

My name is Almena and I would like to tell you about the barriers I have broken and the one that I am able to see myself through with the help from MPBA and the people that love me and all of the people I work with. Now I'm writing the things that happen in my life the best I can explain it. I was 26 years old I got hit in the head with a baseball bat. I was beaten very badly, they left me there and when I awoke I was in the hospital with serious head injuries. I began to have seizures then my children's father died so I know I was depressed and a little scared. I had children to raise and no father. My mother helped me as much as she could until I began to hear voices. I don't know why or how they began but they did and I still hear voices to this day but they are controllable with the medication and the support I have around me. I have been in the hospital so many times I can't remember because I have tried to commit suicide more than once. I could imagine most of these things happened before I came to Bay City I lived in Detroit, Michigan and I didn't trust anyone. I was a bully; well they diagnosed me as being schizophrenic, bipolar, manic depressant, suicidal and homo-suicidal with chronic disorder. So I was in the hospital a lot. Since I've come to Bay City I have not been in the hospital. My doctor has decreased my medication and I'm very functional. I have a job and I'm able to deal with my mental issues like the voices, my anger. I'm not saying that it has all went away but through therapy and my case manger and my medications I am able to cope with everyday life a lot better. My job at New Dimensions gives me inspiration because of the people they are there are like me and have disabilities too. Maybe not the same as mine but still have them and we work together to help one another. The job coaches they help us to do new things and prepare us for working in America. Our supervisors always try to help us relate better with the community. Our Administrator is there to for us the things we need to help ourselves and show the community that were willing to do our best. Our production people getting us to work and inspiring us to do

it. All these things help me to come through barriers that I've had in my life for a long time I know that I still got a long way to go, but for now I am happy I'm in church, I have people who care and they show me they care. My medicine is just fine and it keeps me level and my therapist keeps me looking for new barriers to bust through, my case manager works to makes sure I have what I need and my doctors make sure that I can function with everyday living on my medication and if there is a problem they gave me a crisis number where I can get the help I need anytime, 24 hours a day. So it takes a lot of caring people to make a difference and these people are my support. That's my story. Thank you.