

Meet Nellie Burge Resident, Sharmane



Photo by Patrick Aitken

What has been your greatest struggle? Keeping a job.”

How has that been a struggle? “Because I was very unstable. I had a very unstable childhood which makes you have a very unstable adulthood. You move around a lot and jump from job to job. But I am proud to say I have been on my job now 90 days!”

So being stable right now is a big milestone in your life?

“Yes...I have never had stability until I came to ‘Mary Ellen’s Hearth’ at ‘Nellie Burge Community Center’ which is a transitional living shelter for women and children. I came here with my 5 year old son because I was evicted after I lost a job. I wasn’t in school at the time; I had no stability and was unable to pay my bills. But since coming here I am back in school and actually have a career as a pharmacy technician.”

What is your major in school? “My Major is Communications. I want to be a Screen Play Writer.”

How long have you been here at Mary Ellen's Hearth?

“My son and I have been here 16 months. We both enjoy living here. I have been able to pay off a lot of debt. I have gotten my own car. I have been able to focus on money management and learn from my

financial mistakes I made when I was younger. I had a rough childhood. Both my parents were out of my life at age 14 and both dead by age 18. So I basically raised myself. I managed to keep my grades up but I had a terrible attitude which came from not having any parenting. So I put myself in a lot positions where I would be fired or lose my job because of my attitude but living here has made me get my priorities straight.”

I am sure that you are hoping that the cycle of hardships you have experienced will not repeat itself and will end with your son?

“Yes...the cycle HAS stopped with my son. He is experiencing stability and can pass that on to his children when he grows up. So the cycle has been broken!”