

SSI Ohio Project Success Story: Rebecca

A couple of months ago I began meeting with a 47 year-old female client, *Rebecca. She appeared as a person who was very ill, penniless, homeless and despondent.

I came to learn more of Rebecca's story while representing her during the SSA disability application process. As a child growing up, she had dreamed of becoming prosperous and was excited about her future. As it turns out, this wife and mother of two had earned her Bachelor's degree and worked diligently for many years in her profession. Instead of enjoying a stable life and a happy home, Rebecca ultimately ended up in a place very different from where she was headed. To the general public, Rebecca may be perceived as an unlikely candidate among individuals who are disabled and homeless.

To say that Rebecca has traveled a rough road is an understatement. Due to her disability she had lost her job four years before meeting with me. During the past few years, she gradually became too sick to navigate the chores and responsibilities of daily life. Additionally, an unspeakable loss occurred when both of Rebecca's children became critically ill and died.

Currently, Rebecca is in the process of a divorce; whenever we meet it is clear that she feels unconnected and rejected on multiple levels. These devastating events, along with her inherent transportation barriers, issues with housing, unreliable support systems, access to little money, and the challenges of navigating the complex maze of disability benefits add further anxiety to Rebecca's life.

Fortunately, because of the SSI Ohio Project, I was able to work with this client to help her receive a swift presumptive decision, which quickly led to a final approval. Now, having a steady source of income will hopefully grant Rebecca some peace of mind. Rebecca is settling into a home of her own through low-income housing assistance. Her SSI/SSDI is also providing the means to allow her to continue pursuing therapy and purchasing the medications she needs to survive. While being awarded Social Security benefits does not lessen the personal effects of her disability, it has opened up the door to other resources that can help Rebecca secure stability.

-SSI Ohio Specialist

**Client's name has been changed to protect identity.*