

EDUCATION. EDUCATION. EDUCATION.

THAT WAS YOLANDA BRADLEY'S mantra as she raised three biological children and became the guardian of five more. Her mother had not completed high school and neither had Bradley, who left school in her senior year, already the mother of three daughters.

"I was moving too fast", she recalls, "and being a little too grown up."

The teenager may have been moving fast, but fast was also how she had to grow up. At 14, Bradley gave birth to her first baby, Antourial. At 16, Antoinette was born. The baby she calls Angel weighed only one pound at birth and was in the Intensive Care Unit so long that the hospital required her to sign a waiver that the hospital wasn't liable if the baby went blind.

The physician wasn't sure Bradley was old enough to make such a serious decision.

"If you can do your job as a doctor, I can do my job as a mother," Bradley told him. "I believe in God. What happens, happens." Fortunately, Angel not only survived, she thrived.

One year later, Bradley had her third biological child—Arlishia.

Just a few years later, situations in the lives of her family and friends led her to become the guardian of Tierenee, Jo-Shanna, Quantavious, Jo-vontay and Ketric, making Bradley the mother of eight.

After her family expanded, Bradley was determined that her children would put an end to the history of not finishing high school.

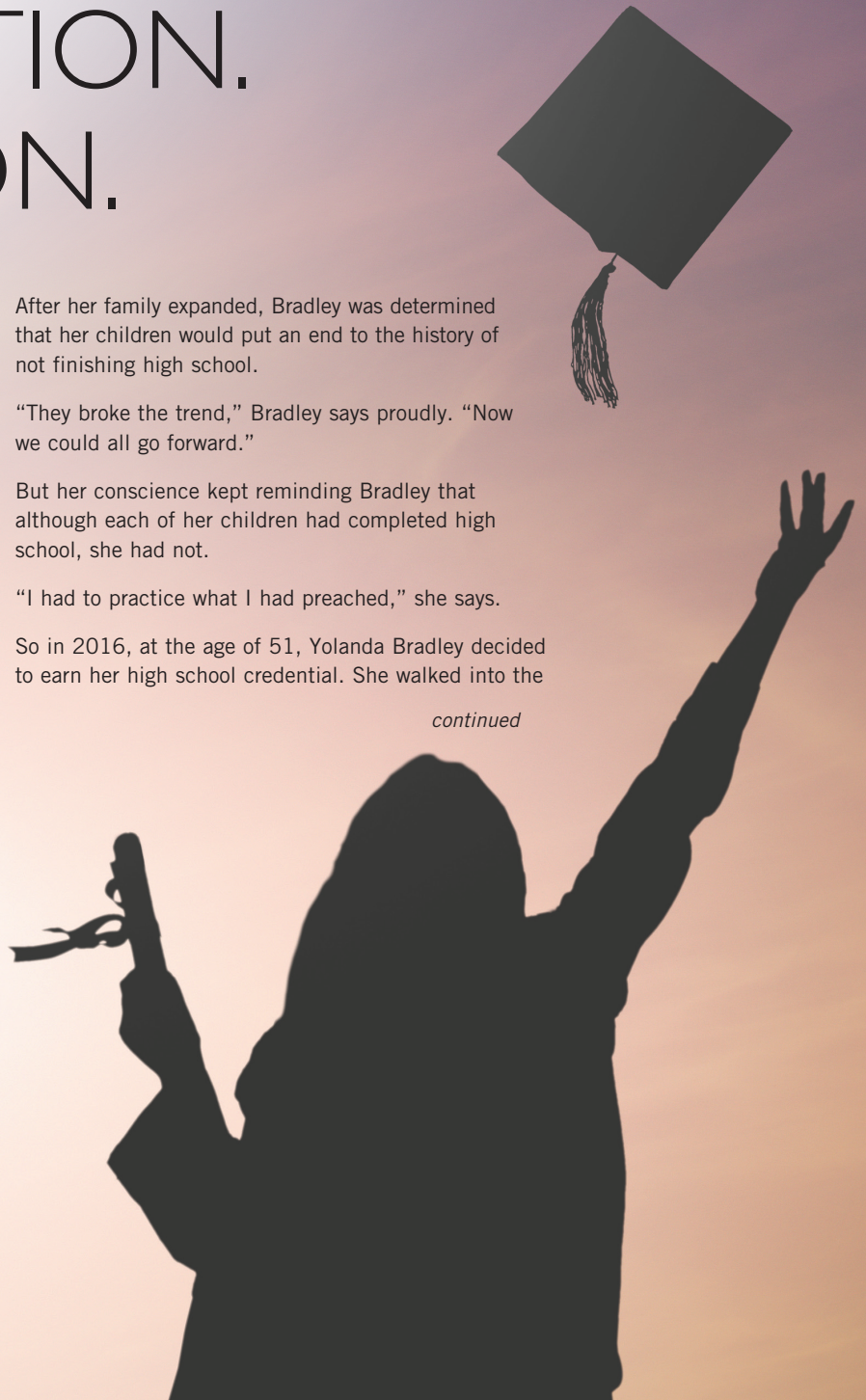
"They broke the trend," Bradley says proudly. "Now we could all go forward."

But her conscience kept reminding Bradley that although each of her children had completed high school, she had not.

"I had to practice what I had preached," she says.

So in 2016, at the age of 51, Yolanda Bradley decided to earn her high school credential. She walked into the

continued





Atlanta Public Schools Adult Education Center, where she met Center Director, Dr. Albenny Price and her next challenge.

“We try to accept the adults where they are and move them to the next level,” Price says. “Whether they need to finish their postsecondary education or acquire skills to get a better job or become more productive citizens, we focus on moving them to that next level.”

Each learner begins with an orientation.

“You are going to need to go online and set up a GED® profile,” Price explained to Bradley.

Like many other learners, Bradley was not familiar with computers and was fearful of trying to use one.

Bradley persisted.

“You take the test on a computer,” Bradley explains, “and the assessment is also on the

Price was responsible for introducing FastForward at the Center. He wanted to create a GED class and thought it would be a good fit.

“FastForward is pretty simple and straight to point,” Price says. “What students need is there.”

Bradley agrees.

“I like the program because it explains the material in a way that you can understand,” she says. “I really like that when you take a test, you have more than one time to get the answer and if you still get it wrong, it will show you how to arrive at the correct answer. Other software programs make you take the entire test and you never have the opportunity to see your mistakes.”

Bradley has passed three of the four exams to earn her GED credential. Only math stands in her way of graduating.

Adult educator Debra Tavaras works with Bradley one-on-one to hone her math skills, often going

“When you take a test, you have more than one time to get the answer and if you get it wrong, it will show you how to arrive at the correct answer.”

computer. You have to conquer this. One day, the computer will become your friend.”

Bradley was right. Although fearful at first, once Bradley got on the computer, she quickly learned her way around.

It was the same for FastForward, Kentucky Educational Television’s learning system designed to help adult learners prepare for high school equivalency tests, college, and careers.

to the blackboard with her to practice equations. Then it is back to FastForward for more practice.

That practice will come in handy in the years to come. Bradley has 10 grandchildren and a great grandchild, all of whom she expects to get a good education—just as she has.

