

# In class, dropout's life fell into place

## Hendrix's new chief recalls journey

Arkansas Democrat-Gazette

6 Aug 2023

RYAN ANDERSON

**Karen Petersen, the 13th president of Hendrix College, poses for a photo in her office in June at the Hendrix College campus in Conway.**



CONWAY — Karen Petersen grew up in a family and in a community in South Florida where education wasn't emphasized, she recalled.

In fact, when she dropped out of high school, “no one cared.”

Working in the auto industry with no discernible future, she “had an epiphany,” she said. “I can't do this; I have to have an education.”

So, she attained her GED, then started community college, where “for the first time I felt I belonged somewhere.”

“My life was changed so much because of education, and I want that for others, because we are in the business of changing lives,” said Petersen, who took over as the new president of Hendrix on June 1. “That's what we do.”

*Read the rest of the story...*

<https://ao.pressreader.com/article/281762748773581>