

El Barrio Success



Kelly lost her job and desperately needed to find employment in order to support herself and her young child.

Her case worker at Cuyahoga County's Employment & Family Services Program referred her to El Barrio's Job Readiness and Job Search Programs in April of 2010. Once she enrolled in the programs at El Barrio, Kelly expressed interest in joining the Customer Service Program and was accepted.

In the Customer Service Program, Kelly was able to fine-tune her customer service skills and practice workplace skills, including phone calls. One of El Barrio's Corporate Partners, a local call center, received Kelly's resume and a letter of recommendation from a staff member and called her for an interview.

El Barrio recognizes where clients need assistance in other areas of their lives and provided Kelly with a referral to Dress for Success. "I wore my Dress for Success [clothes] to my interview," said Kelly. "I had a lot more confidence that day." On the particular weekend that Kelly went to Dress for Success Cleveland, there were extra services offered because it was Mother's Day. Not only did she receive work-appropriate clothing, but she was also able to pick from a variety of different makeover services. Needless to say, the call center hired Kelly in June.

Six months later, Kelly still works for the same company and credits El Barrio with her success. "It really prepared me—I learned business language, how to carry myself, and how to overcome obstacles," she said. "I want to go back and speak to people in the program because the more seriously that you take [the programs], the more prepared you are for employment and the next step."