



GIVE. ADVOCATE. VOLUNTEER. LIVE UNITED



HOW TO LIVE UNITED: **JOIN HANDS. OPEN YOUR HEART. LEND YOUR MUSCLE. FIND YOUR VOICE.**

When April came to United Way of Westchester and Putnam, she said her dream was to help others as she herself had been helped. April has succeeded in doing that every single day.



My name is April Jackson-Haywood and I am a 42-year old mother of three daughters and the grandmother of a 2-year old grandson.

I started the "CLOUT" program at Pace University in White Plains in January 2009. The CLOUT program has truly changed my life and inspired me to aim for what I want and never settle for less. The program helped me achieve computer skills like Excel, PowerPoint, Access, and other useful office programs.

It was a long difficult journey and at times, I became overwhelmed and felt discouraged not knowing if I could do it. But I thought, 'What will become of my life if I don't get through the program?' If you don't stick to the program, you can lose your DSS benefits. They could reduce or completely cut your funds which meant I had no means of paying rent or supporting my family.

I faced my fears head-on by becoming more pro-active, and ended up achieving numerous awards! **No matter what age, religion, or color, all things are possible if you strive and believe in yourself.**

One great aspect of the CLOUT Program is that you receive practical work experience. **In September, I began interning at United Way of Westchester and Putnam in White Plains. From the beginning, I took my responsibilities seriously.** I was persistent and eager to learn about the United Way. I couldn't ask for a better place to be. The staff has been outstanding, constantly providing me with words of encouragement that good things will come. On Friday, November 20, 2009, one of my prayers was answered. UWWP offered me a position in their 211 Call Center. I cried tears of joy realizing what hard work, diligence, persistence, dedication and a bright smiling face can achieve -- a new job for 2010!

I knew someone else cared and I'll always be grateful to United Way for this employment opportunity. United Way of Westchester and Putnam, thank you for all your wonderful support, believing in me, and giving me the opportunity to prove myself!

April Jackson-Haywood

United Way Note: April Jackson-Haywood today is a trained, caring and an enthusiastic 2-1-1 call specialist.