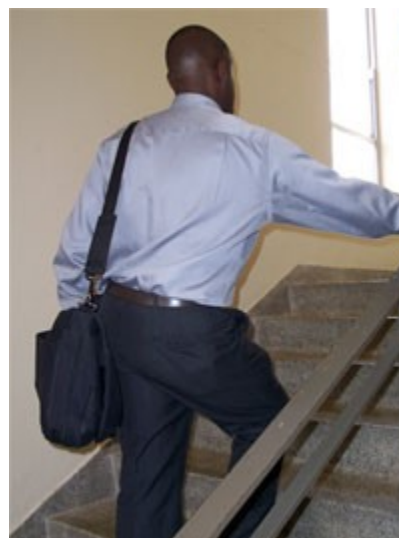


One Man's Climb to a Brighter Future

Friends For Life helps change lives. One great example is that of Robert (name changed), a consumer of FFL services and resident of the agency's Shelter Plus Care permanent supportive housing program. Robert recently was selected to receive a \$10,000 Chancellor Scholarship from the University of Tennessee, which will pay his tuition and fees while he studies for a Masters Degree in Cytopathology Practice. The scholarship is based on Robert's academic performance as well as his financial need. However, this well-deserved honor did not come easily.



A 40-year-old African American man and life-long Memphian, Robert was 19 years old when he learned of his HIV infection. "I was devastated; I was so young and I thought it was a death sentence. I went into denial where I stayed for ten years, receiving no medical treatment and sinking into deep depression. Finally, in 1995, my pastor helped me come to grips with it," Robert states. He sought medical treatment and utilized the services of Friends For Life, receiving case management, food from the Food Pantry, and risk reduction counseling and education about living with HIV/AIDS through the Prevention For Positives program.



Over the next several years, Robert had difficulty maintaining stable employment, experienced periods of homelessness and faced numerous challenges. Homeless, he turned to Friends For Life for help with housing and became a resident of the Shelter Plus Care permanent supportive housing program in 2006. "This was such a blessing," Robert comments. "Having stable housing helped me get through school; it helped my health get better; I can afford the rent." Robert takes advantage of many of the supportive services offered by Friends

For Life, including the Positive Living Center, where he uses the computer, watches movies with friends and relaxes in the meditation/massage chair. He also attends a support group for men and exercises for free at the YMCA, one of FFL's collaborating partner organizations. Robert received his Bachelors degree in Liberal Arts Studies in August 2007 from the University of Memphis and immediately continued his academic work in the fall at the University of Tennessee. We congratulate Robert for his magnificent achievement! Your financial support helps Friends For Life offer the life-affirming programs that are helping Robert and many other persons like him not only find health and purpose in their day to day lives, but also a sense of hope and direction for their future.