



These are only a few of the success stories of the women who were helped by the NYS Displaced Homemaker Program (DHP) during 2020.

In early 2020, an unprecedented number of women were placed on unemployment due to the pandemic and the Displaced Homemaker Program (DHP) needed to retool how services were offered to a significantly larger audience. That was when Project PIVOT (Providing Interactive Virtual Office Training) was born. **Elaine**, one of our first participants to sign up for the new virtual training where she was introduced to Zoom, learned home-based alternatives to Microsoft Office through Google Suite, and practiced new virtual interviewing skills with her Zoom classmates. In two short weeks, she went from feeling overwhelmed and "stuck" to feeling as if she had new skills to offer in the new work world. She was able to submit electronic cover letters and resumes with the new tools, feel comfortable with virtual interviewing, and recently interviewed for an administrative assistant position at a local hospital. In her evaluation, Elaine shared, ***"I learned so much in such a short amount of time. It was valuable information that has really helped me look for employment in this new normal. The class was fun, interactive, and encouraging for all of us who attended. I highly recommend it!"***



LaKesha came to the Displaced Homemaker Program (DHP) because she was looking for a part-time job during the day while her son was in school. Her support system was lacking and she was discouraged by her options. However, through support from her case manager and DHP services, Lakesha completed the Community Health Worker Program and is now employed full-time at Ellis Hospital. She has been recognized by her employer as an employee who is doing outstanding work and goes above and beyond to help those she serves. Lakesha now describes herself as knowing that if one road does not work, there are other ways to get to your destination. She has learned that perspective is important. ***"The Displaced Homemaker Program helped me gain a new outlook on what I can achieve through hard work and that allows me to be self-sufficient and fulfilled in a worthwhile career."***

Fraby came to the US from Ghana, in West Africa, right after high school. She had dreams of working as a nurse. When attempting to enroll in school, Fraby was informed she needed a US high school diploma or GED to continue her education. She came to the Displaced Homemaker Program (DHP) for help. Working with her case manager, she was able to earn her GED and a certificate in Phlebotomy. Fraby currently works as a CNA while attending school for her LPN. In addition to her determination, she credits her success to the DHP program. ***"I owe what I have achieved to my own resolve, as well as the support and expert guidance I received from the DHP program."***

Marcia G. had to resign from her job, when her mother, who suffered from dementia, needed round the clock care. With no income coming in, she needed to downsize and gave up her apartment and to permanently move in with her mother. Eventually, she was able to be paid as her mother's caretaker through Social Security. After her mother's death, Marcia's first attempt to re-enter the job market with her past experience as a Bank Teller was not viable because of the downsizing and layoffs in the banking industry; Marcia needed a new direction. Within a few weeks after registering as a Displaced Homemaker, she was granted funding to attend a Medical Biller course at Hunter Business School. Upon successful completion, she passed her NYS Certification exam and immediately secured two part-time Medical Biller positions. She now has the opportunity to increase her pay and work hours as she gains more experience. **She is extremely grateful for the opportunity and direction the Displaced Homemaker Program has given her.**

In the spring of 2020 a young mother lost her job of nearly 15 years due to the pandemic. Her company just could not afford to keep the business open. Covid-19 has caused so many small businesses to close putting a tremendous amount of people out of work. This young woman knew that she could not survive for long on her Unemployment Benefits so she contacted our Displaced Homemaker Program. We were able to work with her individually via Zoom and phone conversations to provide her with training in Microsoft Office as well as QuickBooks.



She also needed assistance with preparing cover letters and updating her current resume. Because it had been such a long time since she had interviewed for any job, we practiced interviewing skills through a series of mock interviews. As her confidence improved, she began applying for Administrative Office and Accounting positions and was soon receiving requests for interviews. Her first interview was a phone interview and we prepared for it by practicing via several phone conversations. She

became quite confident with phone as well as Zoom and Skype interviews. When she was asked to come for an in-person interview we were able to provide her with a gift card for business attire and a gas card to assist with the travel costs.

She called us later that afternoon to let us know that she was offered the position on the spot, and had accepted with an excellent salary and full-time benefits. We received the nicest Thank You card from her ***praising the Displaced Homemaker Program for going above and beyond in helping our participants obtain the skills and training they need to succeed in today's tough job market.***

Tashana came to Fresh Start Training Program with an unstable and unsuccessful work history. She had never been in a positive employment environment and was having a challenging time. Juggling single parenthood and employment felt overwhelming to her. Tashana did not have a plan or solid goals. She had given up on herself and had resigned to remaining dependent on government support until she saw the Fresh Start flyer offering free training to work as a Paraprofessional in New York City charter schools. Tashana committed to the employment process and successfully met her challenges. She was hired as a 1:1 Paraprofessional and she was assigned a difficult student. Fresh Start encouraged her to stay with the student and she ended up loving the relationship as well as the entire school experience. Later, she was chosen Teacher of the Week. Tashana says she is grateful to have found the DHP Center and is thankful for the job and opportunity. ***"Your warmth and sincerity inspired me to believe in myself."***

Destiny was like many women in 2020 who found themselves unemployed due to Covid-19. She needed to upgrade her computer skills but the shutdown in the spring of 2020 made attending class in-person impossible. The Capital District Women's Employment & Resource Center (WERC) was able to help more than 65 women, like Destiny, find the resources they needed, including navigating unemployment insurance, providing access to online courses to update their skills, and assisting them with their job searches. WERC was able to provide Destiny with access to KnowledgeWave®, an online learning platform with more than 2,000 software trainings from MS Office, Adobe software and more. ***"KnowledgeWave is a great online learning program. It is easy to register and use. The trainings are easy to understand and time efficient and WERC staff responds quickly to any questions or concerns you have."***

Joselyn lost her job due to the COVID pandemic after being with her company for 17 years. She was a one-time client of the Women's Opportunity Center (WOC) when her child was young and she was widowed. WOC had helped Joselyn gain the skills she needed at that time to get a job with the company where she spent 17 years while raising her autistic child as a single mother. Now that she was once again at a crossroads, she returned to WOC. Due to COVID, WOC had quickly pivoted to providing services remotely. In danger of losing her house, WOC partnered her with a local attorney and financial planner to help her navigate the process of protecting her assets. When Joselyn realized that her skill sets were outdated and she had not written a resume or applied for a job in close to two decades, WOC taught her the skills she needed and how to communicate through virtual platforms. Joselyn took advantage of WOC's online learning platforms to upskill and enhance her knowledge base. This gave Joselyn the courage to change careers and secure employment that has turned into something she loves in an "essential worker" capacity.

Through the DHP, **Josefina**, was introduced to many new opportunities for self-improvement, such as ESL classes, interview workshops, and individual career counseling. She has used these resources to achieve her employment and education goals. She applied for an enumerator position in CENSUS 2020. COVID delayed her start date, but as soon as it was safe, she started her job and was promoted to a supervisory position before the job ended. After that ended, she returned to update her resume and applied to start studying in college. She is scheduled to begin studying in the Language Immersion Program on February 1. Her next step is a degree in Education. Success, when measured incrementally, includes many who would be deemed unsuccessful, by the less inclusive parameters. Josefina has made great strides in achieving her ultimate goals.

Michelle is a single mother with several children. She has successfully overcome an addiction problem and has worked hard to distance herself from people and situations that would be destructive to her sobriety. She is constantly striving to improve herself and her situation. She came into the Displaced Homemaker Program (DHP) at the end of 2019 and completed Career Readiness class in January 2020 and went on for BHT training at SCCC which she also successfully completed. She is interested in completing CASAC-T training at SCCC as well. She is currently working at New Choices and intends to continue in the mental health field, specifically in treating addiction.



Vicki is a single mother of two young children. In early 2020, she found herself and her children homeless and was turned down for public assistance. She, a client, and student at the Displaced Homemaker Program (DHP), needed help, and the DHP stepped in and worked with other community resources to obtain emergency shelter, identification, SNAP and TANF benefits, and Medicaid. She was provided with the technical support that she needed for her and her children to continue their education, including laptops and WiFi services. Vicki enrolled in classes for TASC (GED), and she is diligently working on completing this while participating in DHP remote training sessions. For the first time, Vicki is safe, moving forward and showing her children a better way to live.

Emily is a former High School Math Teacher from California. She escaped a relationship that had been physically and mentally abusive, where she had been forced into human trafficking and drug use. December 2019 found her homeless, sleeping in a tent, and living in a homeless encampment. She was sick, alone, and had no idea how she would make it through the next day. She made her way to one of the local homeless shelters to wait out the cold weather. An employee at the shelter gave Emily the Women's Opportunity Center's (WOC) contact information to see if they could help her get some warmer clothing.



Emily was embraced by the WOC staff, which helped her with clothing and advocated for her to get medical treatment. She had pneumonia from her living conditions. They helped find her safe housing, partnered her with the domestic violence agency, connected her with other women, and helped her to begin building a network of support. When WOC started working remotely, they delivered a laptop with WiFi support to Emily at the hotel where she was temporarily living. When she was finally assigned an apartment,

WOC employees gathered food and household items for Emily's new home.

Emily began volunteering at the Mary Durham Boutique, the WOC's retail training center. As Emily's recovery and support continued, she worked on regaining her skills and her confidence. WOC championed her ability to give back to her community with the talents that are so in demand - helping parents help their children with remote learning. Emily is on a path to open her own business, helping students and parents adapt to the new remote learning world. A year ago in December, Emily was sleeping in a tent in the snow, sick with pneumonia, and panhandling for food. This past December, Emily sat around the Christmas tree brought to her by her friends at WOC in her first apartment in six years. While others will complain about the challenges of 2020, Emily remarks that she is amazed by the difference a year can make. She went from "homeless" to "home for the holidays" and she cannot be more grateful or feel more blessed."