

Homefront Pioneering Toolkit Atlantic Region

Prepared in July 2017 under the auspices of the Regional Bahá'í Council of the Atlantic States

Reflections from a Homefront Pioneer to a Goal Cluster

It all started with study of the March 26, 2016 message from the Universal House of Justice, addressed “To the chosen recipients of Abdu'l-Baha's Tablets of the Divine Plan”. In the last paragraph of this letter, the House says: *“Take pride in the sacrifices and victories of so many devoted souls who arose in response to 'Abdu'l-Baha's call. With the same spirit of renunciation shown by your predecessors, cast away the idle fancies and distractions of a world that has lost its way, that you may consecrate yourselves in the next five years to the priceless opportunities and inescapable obligations of the latest stage of a spiritual enterprise on which the fate of humanity ultimately depends.”*

This was indeed my call. The House was asking us to take pride in the sacrifices of our predecessors and--with the same spirit that they evinced--cast away the distractions of this world. I felt like they were asking me to sacrifice just like the early believers did in the time of Abdul-Baha. I meditated on the message, trying to imagine the sacrifices of the early American Baha'is -- and what was going on in their lives and in their minds when they were first reading the Tablets of the Divine Plan. The more I meditated and prayed, the more I was convinced that I am not sacrificing enough and need to do something about it. Soon, I realized that with few changes in my life, I could pioneer to one of the clusters in my region that needed pioneers; so, I made the decision to go! Those few changes turned out to be more challenging than I expected, and sometimes, I even thought that I made the wrong decision. But every time that I continued on with my planning, I would inevitably receive confirmations. And now, looking back, I know that my doubts were tests. (Baha'u'llah wanted to see how serious I was about my decision!) Things eventually worked out; my work situation resolved itself, and at the end of January 2017, I was able to move to my pioneering post part-time.

When I arrived at my post, even though it was a first milestone cluster, the only core activity taking place was on hold. So, I invited my neighbors to a gathering in my home and looked for other neighborhoods where I could engage youth in conversations about serving their communities. I found a medium size neighborhood with a community center right in the middle of it, and then I introduced myself to the staff and was able to speak with a woman who ran the center. I explained the junior youth program to her and she gave me permission to talk to the youth in the neighborhood. This was March 2017. We started working in this neighborhood and, as of this month (July), we have five youth in the training: three from the neighborhood itself, and two of their friends from other neighborhoods. We will soon finish the training and start two junior youth groups. These youth are very excited and are already planning where they will start their groups! A part-time move to a milestone one cluster has brought this cluster to where it is in six months.

I don't have words to express the joy and happiness that I feel for what has happened so far in this cluster. Sometimes when I am making the three-hour drive to the cluster, I can't hold back my tears, thinking of how blessed I am to be chosen by Baha'u'llah as the instrument to bring this cluster one step closer to the second milestone (an intensive program of growth).



I am sure that we all can do what I did. Doing so just requires firm determination, prayer, and willingness to accept some adjustments in our lives.

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Please consider pioneering at this crucial time in the Five Year Plan. The opportunities are priceless!!! The obligation is inescapable!!

We need YOU!!! Humanity needs YOU!!