

Linda's Story

Linda never had the opportunity to know her mother. She died when she was only eight months old. Linda's father struggled with alcoholism so, ultimately, she ended up spending her childhood living with her grandmother.

Frequent visits with her father and his other children led Linda to begin drinking at the age of twelve. Her drinking increased throughout her teenage years to the point that she was hospitalized three times in her early twenties for alcohol poisoning. At age 32, when Linda's doctor informed her that her drinking was killing her, she began to smoke crack cocaine instead. Her dependence on drugs would continue for the next twelve years and would become dramatically more intense upon learning her HIV status in 2002.

In January of 2003, at age 44, Linda had had enough. "I got tired of being tired," she explained. She asked her daughter to help her and the next morning Linda checked into a 28 day treatment program. After completing that program, Linda entered First Step, a temporary recovery home. Less than a year later, she had taken up residence at Bonaventure House. "It was great," Linda explained when asked to describe her time at Bonaventure House. "I got along so well with everyone that I didn't want to leave. I was scared to be on my own."

After two years at Bonaventure House, however, Linda was on her own. She graduated to independent living in December of 2006 and now lives in a studio apartment and has a job working the front desk at Bonaventure House. She is currently taking classes toward earning her G.E.D. "It's great," Linda said. "I have an apartment and a job. I see my family a lot and my friends. I had three of my grandchildren over just the other day. I'm not scared anymore."