



I was born in Augusta, Georgia and I attended school in North Carolina my 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> grade years. I primarily grew up and went to school in the Baraboo/Wisconsin Dells area. My Dad was in the Army. When my Dad passed away, my mom remarried another G.I. and that's how I ended up in Wisconsin. I am the second child of 5 siblings. I have four sisters and one brother.

In 1974, during my senior year of high school, I enlisted in the military. I served for 3 years in the Navy. I was stationed in Norfolk, Virginia. While I was in the Navy, I was able to travel to many areas in the Caribbean. I was in charge of my area of the ship. When we didn't have electricity when we ported, I was in charge of the generators. I was also in charge of turning saltwater into drinking water with an evaporator. This was an important job.

I eventually decided to discharge, this was mainly because I was young and foolish at that time. My commanding officer tried to talk me into staying the month before I decided to leave. Looking back, I wish I had stayed in longer.

After I discharged, I worked in construction doing roofing and siding in Lake Delton, Wisconsin for 6 years. I then moved to Arizona with my former wife. While in Arizona, I managed a 7-11 and did maintenance at a motel. While working at the motel I was always willing to help the housekeepers if they were in need of an extra set of hands. I enjoy helping others. I was in Arizona for about 15 years. I eventually came back to Wisconsin. Upon my return, I went back into construction and later went on to working at Land O' Lakes.

I began working with HUDVASH when I started to struggle with issues in regard to my physical and mental health, and with alcohol use. HUDVASH was my last resort as I was at-risk of losing my housing due to the challenges I was experiencing in these areas of my life. Through the support of HUDVASH these areas of my life have become more stable and I have been sober for 14 months.

For me, HUDVASH has been really good. I have the help I need with my rent. I also have the support of the HUDVASH team. They call to check in on me. I am also able to participate in many different groups that HUDVASH offers like Book Club, AA, WRAP, and Supporting Concept. I also appreciate having the support of my Peer Support and Case Manager. I have not heard a bad thing about HUDVASH, just that it takes time to put things in place. I would tell another Veteran struggling with their housing to not give up and to keep on looking. I would tell them whatever you need HUDVASH will help you with if they can. The entire HUDVASH staff is friendly and knowledgeable.