

'Take a chance'

Mandy Christian finds the perfect fit at GTD and MCC

By Shelly Springborn

Mandy Christian happened to be in the right place at the right time when she applied for an accounting position at Greenville Tool and Die (GTD).

Christian was living in Belding at the time and commuting to her job as an accounts payable clerk in Grand Rapids. While she was open to seeking a position closer to home, she wasn't heavily searching for a new opportunity.

"Every time I drove by Greenville Tool, I thought I would apply if they ever were hiring a position I was qualified for," Christian said. "I had always heard it was a great company to work for."

Then it happened – she saw a message from a recruiting company that GTD was advertising for a staff accountant. She applied that day and was quickly contacted for an interview.

"I got very lucky. For the position I applied for, I didn't have all the skills or even a majority of the skills that they wanted," Christian said.

One thing she did have was the desire and willingness to learn.

"When I went for my interview, they asked if I would be willing to go back to school for accounting," she said. "Until that time, my only experience in accounting was as an accounts payable clerk. So, I didn't really know anything about debits or credits or the details of accounting. They chose to send me to MCC.

"I loved it. It was a great school for me," she said. "A lot of the classes I needed were offered around my work schedule

and if not, my employer was very generous with letting me work around my work schedule."

It was a perfect match for her with a company that has a long history of investing in its employees through education. Christian started at GTD in March 2016, and by fall, she was enrolled at MCC.

While she had attended Indiana University, where she studied psychology, Christian said she was a bit apprehensive about returning to school. Then she met Business Instructor Bill Bishop and Math Instructor Dan Long.

"They both were very patient. If I needed help, they would help me. I appreciate that. They were great," she said.

To earn her associate degree in accounting, Christian took two classes most semesters and occasionally three, as well as summer classes. Plus, some of the classes she completed at Indiana University reverse transferred to MCC, and were applied toward her degree requirements.

"Most of my classes were at night. It definitely made for long days, but it wasn't bad," she said.

Christian has been with GTD for more than five years and currently is a staff accountant and human resources assistant.

Her advice to others is "take a chance. Apply for the job you don't think you are qualified for or might be out of your comfort zone because you might get the opportunity," she said. "That's what happened to me. It has done wonders for me all the way around. I love my job!"

