year plan to study and initiate ways to reduce the school's dependency on traditional energy sources while incorporating the core content of the electrical technology program. So far students have centered their efforts on wind energy and solar energy. Keaton's class has constructed a wind turbine generator and recently completed

construction of a solar panel house made completely of recycled material and used to hold solar panels and store batteries powered by the panels and the wind turbine.

While working on the projects students have built wind mills on a smaller scale putting the information they have gathered into an applied technology arena. They also created an energy conservation display that contains two residential electric meters that measure energy use by incandescent and compact fluorescent bulbs.

The efforts of the project led to a partnership with the NEED (National Energy Education Development) Project. According to its mission statement, NEED promotes "an energy conscious and educated society by creating effective networks of students, educators, business, government and community leaders to design and deliver objective, multi-sided energy education programs."

NEED has used the display at numerous events across the state to demonstrate the energy and money savings accumulated by using the more energy-efficient fluorescent bulbs. In many cases Keaton's students, known as the E-3 Team (Efficient Electrical Energy), have accompanied the display sharing their experience of completing the project.

Keaton and his students have been recognized on the state and national levels with a 2007 Earth Day Award and NEED's Traveling Energy Star Partner of the Year award.

The solar panel house was recently dedicated at a ceremony attended by local and state officials including Education and Workforce Development Cabinet Secretary Helen Mountjoy.

"What Mr. Keaton and his students are doing is amazing. They've taken basic instruction, added in cutting edge approaches to alternative energy, and have come out with a program that is a model for others across the country," she said.

Keaton's goal has not just been to teach his students about electricity through non-conventional methods but to teach them the importance of alternative energy and the environmental and economical impacts energy has on society in general.

The next phase of the project will take the students into the bio-fuels area. They will construct a biodiesel processor and collect used vegetable oil from the local school district's cafeterias to use as the raw material for the fuel. The construction is to be finished by the end of the school year and if all goes well, at least one bus in the district will be fueled by the biodiesel.

"In order for our state to be number one in energy production, we have to be one in energy education. I'm telling our students that green collar jobs are where their future will be," said Keaton.



A radiometer is used to demonstrate how energy produces change in every environment. Sunlight enters the glass globe as radiant energy. When the air molecules are heated, there is movement between those molecules that are warm and cool. This, in turn, produces mechanical energy, and the floating turbine on top of the needle spins.

A NEW CAREER

As the lull in the economy continues, many are finding now is the right time to start on a new career

You don't have to look hard to find bad news about the economy these days. Just recently the federal government announced the country was officially in a recession and has been for a year.

Most of us already knew that. The question now is how long will it last and how much damage will it do. For some the damage has been done and they are looking for new employment. Others are afraid something will happen to their jobs in the near future.

As bad as that is, now could be the time to consider making a change in careers. The fact is Kentucky has a broad network of training facilities and educational opportunities unknown to many. Through a series of Office of Employment and Training (OET) facilities, One-Stop Career Centers and community colleges, those wishing to change careers either out of desire or necessity can do so through various educational and training programs, some at no cost.

For many it has been a no-brainer. Junelle Anderson, of Clay City, was in a factory job that seemed to be going nowhere. As a single mother, the prospects of changing careers seemed impossible. Still, she longed for more. After hearing about an opportunity to become a nurse, she took the first step and visited the Central KY Job Center in Richmond and has never looked back. There she found information about a nursing career and how to obtain it through the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) with little or no cost to her.

"It took me two years to become a Registered Nurse, and now I love my job and the fact that I'm helping people and learning something new everyday," she said.

David Becker of Danville found a new career but for a slightly different reason. The company where he had worked for 24 years moved its operations overseas leaving Becker looking for something new at a point in his life when he least expected it.

“I never thought I would have to leave my job, but I knew at 51, I’d need more education to find another job,” he said.

Becker learned of new training and educational opportunities through the Central KY Job Center’s Rapid Response Team, an early intervention service offered to businesses and workers affected by layoffs and plant closings.

This team is trained to react quickly to announcements concerning permanent facility closures or substantial layoff situations throughout the state.

Rapid Response works closely with Local Workforce Investment Boards and local officials in adversely affected areas to insure that dislocated workers receive program information and services at no cost to the business or the participating employees.

Becker got his associate’s degree in applied sciences and certification in industrial maintenance technology and electrical technology in two years. He began his new career last August in charge of maintenance operations at the Danville campus of Bluegrass Community and Technical College.

Many employment centers offer a variety of services in one place. Kentucky One-Stop Career Centers are designed to give job seekers and employers quick and easy access to those necessary services.

Each center offers labor market information, employment trends, education and training, and job seeker and employment services.

Those include access to computers, faxes and phones for job searches,

career development workshops, information on local job fairs, resume writing and interview tips, one-on-one career counseling, up-to-date job postings, job placement, and recruitment and training. The centers match job seekers with businesses looking to hire and help laid-off workers learn new skills and find not only a new job but a new career.

One-Stop Centers also provide access to Veterans services, unemployment insurance benefits, adult education, workforce investment act, and rehabilitation services for job seekers with disabilities.



David Becker works with an electrical power system at BCTC.

Jeanne Devers is a workforce development operations administrator with the Education and Workforce Development Cabinet's Office of Employment and Training who oversees the Georgetown and Frankfort offices. She said one of the most important things for a customer to know is that there are ample training opportunities for anyone that walks through their doors.

“I really believe we can help anyone that comes here. Granted, it may not be in the same type of job they had, but there are many training opportunities and financial assistance for those programs,” she said.

Paula England is a Workforce Investment Act (WIA) Business Service Specialist/Team Leader at the Georgetown office and said the center also provides skill assessments, resume design assistance, intensive job searches, interest surveys and career planning and guidance. “We will work very closely with customers to provide guidance and assist them in developing skills to meet their career goals,” she said.

One of the newer One-Stops, a KentuckianaWorks One-Stop Career Center, is located in Bullitt County and houses not only employment services but is also home to a Jefferson Community & Technical College satellite campus.

The center helps those looking for new careers by traditional means as well as through the educational venues available at the facility.

“The center is designed to teach and train students in different areas and then help in finding them a job,” said Bullitt County Adult Education Director Jim Boswell.

There are 32 centers located across the state. As training needs are different in those areas, the training available corresponds with the opportunities in that region.

Becker and Anderson have found new careers thanks to their own determination and the efforts of agencies and programs like OET and WIA. Still Becker said he intends to continue with his education.

“I want to further my education. As technology changes, I want to be able to keep up my skills so I can be more productive in today’s society,” he said.



Junelle Anderson checks a monitor in the ICU at Clark Regional Medical Center.



Champion: Stephanie Shaia gives new meaning to the word

*“I don’t have any other choice
but to stay positive.”*

– Stephanie Shaia

Anyone who is a member of a team wants to win the big game. They want to win that championship and be recognized as the best. Stephanie Shaia, a senior at Ballard Memorial High School is no exception, especially when it comes to her drive to be the best.

In her high school career, she has maintained a 4.0 GPA, is closing in on a Kentucky Commonwealth diploma, scored a 35 on her ACT and recently won a national championship for the second consecutive year – in separate events, no less – at the annual Health Occupations Students of America (HOSA) National Leadership Conference.

In the world of HOSA, that is the equivalent of winning the Super Bowl two years in a row on two separate teams. Stephanie’s 2007 championship in Orlando, Fla. was in Researched-Persuasive Speaking for her paper and speech on stem cell research. Her 2008 championship in Dallas, Texas, was in Sports Medicine. Stephanie also serves as the Kentucky State Parliamentarian for HOSA, an organization for secondary and postsecondary students who are interested in or training to be in the health care profession by way of health sciences classes taken at their local schools, colleges and technical centers. Members are continuously involved in community

activities, training sessions and leadership roles, not to mention a rigorous course of study.

She credits her high grades and accomplishments to hard work and not so much from natural talent. "I'm not one of those students who doesn't have to do anything at all to do well, I just study a lot. That's why my grades are so high," she said.

As if that was not enough activity, Stephanie is the captain of her high school color guard team and plays two instruments. She has helped with a summer reading program at her former elementary school and has been a volunteer in the physical therapy (PT) department at Lourdes, a local healthcare facility. Stephanie wants to get a doctorate in PT.

In addition to all this, she has been instrumental in helping put together and be a part of student athletic trainers on various teams.

All that hard work has paid off, but there is more to the story. She has accomplished all these feats while battling juvenile multiple sclerosis (MS), a chronic, often disabling disease that attacks the central nervous system. Stephanie's symptoms started in June 2007, and she was diagnosed last December with the disease. Anyone suffering from it is often tired and must get plenty of rest. On a regular basis, she receives IV treatments and takes lots of medication.

In some cases, Stephanie needed help to break paralysis in the mornings just to get up and

participate in her events during the HOSA conference. In Dallas, she often competed while wearing an ice vest commonly worn by NASCAR drivers and Olympic athletes to cool their bodies in extreme heat. Hot weather is an enemy to MS patients, but Stephanie went on. Her pain and discomfort went undetected by anyone except her advisors and teammates.

Both Stephanie and her mother Ella Shaia, credit the school system she attends and her teachers with helping them get through this difficult time.

"I have to tell you that when Stephanie's health was declining they (school personnel) went to bat to accommodate her," said Ella. "The MS has slowed down her ability to read and understand what she is reading, but her school has been over the top."

Stephanie is particularly grateful to her health sciences teacher and local HOSA advisor Cindy Allardin who said, "She is one of those types of students that if you give her a project...she will just run with it. She knows how to pool her resources. She is extremely intelligent and works to learn all she can about the event so that she does well on the written as well as the performance. I never have to worry about her preparation. It's done. She's an awesome young lady."

Allardin added that knowing Stephanie the way she does, next year's HOSA National Leadership Conference will mean one thing and one thing only to her; going for the three-peat!

Having avoided the "pity party" attitude, Stephanie has added to her list of activities and accomplishments by working for those with MS as well as other diseases. She headed the first Ballard County HOSA Walk MS team last year and collected close to \$3,000 for the MS Society as well as walking herself. She also walked a lap at Relay for Life.

As with most high school seniors, Stephanie is planning her future right now. She wants to attend Belmont University in Nashville and start working toward her doctorate and a job related to sports medicine. She again credits her secondary education for preparing her for college and life after that. Her classes at the Ballard County Career and Technical Center (CTC) have included an introduction to pharmacy, physical therapy and sports medicine.

"Every day I have two of my four health sciences classes at the CTC. I just started PT tech classes and have had the introduction to pharmacy. The sports medicine class will help me with the athletic side and next year when I get to college, I will get to expand that. I want the strongest base I can get and I'm getting it here," she said.

"Our Health Sciences program just expanded to two teachers. The program will keep growing because we keep growing. The classes are full."

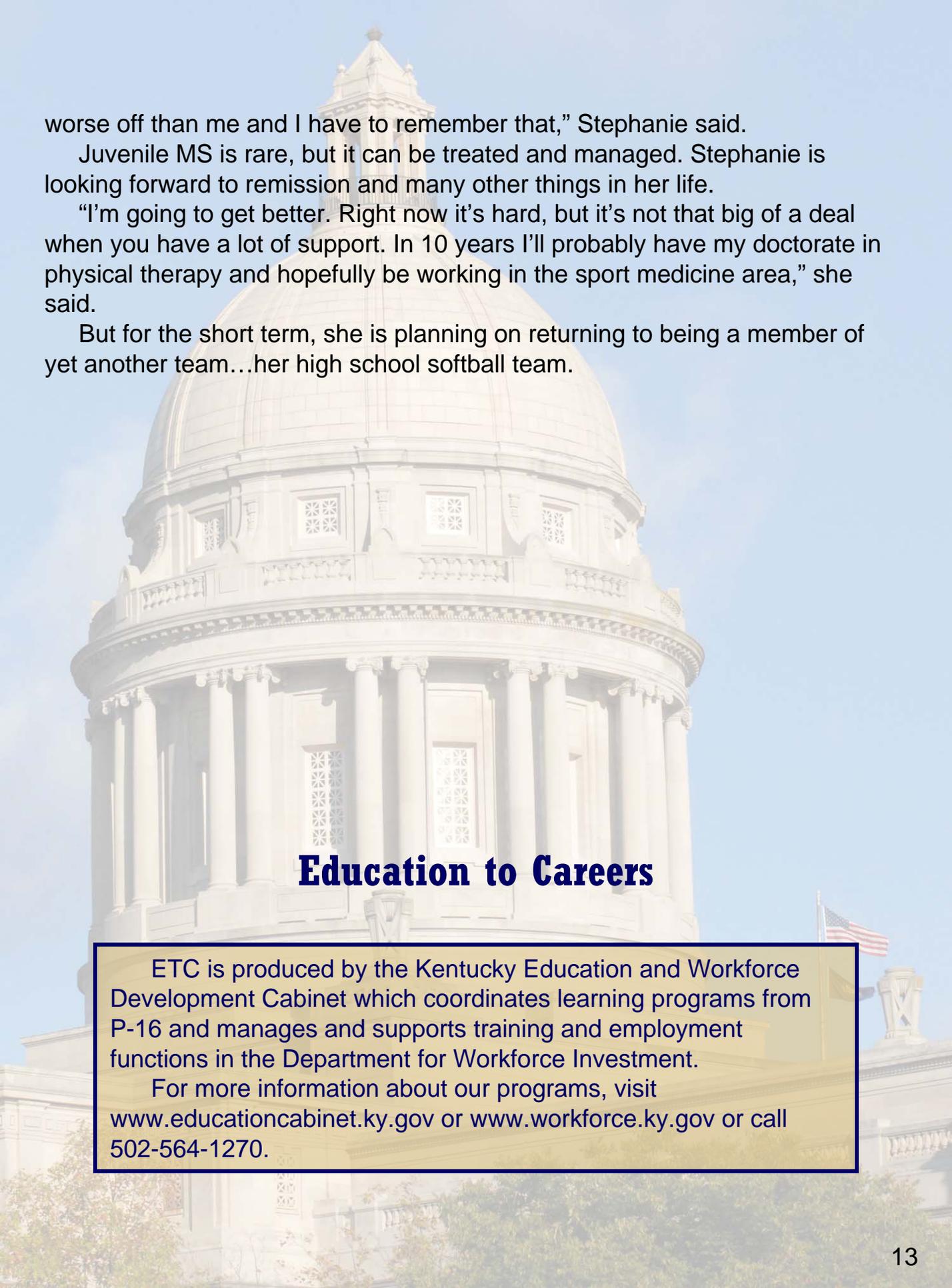
Stephanie refers to herself as a vocational student, something that is not always positive in the world of academia. But she is proving the theory of "vocational students" being less than par, a misnomer. This is not surprising since she has made a habit out of beating the odds and disproving doubters.

Her mom reinforces that support of her educational course. "We knew what she always wanted to do and it was something in the medical field...from that point it was a matter of finding the right school for her. When you get good support in school you can do anything," she said.

The last year has been a tough one for the Shaia family. "Within six months, the course of her disease took Stephanie from being very active to nearly being in a wheelchair," said Ella. "If I could take it away and put it on me, I would."

But Stephanie would not want it that way, although she hasn't always been able to make the proverbial lemonade out of lemons.

"This has cut down on my social life! A lot of times I'm stuck at home on the couch. There is no point in saying it's horrible, though. I don't have any other choice but to stay positive. There are always people



worse off than me and I have to remember that,” Stephanie said.

Juvenile MS is rare, but it can be treated and managed. Stephanie is looking forward to remission and many other things in her life.

“I’m going to get better. Right now it’s hard, but it’s not that big of a deal when you have a lot of support. In 10 years I’ll probably have my doctorate in physical therapy and hopefully be working in the sport medicine area,” she said.

But for the short term, she is planning on returning to being a member of yet another team...her high school softball team.

Education to Careers

ETC is produced by the Kentucky Education and Workforce Development Cabinet which coordinates learning programs from P-16 and manages and supports training and employment functions in the Department for Workforce Investment.

For more information about our programs, visit www.educationcabinet.ky.gov or www.workforce.ky.gov or call 502-564-1270.