

COMMUNITY ACTION AGENCY OF
DELAWARE COUNTY, INC.*Shakemia Clark*

Shakemia Clark was only one year away from completing her bachelor's degree in finance from Cheyney University when she became pregnant. Only 22 years old and unsure of what to do, she turned to her family for help. However, strife in the home forced her to seek refuge with a friend.

Living with a friend worked for a period of time before she was forced to move out, leaving herself and her then 3-year-old child without a home or system of support. She was distraught and had nowhere to turn until she was informed about Community Action Agency of Delaware County (CAADC).

She had a full-time job at a service agency but feared that without a home she would not be able to sustain her employment and provide a safe environment for her son. When

she arrived at CAADC, all homeless shelters were full; but the agency worked to secure Shakemia and her son temporary housing at a motel until permanent housing arrangements could be secured. She was partnered with case manager Sharlet Kennedy who immediately enrolled her into the agency's Transitional Housing program.

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— *Sharlet Kennedy, case manager*

"Shakemia was always compliant and very determined to maintain housing and her job," said case manager Sharlet Kennedy. "Within three months she was praised for her evaluation at work and was given a promotion. We began working on her exit plan three months prior to her exit date, and the first thing we went over was her long-term housing plan."

Shakemia continued to work hard at her job while Sharlet enrolled her in the First Time Home Buyers Program that would assist her in finding a home in her price range and work with her to negotiate the mountains of paperwork associated with homeownership. The program also assisted

her in improving her credit by helping her to manage her debt and set up a plan to pay off any owed money with consistent, manageable monthly payments.

After clearing away portions of outstanding debt, Shakemia began to search for a house and secure funding for a mortgage. She worked with a realtor and continued to attend workshops to understand the borrowing and homeownership process.

She found a home that was perfect for her and her son and submitted a bid on the house. After several nervous days of waiting, she received an enthusiastic call from her case manager informing her that she had won the bid. A month later Shakemia and her son moved into their new home.

Shakemia is maintaining her full-time employment and has re-enrolled in college to complete the final year of her finance degree. She has obtained her driver's permit and is now enrolled in CAADC's Family Savings Account Program to save money for a new car. Through her hard work and determination, Shakemia was able to utilize the resources offered to the community by CAADC to obtain a home for her family and provide her the stability to finish her college education.

10 *The Community Action Agency of Delaware County, Inc. assists low-income individuals throughout Delaware County with a variety of services and programs designed to meet their needs.*