

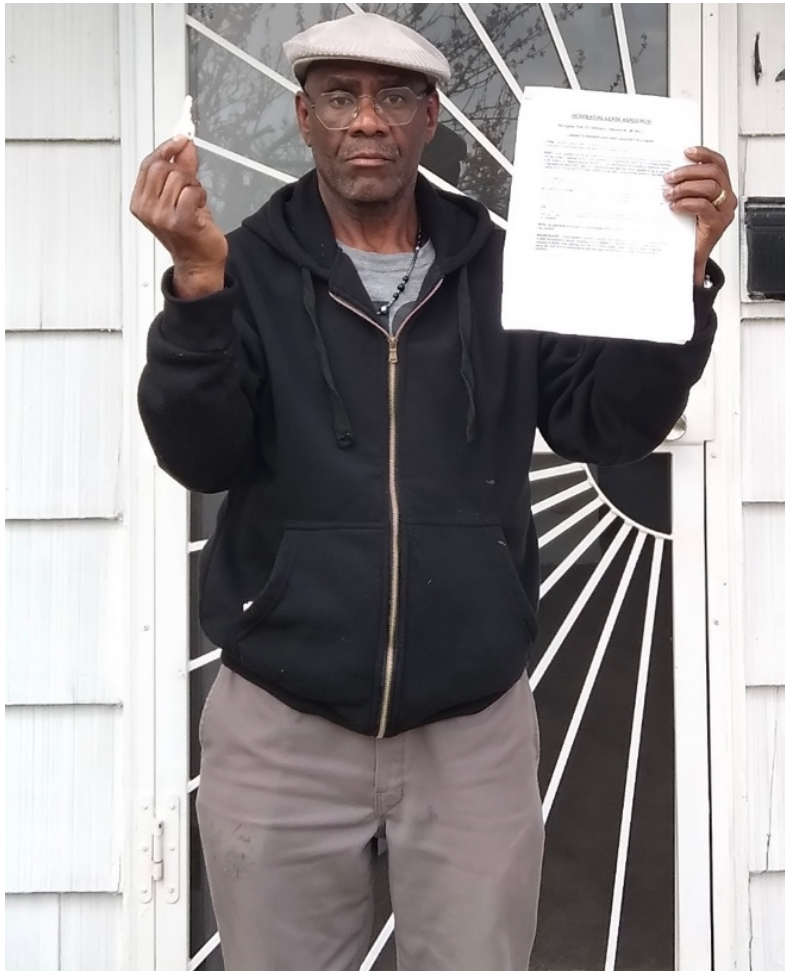


## JUNE UPDATE FOR RETURNING HOPE TO RETURNING CITIZENS PROGRAM

A record setting month for our returning citizens program as we spent a whopping \$19,200 to help people with furniture as they moved into their new house or apartment. Many of them getting a residence of their own for the first time ever.

What that signifies is a tremendous amount of success stories as these individuals are working hard, able to pay their rent and other bills moving forward and are doing great. We're proud, they're proud and all is good.

For example, 68-year-old Leon just got the key to his home and as you can see in the photo below, he proudly showed that key along with his lease. Leon is incredibly proud of the fact that after serving 48 years in prison he has achieved much success since being released last year. He's been a very good worker at Jax Car Wash and has diligently saved money to afford to move into his home. We've been glad to help him along the way with things like clothing, glasses, move in costs, furniture etc. He is very proud of his accomplishment in getting his own home, as he should be, and we are very proud of him. At 68 years of age, he didn't stop until he reached this goal, working many overtime hours and never missing a shift. Way to go Leon!



**Also, good news this month with United Way assisting Here to Help with a generous grant which will allow us to continue helping all those in need, including returning citizens. A big shout out to the United Way of Southeastern Michigan!**

Here are stories for some of those we have had the pleasure of helping this month:

**Brittany:**

It's not always easy for females being accepted in an often-male dominated work force of factories producing automobile related products. But from the time Brittany was released from prison last fall and took a job at Detroit Chassis, she made it through some initial ups and downs and has since been doing great and has been there over six months now and going strong. She's been able to save money while living in a group home transitional housing and we just helped her get

into her own rental house. Her hard work and perseverance is paying off and she's become another nice success story.



### **NELSON:**

Hard work does pay off as shown by Nelson who has been working very hard since returning from prison and is currently employed at two jobs so he could save enough money ASAP to help pay the costs of moving into his first home. We helped him with the remainder of those costs and provided him furniture and all the home furnishings he needed. He is set to be able to pay for all his monthly expenses and continue forward on his path of success. Kudos to hard working Nelson!



**Marshadae:**

It's difficult on young children when their mother goes to prison and it's critical for another family member to assume that parental role as best as possible. As it was for Marshadae and her four children as their Aunt stepped up to take care of the children while Marshadae was away for a year. She's home now and within a week she secured a job and a house to rent, and we helped her with furniture for her and her children as well as all home furnishings in the effort to make the transition easier. We've met with all the children, and they are very excited to have mom home and bright days are ahead.



### **BRIANNA AND QUINCY:**

It's definitely double the pleasure when not just one but two returning citizens we have been working with will be graduating with a skilled trade degree. Brianna and Quincy will be graduating next week with a degree from Detroit Green Door Initiative having completed their training as an Environmental Technician Career Worker. They have great jobs lined up and the future is very bright. We have been working with both of them this year and are now all set to assist them in obtaining their own housing and transportation. Congrats to them for their achievements!



**COREY:**

There is the popular proverb of “It takes a village to raise a child” which is also applicable to returning citizens who need all types of support when they come back to their community. One of the most important types of help they can receive is from the employer who they worked for before going to prison. For years Corey worked for Food Max Supermarket in Inkster, and they welcomed him back and provided him the opportunity to work again and gain much needed economic help via his wages. He hasn’t let them down at all. We’ve

helped Corey in many ways from work clothes, car repair etc. and he is doing great. Shout out to Food Max Supermarket for second chances!



### **JAMES and DENNIS:**

It's great when we can pair the talents of one returning citizen with another returning citizen who is operating their own business and needs another employee to assist. Such was the case with James who had experience doing home construction and renovation and Dennis needed another worker, with those skills, to assist him in his business. James and Dennis established a great relationship and now James has earned enough income to pay rent etc. on his new home and we are pleased to assist him with move in costs and furniture. And great to see Dennis and James working together!



## **JUSTIN:**

The main question we receive from returning citizens when we meet for the first time is “How do I get a car?”

Transportation is often the key to initial success as they need to get a job and then get to and from that job and getting there is usually a problem. We do provide used vehicles but sometimes family members are able to provide a car though it’s often a car in need of repairs. We are often able to get that car up and running again as we just did for Justin who can now get to and from his new job without any problem. He’s doing great so far, and we look for great things to continue for him! 😊





### **TORRENCE:**

Always a great day when we can load someone's trunk up with home furnishings (dishes, pots/pans, glasses, silverware, towels, blanket, pillows, sheets/pillowcases, mattress pad) because it signifies a returning citizen has successfully obtained their own residence. We've been working with Torrence for a while and have helped with clothing, work tools and now furniture, security deposit and home furnishings as he found an apartment right by his employment at an auto repair shop. A great, great success story and we are very proud of all he's accomplished!



## **MAURICE:**

Making decisions on your own is a new experience for returning citizens who have spent many years in prison where what to do and when to do it are pretty much controlled by others. It's great to see those, like Maurice, who return to their community and make many good decisions. Maurice got a great job at Chester Street Residence, a Senior Living Community, and saved enough to get his own home last Fri. and he's done everything the right way. We're helping him furnish his new home and are confident he will continue on a path of continued success.



### **STEPHEN:**

Another wonderful success story yesterday as Stephen Stanley-Coates received the keys to his new residence and has done so much since we started working together this year. He obtained his Commercial Driver License, doing great at his job, found a place to live and is moving in on June 1. All great things and we're happy to have been a part of it in helping along the way and now get the joy of assisting him with the move in costs, furniture, home furnishings etc. Always an exciting time when a returning citizens gets to move into their own place! His selfie shows Stephen's happiness:



**ROBERT:**

Famous writer, producer and director Judd Apatow has consistently said the following advice in interviews: “The hardest worker has the best chance of winning.”

That is very true as it applies to returning citizens as the barriers to this marginalized group of individuals is so significant that if you are not working hard, you are not going to get ahead. Robert is a prime example of that as he’s worked consistently since being released and often at low paying jobs that made it difficult to save to be able to get his own apartment. Until now. His hard work recently landed him a

better paying job and we just helped him get into his apartment and also provided furniture etc. He should be, and he is, quite proud of his accomplishment. Goodbye to crowded transitional housing. Way to go Robert!



**ERIC:**

It is hard enough adjusting to freedom after being released from prison after 30 years away, and a bit more difficult when you are confined to a wheelchair. We have been assisting Eric with his return and have helped him move into his own apartment and provided specific furniture for him, including a recliner chair, and home furnishings etc. to make his new residence comfortable for his needs. He's doing very well on his transition back to his community after being away so long and having been sentenced at a very, very young age. We are glad to have been able to assist. 👍



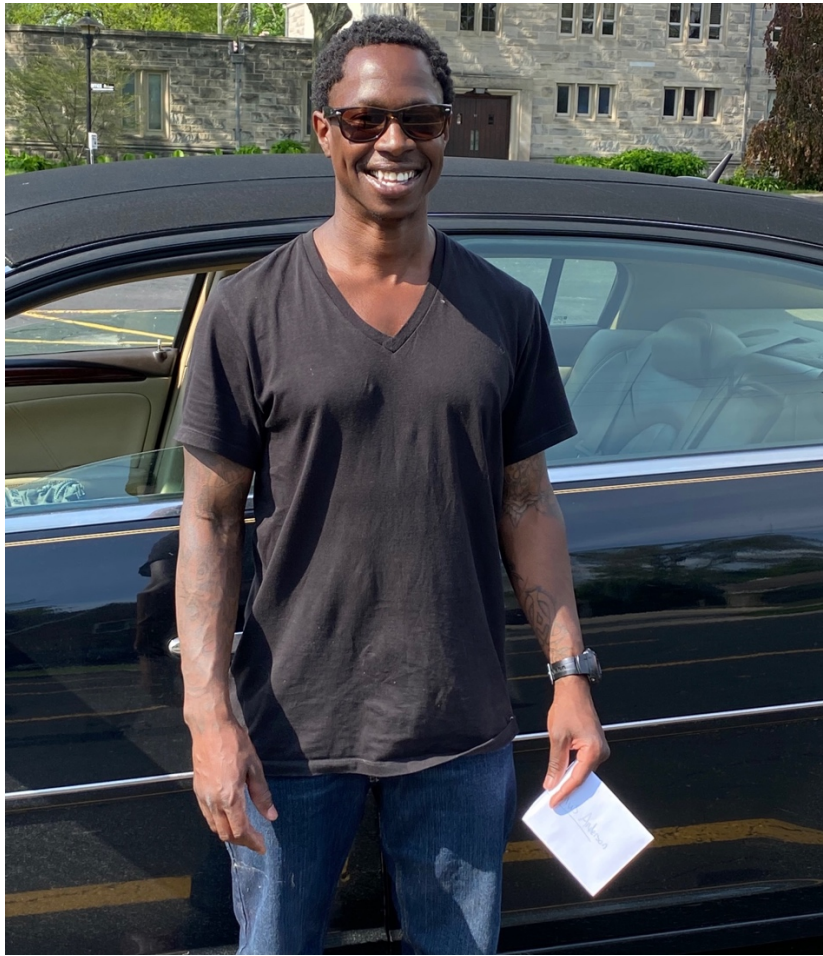
**TARA:**

Reentering one's community is hard enough, but for those with mental health issues, it can be a far greater challenge. When an ex-inmate is suffering from anxiety, depression, drug addiction, or other mental health issues, finding a safe place to live, a stable job, and counseling is critical, and we do all we can to assist in all those areas. Tara has been working at a good job and purchased her home through the Detroit Land Bank and mental health counseling remains a critical piece of her readjustment as well as relieving sources of her anxiety. We're helping in that regard by assisting with remaining closing costs on her home, her water bill, clothing, transportation etc. She is getting the mental health support she needs as well, and her future is looking better and better!



## **JOSEPHUS:**

An alarming statistic is that over 50% of those having served in the armed services suffer from some type of mental health disorder (PTSD, anxiety, depression, substance abuse etc.) and there are now over 150,000 veterans in state or Federal prisons, with the vast majority of those serving sentences related to drug offenses. It's a tough transition for veterans coming home and a similarly difficult transition when they return from prison. We are there for those individuals and we help in various ways including connecting them to counseling etc. Josephus served in the US Air Force and was recently released from Federal prison, and we've been helping in many ways to make this transition smooth and successful and so far all has gone very, very well! 👍



Those are just some of the wonderful stories of this past month.

We are glad to share them with you and hope you have a great month of June.

All the best,

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