



Wilson Briggs

Housing Success

Wilson Briggs believes family is like the roots of a tree. Branches may break, leaves may fall, but the roots remain, keeping you grounded through whatever storms life brings. During his lifetime, Wilson learned that roots can appear in unexpected places.

He believes that there are moments in every life that quietly ask us to keep going and they have the power to change the course of a life.

Born and raised in the Bronx, Wilson has faced more than his share of hardship. After being struck by a car, lingering injuries eventually led to hip surgery. During his recovery, an accident while under medical care left him with a broken neck and permanent nerve damage. He spent nearly two years moving between hospitals and rehabilitation facilities, trying to regain his ability to walk and get answers to what happened to him when he underwent surgery.

For a long time, he carried anger. The people entrusted with helping him had forever changed the course of his life, and he struggled to understand why. But instead of turning away from medical care, Wilson kept showing up. He pushed for answers, continued his appointments, and worked relentlessly through rehabilitation until he finally understood what happened to him. Once he had that understanding, he made a choice that would define the next chapter of his life: he would not let anger become the thing that held him still.

One Christmas season, while living in rehabilitation and fighting to walk again, Wilson describes meeting an angel.

Children had come to visit the residents, making cards and spreading holiday cheer. Across the room, he noticed a little

girl with two prosthetic legs, no older than six, making her way across the room with the very walker he was utilizing at the time. She wore a bright smile and emanated a light to every person in that room. Wilson thought about all the things children should get to do: ride bikes, run with friends, play freely. **Tears filled his eyes as he realized that this little girl, his “angel”, carrying burdens of her own had no idea she was giving someone else the strength to keep going.**

When people look at him, Wilson says he hopes they see “*a light*.” Not because his journey has been easy, but because he wants them to know that there will always be moments that ask us to keep going.

Today, Wilson is preparing to move into a home of his own after finding community and support at one of Care For the Homeless' men's shelter. After leaving assisted living, he was determined to reclaim his independence. What he found at CFH further solidified what he had come to know over the past 3 years: **healing is never a solitary act.** A case manager stepped in to make sure his housing voucher would not expire. Staff members answered questions, even when they were not assigned to his case. Housing specialists stayed on top of paperwork and celebrated each step forward alongside him. Wilson thinks of each of these team members as first responders. **They may not arrive in an ambulance or fire truck, but they show up every day to help others rebuild their lives.** He believes they deserve to be recognized for the quiet, often unseen work they do.

Wilson was quick to point out that they cannot do it alone. "They don't have a magic wand," he says. They can open doors, but he had to walk through them. Every morning, despite chronic pain and the challenge of simply getting dressed, he chooses to get up, make his appointments, and do his part.

Now after everything he has endured, Wilson is on the verge of something he worked long and hard for: a home of his own.

When people look at him, Wilson says he hopes they see "a light." Not because his journey has been easy, but because he wants them to know that there will always be moments that ask us to keep going. Sometimes they arrive as a person. Sometimes a feeling. Sometimes a small act of kindness.

And sometimes, without ever knowing it, we become that moment for someone else.

"With persistence and dedication, Mr. Briggs remained diligent in searching for apartments that would accept his CityFHEPS voucher. He successfully completed all the necessary steps required to secure housing opportunities. Today, Mr. Briggs is in the final stage of the housing process and is hopeful to transition into permanent housing within the next two months. His journey reflects resilience, personal growth, and a strong commitment to creating a better future for himself."

Lesia Bradley, Case Manager

