

## Turning Tragedy Into Opportunity



There are moments in everyone's life when they have no idea where to turn. Isheonna Faulkner found herself in a situation that might have made another person hopeless. Instead, she wrote an inspiring story for herself and her children. When she started on the FSS program she says, "I was going through a rough period in my life. My children's father had committed a horrible crime and left me to be a single first time parent" of a two year old and a two month old. "I tried so hard to cry in silence, but couldn't control the pain that I was feeling inside – the pain of raising fatherless children and not being able to support them working a full time job as an aide. I knew I had to do something very quickly."

Isheonna explains, "I came across a flyer from the FSS Program and thought: I will give it a try." The next morning, "I woke up and headed out to Green Street to see what the program was about. I knew it was my calling and what I prayed for the nights prior to my appointment."

As many FSS participants do, Isheonna set goals surrounding education and buying a home. She says, "As soon as I wrote my goals down for the FSS Program, I immediately got to them as if I was running up against time. I signed up for school one week later."

With less than a year left in the FSS Program, Isheonna is "currently a college graduate and working as a tech at Albany Memorial Hospital." In the next five years, she's looking to become a Registered Nurse and be an established homeowner.

For those thinking of joining the FSS Program, she offers the following advice: "Just be like Nike and do it. Procrastination is a disease and will have you still stuck and thinking about it five years later. Sometimes you have to keep the faith and believe." She also says that FSS staff "helps you achieve your goals by being there for you every step of the way. If you run into a problem on your journey to success, they will help out with resources."

Isheonna is enrolled in the homeownership program with the AHP Homeownership Center and looking forward to "buying a home for [her] children." One of the major things she learned through FSS is to set both short and long term goals. She says, "My future goals are to continue to set aside five year plans. If I could accomplish two to three things out of them, I will always feel like I'm winning."