



Danny Gonzalez

Housing Success

Enduring the Harder Path Forward

Danny Gonzalez describes himself as outgoing and adventurous. It's clear within minutes of meeting him that connection comes naturally. **He finds joy in conversation, in people, and in the small moments that make up a day.**

"I was a happy kid," Danny says. Life shifted early.

Losing important parental figures early in life and a near fatal car accident at sixteen that left him with a traumatic brain injury that had a lasting impact on his impulse control. As Danny got older; he found himself navigating grief and instability largely on his own. Over time, he turned to substances as a way to cope, something he reflects now with honesty and clarity. **"It was hard for me to let go of something that was making me sad when at one point it was the only thing making me happy."**

For years, Danny moved in and out of cycles that were difficult to break. What stands out in his story isn't just what he went through. It's the moment he decided something needed to change. That moment came quietly, at home, with his cat, Prince. "I remember just holding him and thinking, what's going to happen when my addiction overpowers my love for this? That's when I knew I had to do something different."

From that moment, Danny made a decision that would shape everything that followed: he chose recovery. Not the easiest option, but the one he believed would lead somewhere different. He could have entered another rehabilitation facility. But instead, he chose to enter a Ready, Willing & Able shelter that he describes as providing structure, forcing him to build from the ground up, and shifting his approach to life.

In the shelter system, Danny threw himself into rebuilding. He committed fully to working, engaging in programs, and stayed focused on the future. He joined the Care For the Homeless

Consumer Advisory Board, where his natural confidence and openness quickly stood out. He took on new responsibilities and even enrolled in barber school. **He stayed busy with intention.**

"I didn't want to get comfortable," he says. "I wanted to keep moving forward."

That momentum paid off. After more than a year in shelter, Danny recently moved into his own apartment on the Upper West Side. It's small, but it's his.

“There’s something about having your own space,” he says. “I can go to sleep when I want. I don’t have to worry about anyone else. It’s mine.” That sense of ownership represents more than housing. It reflects the commitment he made to rebuilding his life.

Today, Danny has been sober since December 2024 and is looking ahead. He is exploring several opportunities for his next chapter, including a role supporting others in the same shelter system that helped him get back on his feet. He’s also continuing to develop his craft as a barber, keeping his options open as he considers what comes next.

“My story is still being written,” he says. “But I know I’m better than I was a year ago.”

For Danny, progress isn’t about perfection. It’s about consistency.

“You can’t rewrite your past, but you can get a clean sheet of paper and write your future.”



“Danny is an amazing person whose determination and growth have been inspiring to witness. He has overcome tremendous challenges, not only rebuilding his own life but choosing to use his experiences to support and encourage others along the way. His dynamic energy, willingness to connect with people, and dedication to giving back make him a valued member of our CAB community. We are fortunate to have his voice, perspective, and his unwavering commitment to helping others see what is possible.”

Cynthia English, Chair of the Consumer Advisory Board

