

The Way Station



From Pathways Participant to Licensed Teacher The Power of Short-Term Goals



My name is **Ruth Rickerd**, and I am a former participant in The Way Station's **Pathways to Independence** program. A big component of this curriculum is goal setting. In life, creating both short- and long-term goals is very important.

When I set my short-term goal, it was to be admitted to Kent State's Early Childhood Education degree program. My long-term plan was to graduate with a **Bachelor's in Early Childhood Education**. I worked hard to save the incentive money I earned from participating in PTI to purchase a laptop, which I knew would be necessary to complete the degree. On that computer, I attended classes during the COVID lockdown, wrote papers, and did everything necessary to **graduate this year on May 9th**. Since graduating, I have used it to write resumes and cover letters. Most recently, I used my laptop to schedule my fingerprints and background check because I was hired as a **substitute teacher!**

My current long-term goal is to pass the three exams needed to become a **licensed K-5 teacher in Ohio**. Of course, that goal will be broken down one exam at a time into short-term goals. I will save money from each paycheck to pay for and take one exam at a time. That, after all, is the only way to achieve big goals. You can feel overwhelmed if you look at the whole picture. However, if you break it down, you will be **less stressed and more successful**. That is what I did during my time at Kent State University. I took one semester at a time, and within that, I focused on each assignment. Remember, once you achieve one goal, you make a new one. Goal setting is the only way to succeed in achieving your dreams.

I am so grateful for the Pathways program teaching me how to set goals. If you are reading this as a donor to The Way Station, **thank you** on behalf of myself and the others whose dreams your funds have allowed to come true. If you are reading this as a current participant, keep going and remember, **with God all things are possible**. You've got this because He's got you. (*Pathways to Independence (PTI) is funded by Columbiana County Job & Family Services*).

