



# Capital Area United Way

# STORIES OF SUCCESS





## United Way 211/CAUW Referral & Care Coordination

United Way 211/CAUW is a free confidential service that helps people find the local resources they need, 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

Samirea, a divorced mother of five from Ascension Parish, had reached an impasse. Because of a medical condition she had not worked in over a year and had received assistance from several local community organizations to sustain her family. With continued uncertainty regarding her health and mounting household and medical expenses, Samiera had nowhere to turn.

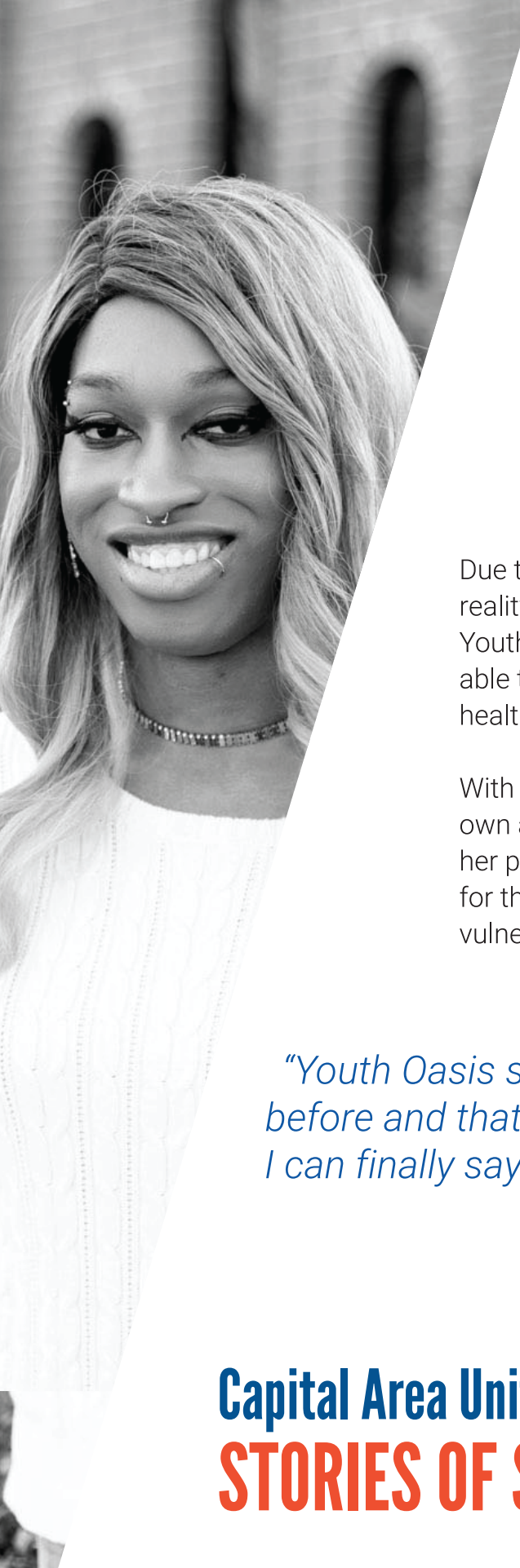
She was referred to the Louisiana 211 Referral and Care Coordination Center at CAUW for rental assistance. A Care Coordinator listened to Samirea's story and connected her to services that assisted her with rent, utilities, and medical expenses.

*"You give me hope. I get excited every time the phone rings and I see your number."*

*- Samirea*

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## Basic Needs Grants Youth Oasis

Due to personal family matters, Piper found herself facing the reality of being kicked out of her home. She was directed to Youth Oasis's Emergency Shelter for Homeless Youth and was able to find resources for food, clothing, counseling, and healthcare referrals, as well as short-term housing.

With the continuing support of Youth Oasis, Piper now has her own apartment, works a steady job, and has goals to pursue her passions for cosmetology. We are so proud of Youth Oasis for their hard work and support of our communities most vulnerable.

*"Youth Oasis saved my life, really. I've been on the street before and that's not a safe place to be as a trans woman. I can finally say that I'm actually happy for once in my life."*

*- Piper*

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## United Way Provides a Brighter Future The Emerge Center

Aaron's family was initially worried about their son's speech and language development and was connected to the Emerge Center's Child Development Center for evaluation.

After Aaron was diagnosed with Autism, he was enrolled in the Bloom program where he began to learn communication techniques that helped him interact with his family and peers. One of the most helpful tools has been the use of Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC) devices which have allowed Aaron to more effectively communicate his needs and wants.

The progress that Aaron has made since enrolling in the program has been nothing short of amazing. He has become more confident and his communication skills have vastly improved. Not only has this been beneficial for Aaron himself, but it has also been a great relief for his family, who can now better understand their son's needs.

The Emerge Center has opened a whole new world for Aaron and his family. With the help of dedicated therapists and specialists, Aaron has been able to overcome the challenges he faced and is on the path towards a brighter future.

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## United Way Provides Hope for Independence HOPE Ministries

Jonathan's journey to financial independence is a testament to the success of HOPE Ministries' Way to Work Program. After struggling with unemployment and relying on government benefits in the past, Jonathan approached the program seeking job assistance. With the help of a job coach, Jonathan was able to secure initial employment through a community job placement site. His strong work ethic and positive reviews from his employers paved the way for an incredible opportunity to start a new career working offshore. This change led to an impressive income increase of 68%, allowing Jonathan to achieve financial independence.

Jonathan's story is a powerful example of how community programs and partnerships can change lives for the better. By providing individuals with the resources and support they need to succeed, we can empower them to achieve their goals and reach their full potential.

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## United Way Gives A Second Chance Goodwill Re-Integration Program

Richard's\* story highlights the importance of second chances and the impact they can have on individuals and their communities. After serving time incarcerated, Richard was determined to turn his life around and become a contributing member of society. This is where Goodwill's Reintegration Program (GRIP) came in.

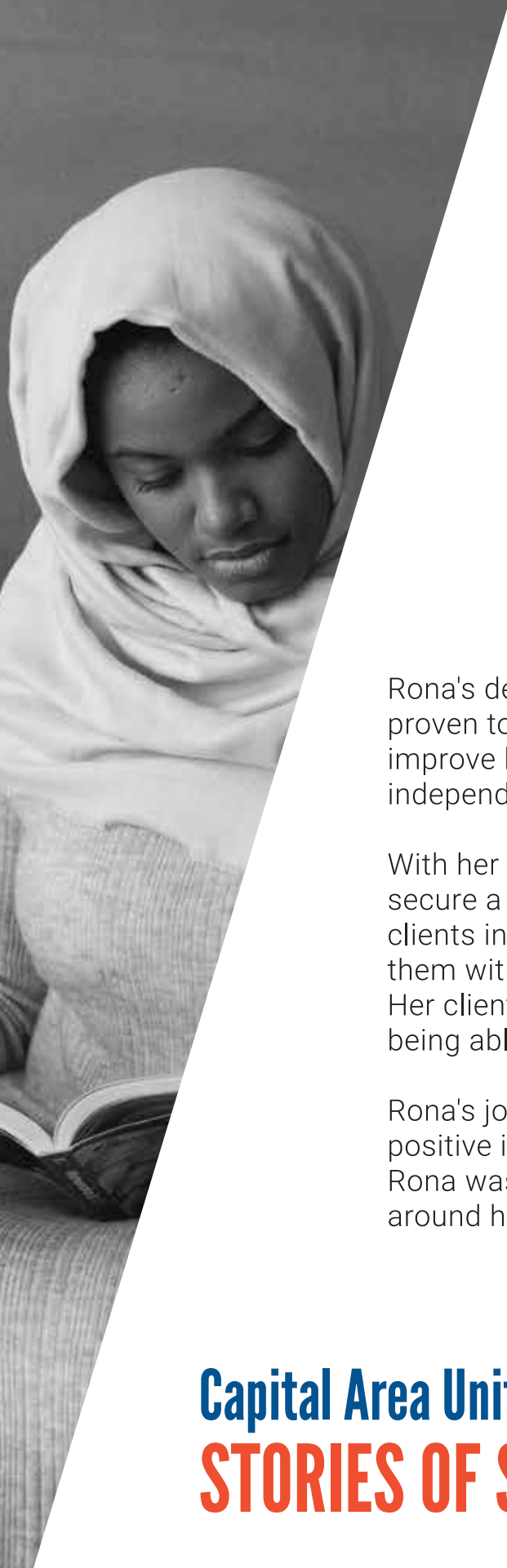
Through this program, Richard\* was able to enroll in a job placement program and receive guidance from a Career Specialist. With their help, he secured a job as a heavy equipment operator and was also able to receive assistance with transportation and work uniforms. These resources were crucial in ensuring that Richard was able to focus on his job and not worry about the financial burden of transportation or work attire.

Richard's\* story is a testament to the transformative power of second chances and the importance of programs like GRIP. By providing individuals with the tools and resources they need to succeed, we can create a more just and equitable society where everyone has the opportunity to thrive.

\* name change

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## United Way Gives Motivation

### Adult Literacy Advocates of Greater Baton Rouge

Rona's decision to enroll in the Adult Education program has proven to be a life-changing one. By taking the initiative to improve her reading and math skills, she gained the independence she desired.

With her newfound skills and confidence, Rona was able to secure a job as a sitter. She now uses her skills to assist her clients in various ways, such as reading to them and helping them with simple tasks like going through mail and paying bills. Her clients appreciate her help, and Rona finds great joy in being able to assist others.

Rona's journey is a testament to the power of education and the positive impact it can have on one's life. By investing in herself, Rona was able to improve her own life and the lives of those around her.

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## United Way Provides A Hand Up O'Brien House

Mary's\* journey is a testament to the power of seeking help and finding the right support system. Growing up in a family of addicts with substance abuse, Mary's life seemed to be on a downward spiral. However, after 30 years of struggling with addiction, Mary made the brave decision to enter the Long Term Substance Abuse Treatment program at the O'Brien House. It was here that Mary was met with a team of caring staff and a compassionate therapist who helped her work through her disease. Through their guidance and support, Mary was able to overcome her addiction and start a new chapter in her life. She now sees herself as having lived two lives, one filled with a disease that she thought would ultimately take her life, and one full of hope and a future.

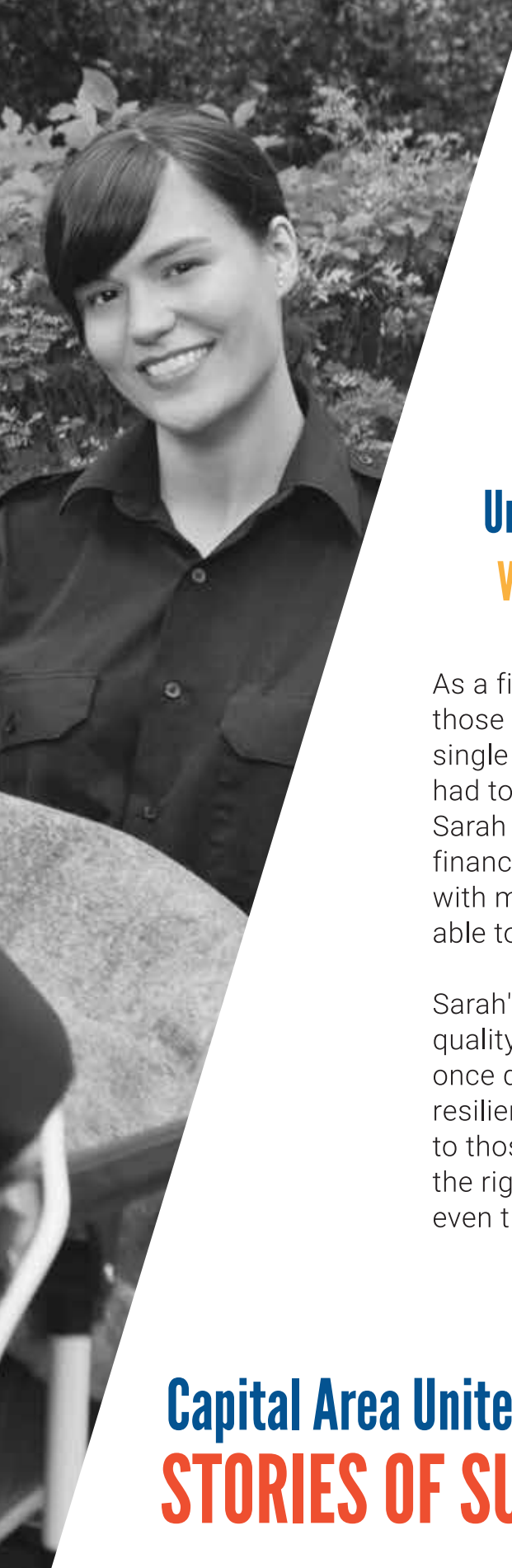
Mary's transformation was so profound that she now gives back and shares her story with others by working close with mothers battling addiction, offering them a message of hope and a reminder that they are not alone. Mary's story is a powerful reminder that it is never too late to seek help and that with the right support system, it is possible to overcome even the most difficult challenges.

\* name change

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## **United Way Supports Mental Health Services** **Volunteers of America South Central Louisiana**

As a first responder, Sarah\* is always ready to lend a hand to those in need. However, life has not been easy for her. As a single mother, she has struggled to make ends meet and has had to endure the pain of PTSD from past trauma. Fortunately, Sarah discovered the Reilly Counseling Center, which offers financial assistance and treatment options for those struggling with mental health issues. Thanks to United Way, Sarah is now able to attend weekly counseling sessions at no cost.

Sarah's hard work has paid off, and she is now able to spend quality time with her daughter and enjoy activities that were once difficult due to her anxiety. Her story is a testament to the resilience of the human spirit, and she serves as an inspiration to those who may be struggling with similar challenges. With the right support and determination, it is possible to overcome even the most difficult obstacles.

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