

# HELP FOR GOOD

ALYSSA



Stark County  
Board of  
Developmental  
Disabilities



# Alyssa Sutter

Meet 31-year-old Alyssa Sutter, a prep cook for AVI Food Services at Aultman Hospital. Since Alyssa left the school system, she spent many years at several day programs seeking purposeful employment and activity.

Alyssa's SSA Courtney Downing, had worked early on with Alyssa at a day program; Courtney felt that Alyssa had potential for community employment. And thanks to Courtney, she recommended Alyssa for Siffrin's EPIC program at Aultman Hospital beginning in February 2022.

"Many people thought it was a stretch for Alyssa's capabilities," said her parents, Beth and Dan Sutter. "The structure and positive atmosphere of the program enabled Alyssa to succeed. That structure included an interview process, showing up on time, navigating the building, having rules, and wearing a uniform and badge. All with the safety net and coaching from the Siffrin EPIC program (Sara & Marj)."

During Alyssa's interview she was asked "What is your dream job?" To which she replied: "To work in a coffee shop." No one had ever interned at the Aultman Hospital coffee shop. But to Alyssa's delight, they created an intern rotation in the coffee shop as part of the EPIC program.

"When the rotation ended, we were worried that Alyssa would not want to leave. But Sarah coached her to be professional and she then moved on to the kitchen. To everyone's surprise, she liked it better than the coffee shop and was soon hired," said Beth.

Being an employee has boosted Alyssa's confidence. She received an employee packet, training, logs into the portal and receives cafeteria perks for perfect



attendance. So far she has established good relationships with her co-workers and feels part of the team.

Outside of work Alyssa has a lot of interests: going to any coffee shop in Stark and Summit or any place she travels; her grandpa “poppy” is one of her favorite coffee buddies. Alyssa likes to watch Netflix series, and does daily FaceTime calls with her one-year-old niece, Laurel.

With the funding assistance of an Individual Options (IO) Medicaid waiver, Alyssa not only has job coaching support on the job, she also is able to have transportation to and from work. Outside of work, the waiver helps Alyssa go on community outings with friends, including weekend trips out of town. Alyssa also enjoys traveling with her mom and dad, and has been active in Stark Sharks Special Olympics swimming for over 10 years.

Her daily chores include making bed, laundry--yes, every day, Alyssa loves clean clothes, and setting the table!

