

## Clark balances roles as mother, student, worker

By **ASHLEY SULLIVAN**  
Staff Writer

Valerie Clark balances roles as a mother, wife, employee and student.

Almost 24-hours a day seven days a week, Valerie Clark is either in school or working. Somewhere between raising three kids, being a wife and maintaining a job outside the home, she is still able to handle a full-time course load as a student at Wayne Community College. While she knows how important education is to her success, she and other students saw how her children might be just as important to the attainment of their education.

Recently, one of her children was able to visit with a developmental psychology class she is taking. At that particular time, the class was discussing early childhood cognitive development and abilities. Being 8-years-old, her son provided living confirmation of the information covered in the class textbook.

"I see the things we talk about in the kids. I try to step back and look at situations through their eyes," Clark said smiling.

Clark's instructor, Sue McClenny, allowed her to bring her son so other students would be able to see a child's mind in action. During his visit, McClenny asked the boy questions and from his responses the class was able to gain a better understanding of their child development studies.

Clark knows from first-hand experience how instrumental the knowledge she obtains through her courses can will be in understanding why children behave, speak, play, interact and think the way they do.

With that knowledge under her belt, she is able to move a little more easily though other challenges that she faces. One of the obstacles Clark faces is the overwhelming amount of information that can be packed into a class. Another issue that she shares with nearly everyone is time. After helping the kids with their homework, supper, getting their baths done and putting them to bed, she finally finds the time to do her own work.

Before becoming who and what she is today, Clark went through some of the life processes most everyone has faced. Previously, she worked as a waitress, caregiver in a day-care facility and as a habilitation technician. Clark currently works with the Mental Health Association of North Carolina as a program manager. She deals with individuals who seek treatment or help for substance abuse and addictions.

"I love to help people. I want to be a part of aiding them in

See Clark on 7



Photo by **ASHLEY SULLIVAN**

Like the psychology book before her, Valerie Clark has a wealth of knowledge.

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