

HUDSON COUNTY

73-year-old grandmother completes her GED

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Mildred Walker of Jersey City completed her GED at the age of 73. (Courtesy of Barbara Armstrong)

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By Kristen Keller

The Jersey Journal

A Jersey City grandmother is proving it's never too late to get an education.

Mildred Walker, 73, crossed off the item that was atop her "bucket list" when she received her GED on June 14.

With the help of the Senior Community Services Employment at Easterseals, an organization that assists senior citizens and those with disabilities, she was set up with the classes that led to her GED.

"When I first came to Easterseals, they asked me what I wanted to do and I told them I wanted to finish my high school education," said Walker, who has four children, eight grandchildren and six great-grandchildren. "Thanks to them, I was able to do it."

Before starting this program, Walker worked in the cafeteria of Jersey City Medical Center and drove a school bus.

Now, she is aiming for another certificate.

Walker is planning to enroll at Saint Peter's University in the fall to major in public policy in hopes of helping others.

"I have been a resident of Jersey City for 51 years," said Walker. "I remember the way it was back then and I want to help the city get back to the way it was."

She is also helping to inspire other seniors to reach their goals as a member of the Participant Advisory Council at Easterseals. The group meets with seniors and helps them figure out the types of jobs they would like to work in and what training is required for those positions. Walker joined the group after receiving her GED.

Walker gives a lot of credit to Easterseals in Jersey City and its Senior Community Services Employment program, which helps people 55 and older get the training they need to find a job.

She is currently taking computer classes at New Jersey City University and is hoping to start at Saint Peter's University next fall.

"I've always wanted to inspire others to reach their goals and follow their dreams, and that is what I am doing by going back and getting these degrees."

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