



PROFILES OF HOPE: Meet “T”, an IOH Graduate:

I graduated from IOH in August 2016. When Ms. Deborah asked if I would lead life skills, I said: “Are you texting the right person? What would I have to teach?” And she said, “Just give your testimony.” We always think our testimony means nothing, but I’m hoping it will mean something tonight.

I came from Ohio for a good job with Blue Cross/Blue Shield. The company had layoffs and I lost my job. I lost my car, my place, everything. The kids and I were living in motels, sleeping here and there, really struggling. One night, the motel rent was due, I didn’t have it and I was so scared. My kids trusted me to care for them and I had failed. After they went to bed, I was lying awake worrying when I heard a voice in my heart say: “Am I not the God who saves?” After that, I went right to sleep. I still didn’t know what to do, but somehow I was at peace.

I dreamt about a place where we could be safe and I could get back on my feet. It was IOH. I saw it in a dream before I ever heard of it. I found IOH through the United Way Directory and applied. When I heard we were accepted, I cried with relief. We showed up without money, pillows, towels – we had nothing. But I didn’t care since we had a roof over our heads. When I opened the door to the apartment, I couldn’t believe it: Everything we needed, all set up so nice, so welcoming. I stood there crying – again! From that day on, I watched God rebuild my life. Every step of the way, He helped me - to become a better mother, a better person, a better worker.

The process to get approved for a mortgage was long and hard, but when I got those keys it was the best feeling I’ve ever had. Seeing the look of relief and joy on my kids’ faces – I will never forget it. We are still in awe that it is OUR house. The best feeling in the world is knowing you can provide for your kids. They look up to us, and everything we do affects them in ways we can’t imagine.

Whenever Ms. Deborah asks me to come back, I’ll be here. I’d scrub the floors with a toothbrush, with a smile on my face. That’s how grateful I am. This place is a testimony to God’s goodness, and I am a testimony to IOH.