Frank and Maria’s Hope Story: Self-Sufficiency Success

Frank and Maria came to one of our Emergency Assistance Centers because they were living in their car. Maria wasn’t able to work due to an illness. She filed for disability, but was denied. Frank was working day labor jobs, but many of the temp firms did not have any work for him. Unable to pay their bills, their car was all they had for sleep and shelter.

One day, a friend recommended Catholic Charities of Northeast Kansas. Although they were embarrassed to ask for help, Frank and Maria met with a case manager. Through various donations, she secured a couple of nights stay at a motel while she worked on finding permanent housing for them. She also walked the couple through our food pantry and provided warm clothing and blankets from our clothing closet.

With Catholic Charities’ help, Frank and Maria were approved for an apartment. Getting them housed wasn’t the end of the story.

We partnered with a local church and our thrift store, TurnStyles, to assist with furnishings for their new home. Also, our employment services team helped Frank find a steady job. Both Frank and Maria enrolled in our financial education classes so that they could learn how to budget their money and be better prepared for any future financial crisis.

Grateful for all the assistance that they received, Frank and Maria wanted to pay it forward. Today, they help other families in need by volunteering at one of our food pantries.
Susan and Joe live in a rural Kansas town with limited resources. Due to medical conditions, they were unable to work. They fell behind on their rent. With no money for food, they relied on fishing, sometimes catching only a turtle.

Susan and Joe heard about the Mobile Resource Bus coming to their area. The bus is equipped with basic essentials including food and clothing. A case manager is on board to provide services such as budget coaching, employment counseling, referrals or help filling out paperwork for other existing programs.

“It’s not possible to have a permanent office in every county, but we are committed to serving those who live in rural communities where emergency assistance may not be easily accessible,” says Denise Ogilvie, Vice President, Outreach and Grants Management.

Susan and Joe came to the Mobile Resource Bus feeling helpless. Although Joe was scheduled to begin working at a temp agency in the coming days, they were about to be evicted. Catholic Charities helped with immediate rent needs, as well as food assistance. The case management, however, went beyond that. “We provided financial coaching to the couple, developing a goal plan for budgeting their money and paying their bills once Joe started his job,” explains Dani De León, Case Management Specialist.

Susan and Joe left the Catholic Charities’ Mobile Resource Bus with more than a bag of food and a budget plan. They had hope – something they hadn’t had in a very long time.