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# Violence victim recovers from injuries, decides on new road through education

BY HOWARD MCEWEN | ENQUIRER CONTRIBUTOR

Kami Dressman doesn't remember being thrown through a second-story window, but she does remember deciding to turn her life around by getting an education.

Dressman, 38, a food server at the Fort Wright Bob Evans, can't recall the events leading up to the incident - driving home from work, walking up to her apartment or opening the door - and she is still not sure who threw her through the window. She spent the next month and a half in a coma and several months in rehabilitation.

Dressman permanently lost the hearing in her right ear and had to learn to walk and talk again.

ADVERTISEMENT It was in recovery that she decided to head back to school. She attends Gateway Community and Technical College.

"I went to the Adult Learning Center to see where I stood on my education after the head injury," said Dressman, of Covington. "I wasn't sure what I wanted to go to school for and after looking over the programs that Gateway offered I decided to go for administrative assistant. I was somewhat familiar with the courses from high school."

When teacher Mary Wittrock was asked about Dressman's injury, she was unaware of any. "Kami's handicap, problem, injury has never been disclosed to me," said Wittrock. "I am personally unaware of obstacles, past or present, that she may be facing."

Gateway instructors are told students may need accommodations but are not given a reason for it.

"I can tell you this about Kami," said Wittrock. "She is an excellent student, has always met my expectations, has nearly perfect attendance, and demonstrates a sincere desire to gain the knowledge and skills needed to be successful."

There are 123 students, representing 4.2 percent of the total enrollment, with disabilities registered in the fall term at Gateway. Sixty-six of those students require an accommodation. Accommodations can include sitting closer to the instructor, using a tape recorder in class, or the use of a supplemental note taker.

Colleen Kane, Gateway's disability services coordinator, saw that Dressman needed another kind of support.

"I believe the way I helped Kami was to be a cheerleader in her life," said Kane. "Kami needed the most help in regaining her confidence to face challenges in life."

After all that she has been through, returning to school doesn't seem too hard. "I really enjoy school," said Dressman. "I like Gateway because the classes are small and everyone is very helpful."

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