

LaRae: Homeless No More

In June of 2015, LaRae and her three children (ages 6, 3, and 1) moved into Inner City Mission after having made the rounds of other area shelters. “I cried when Sarah said they had a room for us (at ICM),” she says.

Even so, LaRae was afraid that she and her kids might not fit in. “I was afraid we wouldn’t be accepted because I had all these young kids, and my middle child was sick so much.”

LaRae’s youngest underwent surgery while they were living at ICM. “He cried for three days after the surgery. The staff and other residents at ICM didn’t complain. That’s when they really showed me that they cared.”

Once things settled down, LaRae was introduced to ReNew Consignment & Thrift in Lincoln, Illinois, as part of ICM’s work program. “I was excited to be able to work,” she says. “I like working with people.”

“She’s fabulous,” Store Manager Bobbi Reddix says of LaRae. “She can do just about everything, from the cash register to pricing and tagging, to customer service. The customers really like her.”

LaRae appreciates the trust Bobbi has in her. She takes pride in her work and her ability to contribute.

Recently, LaRae moved with the kids into an apartment. They are doing well, and LaRae still spends time at ReNew.

So what’s next for the mother of three? “I’m looking into schooling to become a social worker. I want to work with victims of sexual assault. I think I could share my own experiences and be a good support person.”

