

CCEA Human Interest Stories

April 2023 -

To whom it may concern;

I am a client at the Chesapeake City Ecumenical Association. I have been a client for over 4 years and am so grateful for all they have done for me. When I first became a client, I was embarrassed, ashamed and it was very hard for me to ask for help. My husband had recently lost his job and was unable to provide the kind of lifestyle my children had become accustomed to. We weren't rich but we had nice things whenever they were needed without struggle. Things were becoming harder and needs were starting to go unmet. Although we were making do, I was losing myself; my self-esteem, my feeling of worth and my ability to provide my children with the things they needed. Every day seemed to get harder and harder until I met the CCEA. Because of the volunteers' kind demeanors and compassionate dispositions, I was able to feel more confident and more secure with each visit. Although I was struggling, the CCEA helped me to feel like a viable part of the community. With food on my shelves and in my fridge my children hardly noticed any difference. The CCEA helped me put a turkey on the table for Thanksgiving and presents under my tree that Christmas. They gave me food each month and even clothes and house hold items I wasn't able to afford at that time. Today, I am still a client. I do not receive food at the moment because I can afford to buy my own with my new job. I still visit their clothing department when I need to, and that helps a lot! But mostly I go in and see the volunteers because they are like family to me now. They know me. They know my husband. They know each of my children by name and love to see them get taller and hear about their adventures. They helped me without making me feel low in a time when I didn't think I could handle feeling any lower than I already did. I am able, today, to give back when I can. I am still a client, but I also donate my time and energy to those that need it now the way I needed it then. I am so grateful to each and every one of the volunteers at the CCEA not just for what they do but for who they are. God has surely blessed the Chesapeake City community with the fine people at the CCEA. I will never forget the kindness they shared with me and my family.

-anonymous

May 2010 –

Did you know... CCEA Food Pantry Volunteers touch lives in various ways! A young man came in today asking for help to get a prescription filled. He said he needed it because he was in a great deal of pain. The medication was not pain medication; it was to shrink his prostate. He is scheduled for surgery the end of May. Without the medication, the pain keeps him up nights. He is only in his mid-twenties and he is taking care of his little daughter and his father. His father had been in a car accident that has left his memory impaired. He has limited short-term memory. Something about the young man struck me. He was up against a lot, needed some help, but still seemed strong and determined. I faxed the application to the CCEA and told him a representative called him later. Before he left, I just felt the urge to pray with him. When I asked if I could, his eyes lit up and he welcomed it eagerly. He said, "Nobody asks if they can pray with me or for me." I took his hands and prayed. I do not know exactly what I said. I just asked for all that came to my mind for the young man who needed healing on so many levels. I thanked God and went to pull away. "Wait!" he said, "I want to tell Him something, too." He prayed, "Help me be a

good dad for my little girl, God and make me strong and heal my dad and bring him back to how he was before the accident and remember all I asked you in my heart when I was 18." It was simple – but it spoke volumes to my heart and I hope it speaks to yours. That is why we are here, to see God's wonder in the simplest of things. It is not just handing bags of food out. It is not about helping people fill out financial aid forms, handling emergencies, and paying their bills. It is about seeing Christ in the face of everyone that walks in seeking assistance. It is about watching God do wondrous things in the people around me, and doing a new thing in me.

September 2009

Testimony from a Food Pantry Volunteer - In late July, a young widow who has three children came to the CCEA Food Pantry. She is only 36 with two boys and a little girl. The widow was filling out paperwork while I went down to get the food bagged up. I came out with the four bags into the hallway and the youngest child came up the steps with her stuffed cat. The lady who brought the family in asked, "Is this all for us?" When I said "yes" the little one's eyes lit up and she kept looking at me and at the lady. Her eyes were asking, "Really?" with such a smile. "Oh... thank you" she breathed. Her eyes danced! I went upstairs to get mom and check on the paperwork. As we walked down to get the food, the littlest one was telling the lady, who drove them, all the items she found in the bags. "There's cookies!" "There's juice!" She looked up excitedly. As her mom gathered up the bags, something caught the youngest attention. She looked at me with excitement in her eyes. "Is that?...." as she peeked in the bag she spun and looked at me again with almost wonder. "It's macaroni and cheese!! I LOVE macaroni and cheese." She was so excited and kept saying thank you. Her mom and the kind one who drove them kept saying thank you all the way out the door. Oh, that God would give me such a treat today! Praise His mighty love! To get a front row seat to watch Him in action doing what He does best because it's who He is.....Love.