

HVRP SUCCESS STORIES:

Building Confidence, Promoting Accountability

Background

Founded in 1996, Mary Hall Freedom House, Inc., (Mary Hall) serves women and children in need of housing and substance treatment services in metropolitan Atlanta. Starting with one apartment and two women, Mary Hall has grown into a thriving organization that serves an average of 200 women and 75 children each day, and 10,000 women since 1996.

The mission of Mary Hall is “to empower women to end the cycle of addictions, poverty and homelessness for themselves and for their children.” Although initially focused on recovery, Mary Hall has expanded its programs and services to include career development, child reunification, and wellness services. Client accountability, provided within a supportive environment, is incorporated into every program. One such program is Mary Hall’s Homeless Female Veterans and Veterans with Families (HFVWWF) program, Training Reintegration Outreach & Opportunities Program Services (TROOPS).

One Veteran’s Story

Starr Biven, a recent participant, described her experience with the TROOPS program as an uplifting time. She entered the program jobless and homeless.



TROOPS gave her not only the resources she needed to find a

job, including résumé-building workshops, employment opportunities, and gas cards and clothes for interviews, but also the support she needed to set and meet employment goals. The best part, she says, was the accountability: “having someone inquire about one’s goals and job aspirations while holding me accountable to reach these achievements.”

TROOPS sets up its clients for future success. While going through the program to build her work readiness and skills, Starr began working at Smoothie King. The job provided both income and experience that helped her prepare for an apprenticeship at Randstad, the hopeful first step to a future career. Starr is thankful to TROOPS for giving her the space to grow, improve practical skills, and, more importantly, to believe in herself. She is excited to continue her journey and build a life of her own.

“They allowed me to expand at a time when I was so diminished.”

— Starr Biven