



# PATHWAYS POST

FALL 2014

## A NEW HOME FOR NICOLAS



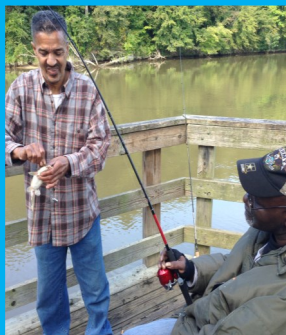
Nicolas, a loud and stocky man in his early 50s, had been a familiar face in Farragut Square for more than eighteen years. His often aggressive behavior, coupled with the complicated social service system, had made it difficult for him to access services and get off the streets on his own. Jaded from previous attempts to work with service providers and concerned about the team's intentions, it took a long time for Emily, a member of our Homeless Street Outreach Team, to build a relationship with Nicolas.

As the weeks passed, the trust between Nicolas and Emily began to grow, and Nicolas mentioned to Emily that his vision was so bad that he could hardly see. Terrified of doctors, Nicolas had been without health care for the eighteen years he had been living on the streets of downtown DC. With Emily by his side, Nicolas agreed to visit our on-site health care clinic and meet with Doug, our Nurse Practitioner. Though extremely anxious throughout the entire visit, Doug's gentleness and patience put Nicolas at ease. After meeting with Doug, Nicolas learned that he had some serious chronic health concerns, including emphysema, diabetes and hypertension. Because of the severity of his physical and mental health issues, Nicolas was considered to be one of the most

vulnerable individuals in Washington, DC, and was quickly transferred onto one of our Housing First teams. Just a few weeks later, Nicolas moved into an apartment of his own!

After nearly two decades of homelessness, Nicolas is finally home. He has thanked us several times for "taking the time to bother with [him] because nobody else wants to be around [him]." Today he is meeting with his Pathways support team regularly to address his health concerns and to learn healthy ways of coping with his anger and frustrations. Every time the Pathways team finishes their weekly home visit, Nicolas walks them to the entryway, and as he locks the door behind them, they can hear him breathe a sigh of relief to finally have a place of his own.

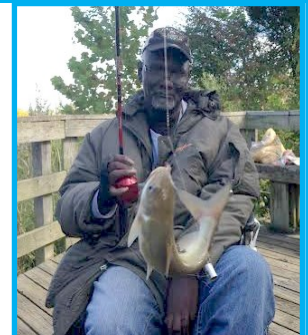
## CREATING COMMUNITY FOR OUR VETERANS



Some of the veterans we serve have started a new tradition... monthly fishing trips! Each month, the veterans come together to spend time on the water, swap stories, and enjoy the great outdoors.

"I don't feel alone anymore when I go fishing with Pathways. I feel like part of a family. These are my brothers."

- Gary, Pathways DC Veteran



Celebrating 10 years of Home, Health & Hope!



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## CHRISTY'S CORNER: An Update from our Executive Director

This fall I am so excited to announce the launch of our integrated health campaign! Here at Pathways to Housing DC, we can end someone's homelessness in a matter of days (the amount of time it takes to find an apartment), but the recovery that comes after move-in can be a longer journey. The people we serve are among the most vulnerable in Washington, DC, and most have spent a prolonged period of time living on the streets, in shelters, and in psychiatric institutions. In addition to managing their mental health symptoms and overcoming addictions, many of our clients also have serious health needs due to years of homelessness and a lack of health care. Chronic diseases like diabetes and hypertension, when unmanaged, can rob a person of a third of their life-causing them to die 25 years younger than the general population. At Pathways to Housing DC we know that mental health and physical health are intrinsically linked and both impact an individual's ability to achieve their life goals.

Our integrated health campaign will not only streamline care, but it will also empower the people we serve to take control of their health through education and individually-tailored health services. We are bringing healthy food options and nutrition education to clients through Martha's Market, an on-site farmers' market, and this October we hosted our first annual health fair. Throughout the next year, we will continue to grow our medical team and train existing staff in integrated health care coordination. These exciting changes will address our clients' most chronic, serious health needs and will result in longer, healthier lives for the people we serve!



*(Left) Christy and one of our clients enjoy lunch together at the Health Fair.  
(Right) Pathways staff at the exercise and yoga table, sharing the benefits of working out!*

Thanks to a generous matching grant from The Morris & Gwendolyn Cafritz Foundation, every gift made to Pathways to Housing DC this holiday season will be worth **DOUBLE!**

