



"Three Generations of Hope" - Harriet, Ashley and Zendaya are building brighter futures thanks to United Way's Family Success Center. Photo: United Way staff

A FAMILY'S HOPE RENEWED

“We reached out to our Family Success Center coach and he was a Godsend when we needed it the most.” - Harriet Coffey

With a desire to build better futures, Harriet Coffey and her daughter, Ashley, joined one of United Way of Greater Greensboro's Family Success Centers. These Centers take a generational approach to ending poverty by offering children and adults free bundled services in one location.

The mother and daughter duo were paired with a caring coach who helped them develop personal goals. They quickly began attending career, money management, computer, and education classes. Ashley's own daughter, Zendaya, was also enrolled in an on-site education program and three generations of the Coffey family began thriving.

Thanks to newfound skills, Harriet landed a job, and Ashley successfully earned a GED and began pursuing her own career. However, the Coffey family was dealt a heartbreaking blow when Harriet's youngest daughter unexpectedly died from complications related to diabetes.

According to Harriet, the emotional struggle caused tremendous stress and the once-thriving family began losing hope. “We were devastated. It was hard to stay motivated,” said Harriet.

Amidst the struggle, the COVID-19 pandemic forced Harriet to overcome yet another hurdle. Due to safety precautions, she was forced to begin working remotely, but the motel room they were living in lacked Internet access. Determined not to lose her job, Harriet set up a temporary work desk at a friend's home and called her Family Success Center coach for advice.

“We reached out to our Family Success Center coach and he was a Godsend when we needed it the most,” said Harriet. The coach advocated on the family's behalf and linked them with partners that provided assistance. Harriet was quickly approved to lease an apartment with Internet access and was able to maintain her job.

With renewed hope, Ashley now plans to honor her sister's memory by one day becoming an endocrinologist to help people who are struggling with diabetes. “It's nice to have people who will actually listen to you and encourage you. So many people don't have access to the things they need, but thanks to United Way, our family has access and hope,” said Ashley.