

## Success Story: **Larry Harper**

For Larry Harper, childhood was not a time to be carefree and whimsical. It was a time to make money and be responsible. Larry grew up in College Park, Ga. along with his five brothers and five sisters. Things were rough for Larry because he lived in a two room house and shared a bedroom with all of his siblings. It became too much to handle, and so, at 10 years old Larry moved in with other relatives. When he was 13 years old he got his first job as a golf caddy.

Throwing himself into the workforce at such a young age forced Larry to act and feel like an adult. By the time he was 16 years old, Larry started drinking alcohol regularly. As he got older, Larry continued his alcohol abuse and was eventually sent to prison. Once released, he went to a halfway house and spent nine months completing community service hours. Larry left the halfway house after he finished his community services hours; however, he had nowhere to turn. Larry was jobless and homeless.

Being homeless was painful and tough for Larry. He knew he would not survive without getting housing and help. Since he no longer battled alcoholism, he turned to the

**Atlanta Union Mission** for help. From there he went to **Positive Outlook** where he stayed until they helped him secure housing and an income. He has since started to receive a monthly retirement income.

Now Larry lives in an apartment with a roommate and enjoys his life. He likes to read mystery novels, go for walks, and listen to music. He is also a big fan of the Atlanta Falcons. Mostly he is proud of his nieces and nephews. They are all going to college, and one of them is in medical school. He considers himself successful and is optimistic about his future. Larry says, "I do wish I had more opportunities as a kid. But now, I feel good about myself."



*This story was written using the interviews done by Celebrating Success volunteers Allegra Coleman, Don Crampton, Karen Heilmann, Josh Hunt and Bob Wise.*

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