

mPact Statement

FINANCIAL SUCCESS STORIES FROM OUR COMMUNITY

MARSHA BROWN

It was a strange moment for Marsha Brown when she found herself homeless in June of 2012. She was bewildered by how quickly everything had gone from stability to desperation. Marsha reports that what really struck her was how unbelievable it was; "I didn't think it could happen to me...nobody does...but it did." How she got there, and how she got back on her feet is pure inspiration.

After moving to Denver when her employer relocated, Marsha set out to make a home for herself and her children. When her employer moved offices again, she stayed put. She founded a nonprofit here in Denver which then led her to start a consulting business helping nonprofits get educated on development and management strategies. Marsha found a way to make ends meet and things were running smoothly until she received a call around

Thanksgiving in 2011 telling her that her son had been hit by a drunk driver. He sustained serious nerve and muscle damage, and would require complex treatments and procedures in the hospital, as well as a long series of treatments and therapies once released. The medical bills started piling up on Marsha and she was able to keep her family out of serious financial trouble for 9 months until she had finally spent everything down and ended up on the streets. She was homeless for 3 weeks before finding the resources she needed to turn things around.

Marsha's first move was contacting Warren Village, an organization focused on helping single mothers create self-sufficiency. As part of their program, an *mpowered* financial coach was on site offering financial education on how to achieve their financial goals. She started working with her coach immediately on setting goals around re-building her tarnished credit and getting control of the debts that she had accrued. When talking about her financial coach's role in helping her recover from homelessness, she states that "this is not a welfare program for me, it's reassuring self-sufficiency work." Since starting with her financial coach, Marsha has been able to raise her credit score by over 200 points. "I take credit way more

serious[ly] now; I'm more committed to finding a way to manage my money effectively, instead of living above my means." Marsha continues to work on tackling her debt and is close to her goal of saving for a down payment as part of her homebuyers program here in Denver. Because Marsha has committed to achieving her goals, she has a whole new outlook: "There is hope now, and I know that my goals will be realized if we keep working on them."

"There is hope now, and I know that my goals will be a reality...if we keep working on them."

