

Unique, innovative, and over-comer represents the courage of Miss Kimberly Mounts



I battled addiction to heroin for the past 11 years which was a direct result of my criminal activities. My last arrest was August 2015. While incarcerated I took a class called Pathways to women's Healthy Living. I met Ms. Patrice our facilitator from day one she planted a seed of hope that began to grow. I remember the flyer said that the class was for women who were tired of being in and out of jail. That made me think of my present situation, my answer was yes I am tired; I was tired of chasing my addiction, being in and out of jail and tired of the life style all together. For me this was my rock bottom. While taking this class I learned about changing my thinking patterns and identifying my thinking errors. I also learned way to build my self-esteem and love myself. It was a very empowering class.

I got out in May and was ok for the first couple of months. Then I found myself back with the wrong people, before I knew it I was back in active addiction, and the cycle of disparity began. This time my addiction was worse than it had ever been before, my life spiraled downhill so quickly. I was sleeping outside and doing things in order to feed my addiction, things that I had never done before. I felt so much guilt and shame to the point of no longer valuing my life, for me at that point death was my only option. I actually thought and planned out my own demise, but then I got a phone call from my facilitator of Pathway's Ms. Patrice, she left me a message that spoke life to my darkness. It was that message of hope that gave me the courage to call her back. Her voice was a soothing response to my chaos and debilitating cycle of addiction and world wind of destruction. The next day Ms. Patrice, CIT Officer Jennifer Mancini, and Dyana from Southeast showed up at my door and my journey of

recovery began. I was ashamed and felt underserving of such care or love, but they held on to me and I felt important.

It was the extended care and outreach of services that I began to stand on the foundation that Pathway's had laid for me. Ms. Patrice and Jennifer reached out to me and through our communicating they shared the importance of living a healthy life and making positive productive choices. After getting sober and my mind cleared I felt a purpose in my life for the first time. I moved into a sober living environment at Jessie's World and began taking the steps to change the course of my life with a brighter future on the horizon. Rebounding from relapse is a difficult place to be but through the support from Commissioner's Brown office, words of encouragement from Michael Daniels, Pathway staff, and CIT Officers who showed me so much love, support, and concern made it easier for me to stick with the process and weather the storms from the life style of addiction.

Coming from someone without a family this support made all the difference and helped me develop the strength to press forward for my recovery. Today I have been back to the county jail but this time as a visitor to share my story with the ladies and encourage them that a new life is achievable. I am working on my GED and then will enroll in Columbus State Community College to follow my dream of becoming a youth drug counselor to assist young girls and empower them to take a different path in hopes that they will never go into the dark places that I have been in my life. This is my way of giving back for the services and out stretched care I received through Pathways. I now have one of my children back in my life and working towards another one. I have made several healthy friendships and have learned to love the new me in sobriety and find out who I am sober. Today I know how to laugh, smile, and enjoy life without the use of drugs. I have found the confidence in a life style of sobriety which I once thought was never achievable for me. In my new journey of life I continue to grow every day by using the tools I was given in that class so many months ago. Today I am blessed and have found happiness beyond measure in my new self.