



More To The Story

William, whose story is on the right, is one of 2,350 people we served in Houston last year.

This year we're on pace to serve more than 3,500 people locally. Our destinations include two housing programs for Veterans who are getting back on their feet.

We saw William again in June this year. He's maintaining his new "lease" on life, despite the challenges.

He said, "It's funny how certain circumstances force us to change. I feel like I'll always crave alcohol in my brain, but I know I'm getting stronger every time I say 'no.'"

To support our work, you can give online at www.fillingthevoid.com, send a check to PO Box 1134 in Broken Arrow, OK, 74013, or scan the QR code below. Thanks!



It started at age 7

William's story writes itself. It's symbolic of the struggle we see in so many of the lives we serve. Their stories typically start early on...in a broken or chaotic home.

For William, it started at age 7. That's when his father introduced him to alcohol. When most kids are learning about addition and subtraction, he was learning to drink.

"The hardest thing I've done is forgive my dad. Before that, it was eating me up. I was in a really dark place. But I've forgiven everyone, including myself," William said.

By age 15, he stole a car — spiraling out of control down the wrong road in life with no plan and seemingly no good ending. Even today, he says he's still growing up.

"Dad got us drunk. Mom said I'd be dead by 20. If I could go back, I would change so many things. I should have stayed in school and sports, but I had no one to tell me to," he said.

Facing adulthood, he joined the Army. He thinks his dad conjured up a backroom deal with a judge to send him into the service rather than jail. Things didn't get better.

You know where his story leads — to the streets. For years, he had a small tent strategically hidden between a dumpster and a hedge. He needed a 6-pack every day just to function.

"I could go 2-3 days without eating, but I couldn't go a day without beer. I got really



William is proof that people change.

good at being homeless. I kept my area clean, picked up my trash and did odd jobs for cash."

Then one day he fell and was found unconscious. He woke up in a hospital bed at a VA Medical Center — across the street from where he was "living." It was his birthday, but nobody knew.

"I started crying. There was no cake. I was alone. And I could see my tent from my hospital room. But that fall saved me. It got me into rehab for two years. I guess that's a God thing."

Now, William has a real place to stay — at an apartment complex in Houston for formerly homeless Veterans. "It's the first time I've had a lease with my name on it," he said.