

LITERACY CENTER

PROMOTING RESEARCH & STUDY OF LITERACY & LANGUAGE

THE EDWARD STEVENS CENTER
FOR THE STUDY AND
DEVELOPMENT OF LITERACY
AND LANGUAGE



Katie Barkman

Buckeye Career Center

Katie Barkman grew up Amish in Charm, Ohio, where her mother owned Miller's Dry Goods, a fabric and quilting store. When Katie's mother died, the store was turned over to Katie, her sister and her brother. Recently, Katie's sister purchased the store outright from Katie and her brother, leaving Katie with the free time she needs to pursue her educational goal of becoming a nurse.

Although Katie was raised "Amish," she had long dreamed of becoming a nurse. While she was growing up, her father dealt with medical problems that required frequent hospital stays. Watching the nurses work Katie knew she "wanted to help people" and set her sites on nursing. Unfortunately, Amish school ends at the 8th grade and as Katie says, "The word 'algebra' is not in our language."

Katie left the Amish way of life in 1995 although she continued working in her mother's dry goods store. In 2004, Katie decided to go for her GED. She felt excited at the prospect of getting her GED and started the program in January, 2004 at Hiland High School. Just one short month later, Katie passed the GED in February, 2004. It was in May, 2004, that Katie first heard about the nursing program at Kent State's Tuscarawas County campus and decided to learn more about the requirements. "When I got my GED it made me feel that I can do anything I want! That piece of paper was incredible." Katie has begun taking the pre-requisite classes for the 2 year program and hopes to be admitted this fall.

Katie credits family, friends and teachers for giving her the moral support she needed to make the decisions that led to her receiving her GED and working towards her nursing degree. "I want to conquer the world. The future is positive. I encourage anybody at any age to go for it! You only live once!"

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