

## Home for the Holidays: Paul's Story

Paul is the first one to admit that he should have asked for help. As a man with a lot of pride, as things started to unravel in his life, Paul didn't want to rely on his friends and family for support so things only got worse.

When Paul was let go from his job as a facilities manager for an apartment building, he lost his apartment too. For a short time he stayed with friends while trying to find work. As the weeks went on, Paul decided it was time to leave his friend's couch, that is when he became homeless, sleeping on the streets.

This wasn't the first time Paul had been homeless. After leaving the military, he was unable to find work. Refusing to let his friends and family know he was struggling, he "camped out" on the streets until finding a job to support himself.

Cold nights on the streets brought back old memories from his younger years when he was too proud to ask for help. Still not wanting to tell his friends and family what had become of him, Paul decided he would ask for help.

Through another agency, Paul received rent subsidies that would help pay his rent. He was so excited to once again have a place to call home; but one thing stood in the way, the \$500 security deposit he had to pay before moving in. Paul was homeless and unemployed, he didn't have enough to cover the \$500 deposit. When he began to lose hope Paul was connected with the Volunteers of America Rent Deposit Loan program. Through the program, Paul received a loan for the \$500 that he was committed to paying back. "It felt so wonderful to know that someone trusted me. It made me feel like I was worth something again;" said Paul.

Because of the assistance he received, Paul was able to move in to his own apartment. Even though he still has not found work, he was committed to paying back his loan, he even made his last payment a month ahead of schedule. "If it wasn't for the help I received I would still be on the streets. Now I am happy where my life is and look forward to the future."