

Rigby Wilcox Adult Learner Award

I have been working since October with Kelly Cotter, a young woman in her twenties who is trying very hard to achieve her GED and find employment as a Teacher's Aid.

Kelly has cognitive disabilities and is working extraordinarily hard at overcoming them. She is active in several areas within SACL, including self-advocacy and social groups. She has spoken to various groups about dealing with disabilities. Not only does she speak at schools, but she has gone with a group to other countries to tell people about living with and dealing with the different challenges people face. She has been involved with the fundraising for these trips.

Kelly works two shifts per week at a grocery store and has recently begun babysitting two morning per week. Seeking financial independence is very important to her, but so is being otherwise independent. She tells me about her chores of doing her laundry and cleaning her room.

Kelly is always at her meetings with me, and on time, despite walking (usually) in all weather to get to the library. She usually has her homework finished, but we accept that sometimes life gets in the way and she's too busy to complete it. I think it's a positive thing she is so busy at other things.

Kelly presents a new experience for me as a tutor, and I wasn't sure what to expect. She has



exceeded my expectations in many ways. I know some people take longer to do certain tasks than others, but she keeps working on them. I can see sometimes she's getting frustrated, but she is then quite willing to switch gears and work on some other area. She doesn't give up and quit. I am able to see some improvement in her writing and comprehension abilities, and her mother, with whom she lives, tells her she sees improvement also. She keeps a positive attitude and is very willing to start learning in different areas.



I am gaining an understanding of people who face challenges and of how such challenges can sometimes be overcome with desire and effort.

I have great admiration for Kelly, who is facing her challenges head-on and doing an exceptional amount of work in order to overcome them. She is a confident, hard working woman who has a goal and is working towards it.

I hope you find Kelly Cotter deserving of special recognition.

Peggy McGregor
Kelly's Literacy Tutor