



Retail Business Services

Pride Month: Meet Rachael Gresty

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For Rachael Gresty, Vendor Relations Analyst for Retail Business Services, the services company of Ahold Delhaize USA, Pride Month is celebrating a community full of love.

Raised in a religious household in rural Pennsylvania, Rachael said it took her a while to realize her identity and be true to herself.

"I grew up in a little country town literally in the middle of a cornfield," she said. "I know this is pretty common, but I've kind of always known I was not straight. But I also didn't know what I was. In my early 20s, I dated a few men but those relationships never felt right."

In 2015, at the age of 25, Rachael finally realized her truth.

"That's kind of when I realized that I was a lesbian and that I liked girls," she shared. "I came out to my friends and, thankfully, I had a lot of great friends who were very supportive."

Still, that didn't make it easy, and Rachael faced opposition from her parents as well as her then employer. At the time, Rachael was a general manager and when she came out at work in 2016, the company released her from her position – but there's a silver lining to this story. Shortly after, Rachael joined Retail Business Services' Indirect Center of Excellence as a contractor and was hired on full-time in January 2020.

"Being let go was not a good experience, but it gave me the incredible opportunity to work with Retail Business Services in my current position," she said. "It still blows me away how inclusive our company is – it's kind of awesome."

Despite the circumstances, Rachael added that her time with her previous employer was invaluable because that's where she met her wife Susan – or "Ziggy" as she's known to friends. The two met at work in 2016 and remained friends after Rachael left the company that year.

"Apparently she was flirting with me for a year and a half – and I am extremely oblivious to that," Rachael shared with a laugh.

Rachael and Ziggy dated for a year before Ziggy proposed in 2019. Their wedding was set for May 2020 but had to be pushed back due to the pandemic. Lucky, the state of Pennsylvania eased restrictions enough in the following months for them to marry on June 27, 2020.

"We just were very lucky with the timing; we were able to have a small, intimate ceremony," Rachael said.

Her marriage also helped Rachael find a new circle of love and acceptance.

"I have an amazing mother-in-law and family on my wife's side; they are very supportive," she said.

Rachael and Ziggy live in Pennsylvania on a small hobby farm with three cats, a dog, five goats and their newest charge, a lamb. Rachael is working toward a bachelor's degree in cybersecurity, and in her free time, she likes to practice photography and kayak with Ziggy.

Now, as she reflects on her coming out journey, Rachael believes Pride Month is a time to be seen.

"It's an opportunity to focus on the LGBTQ+ community," she said. "Not that we're hiding for the rest of the year – but it just gives us the opportunity to say, 'Hey, we are still here. We are part of this town, this community.' It's a chance to educate, and to show that we're not scary, we're not invisible."

For allies, Rachael said the best way to help the LGBTQ+ community to make sure its members are seen and heard.

"Just continue to support us and treat us like every other human," she said.