

**MORE  
THAN**  
*a shelter.*

# RAISING UP

THE GOOD NEWS OF HELPING UP MISSION



## Finding Her Voice: Ramatu's Story

Written By WSRP Client, Katie O.

“Before I came to Helping Up Mission, I lost focus and I didn’t trust God to help me,” says Ramatu, age 28 (pictured left). Rama, as she likes to be called, grew up in Sierra Leone, West Africa and was raised by her grandmother after her mother moved to the United States when she was 5. Looking back, she describes her childhood simply: “It was good and bad. Good because I was with my grandma, but bad because I wasn’t allowed to see my dad. That side of me got shut down. I felt stuck and without a voice.”

After years with her grandmother, she joined her mother in Maryland in 2018, hoping to connect. “It was difficult because I felt like she didn’t know me. She was working, so I was lonely and I didn’t know how to talk about what I was feeling.”

In that loneliness, Ramatu turned to alcohol. “When I drank, I was able to say things that I couldn’t say when I was sober. It became the only way I knew how to express myself. I started using it to cope with everything—

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sadness, stress and even when I was happy. I just wanted to escape.”

Her father’s death in 2019 drove her deeper into addiction. “When my dad passed, I didn’t know how to deal with my grief. Alcohol became the only comfort I had, even though it was killing me.” Her drinking worsened while she worked as a geriatric nursing assistant. “I would wake up with my heart racing and my body trembling. I knew I was on a path that could kill me. I was in and out of the hospital.”

**“Because of you, I found my voice. Because of you, I have hope.”**

Eventually, she reached a breaking point. “I was tired. Tired of drinking, tired of hospitals and tired of being ashamed.”

In 2023, Ramatu entered treatment and learned about Helping Up Mission (HUM) Center for Women & Children. “When I first heard about HUM, I was scared. A year sounded like forever. It was frightening and exciting—all at the same time. I didn’t know anyone, but I told myself, *Rama, you have nothing to lose.*”

Her time at HUM has been life-changing. “Since coming to HUM, I learned that I need to face challenges as they come and that I do not have to rely on alcohol anymore. I thought I had to do everything on my own. Now I can express myself, even when it is hard. I don’t hide anymore.”

Looking ahead, Ramatu has hope. “I want to go back to school. I want to work in the medical field again. I want to have children one day. But I want to raise them differently. I want to give them the freedom to experience life, the freedom I never had.”

To the donors who make her journey possible, she has a message: “Thank you for giving me the chance to live a different life. Because of you, I found my voice. Because of you, I have hope.”



## Hope Restored. Lives Rebuilt.

Daniel’s Monthly Update

### Dear HUM Family,

Readiness for change is something we cannot mandate for those we serve. So often, HUM’s outreach to engage those in need and invite them to join our Spiritual Recovery Program is not always linear and requires patience. We might observe someone caught in the throes of addiction and consider them ready for help.

Ramatu shares in her testimonial, “I was tired. Tired of drinking, tired of hospitals and tired of being ashamed.” Ramatu came to a point of surrender and willingness to change—so foundational to recovery. Helping Up Mission’s outreach efforts are designed to be there when someone in need is ready. As the Psalmist writes in Psalm 107, it’s also how God meets each of us in our time of need, right where we are and loves us enough to not leave us in our despair.

Your support, prayers and service enable us to be there for Ramatu and scores of men and women, ready to start on the path to hope and transformation.

Serving with you,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "K. Daniel Stoltzfus". The signature is fluid and cursive, written over a white background.

**K. Daniel Stoltzfus, CEO**  
Helping Up Mission

- <sup>4</sup> Some wandered in the wilderness, lost and homeless.**
- <sup>5</sup> Hungry and thirsty, they nearly died.**
- <sup>6</sup> “Lord, help!” they cried in their trouble, and he rescued them from their distress.**
- <sup>7</sup> He led them straight to safety, to a city where they could live.**
- <sup>8</sup> Let them praise the Lord for his great love and for the wonderful things he has done for them.**
- <sup>9</sup> For he satisfies the thirsty and fills the hungry with good things.**

Psalm 107:4-9

# Focus on Recovery

Donna Mercer, Chaplain, Center for Women & Children

Helping Up Mission Center for Women and Children graduate, Rama, had long been silenced by the pain and confusion the world offers so freely. Most come into the Women's Spiritual Recovery Program having lost focus and direction.

Through the help of HUM's many and varied partners, volunteers and supporters, the program staff is actively involved in helping the women regain hope. Years of disordered living had only offered fear and isolation. They learn this is not God's intention for those made in his image. The abundance offered through Spiritual Life classes, 12-step Recovery meetings, Work Therapy, Substance Use Disorder classes and community serve as evidence of his love.

Like Rama, many are hearing the voice of Love and finding hope to respond. Healing is a



continuous in the supportive, loving community at the Center for Women and Children.

God promises the pains of this world are temporary. "Three things will last forever—faith, hope and love—and the greatest of these is love." 1Corinthians 13:13

## Cuppa Tea Fridays

Now and then on a Friday the women at our Center for Women & Children gather for **Cuppa Tea**—a warm, welcoming pause filled with hot tea, sweet treats and heartfelt conversation. It's a simple moment to breathe, connect and just be. These peaceful gatherings are made possible by our dedicated volunteers and staff. *Small cups, big impact.*





## Where Are They Now: Carla S.

### Urgently Needed

Help us support the women and children at Helping Up Mission by donating essential items: *sports bras and underwear (all sizes), backpacks and tampons.* These basic necessities make a huge difference in restoring dignity and confidence. Your generosity directly impacts lives in crisis. Donations can be dropped off or ordered online and shipped to us. Thank you!

**To Donate Urgent Needs**  
[helpingupmission.org/ways-to-give/donate-goods](http://helpingupmission.org/ways-to-give/donate-goods)



When Carla S. graduated from Helping Up Mission’s Center for Women & Children in 2022, her journey didn’t stop there. With the foundation she built at HUM, she earned her CPRS certification and now serves as a Peer Recovery Specialist with Mobile Crisis 988, walking alongside others in their hardest moments. She says, “HUM taught me to live with honesty, open-mindedness and willingness—principles that continue to guide me daily. I am especially grateful for the staff who cared for me like family, offering safety, support and encouragement when I needed it most.” Today, she not only enjoys meaningful work, but also restored relationships with her children and the priceless joy of being a present, loving grandmother.



## FILL THOSE EMPTY CHAIRS WITH HOPE

Empty chairs at family tables tell stories of addiction’s devastation. Fathers and mothers once central to holiday meals now struggle to survive. Your gift to Helping Up Mission helps restore lives and reunite families—filling those empty chairs with hope.

*We are grateful for the contributions of WSRP Katie O., who curated this issue of Raising Up.*



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### Our Mission

To transform the lives of and restore hope to those suffering from addiction and poverty by harnessing the power of faith, science and community.

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