

## Reviving the drive to compete

As a natural athlete growing up in an upper-middle class family in West Austin, Victor Hutchinson had the opportunity to play and excel at most sports. As he got older Victor turned his focus to competitive swimming. By high school he was rated the top teen swimmer on the Austin City League and was recruited to the University of Kansas with a full athletic scholarship.

"Life looked bright, and I had my goals set," Victor said. "My plan was to swim, finish college and become a high school coach and teacher."

Then in December of his freshman year, Victor began to feel sick. "It came on real fast, like the flu or something," he recalled. "On Friday I was swimming and then by Monday I didn't have the strength to get across the pool."

The diagnosis was chronic kidney failure. Soon he was on weekly hemodialysis and a year later was looking for a kidney donor. Victor was given the devastating news that his swimming days were over.

"It's hard to describe the anger and hate I felt at that time," Victor stated. "I was 19 years old and everything I cared about was gone. I felt like I had been thrown out to dry."

Victor was given a new kidney at age 20 and spent the next several years trying to pick up the pieces. He took jobs as a truck driver and diesel mechanic, but eventually he turned to drugs to ease the pain.

After a bitter divorce, Victor got more bad news in 2004. His transplanted kidney was failing. This caused avascular necrosis, an infection that ate away his hipbone – putting the former athlete in a nursing home for 6 months – and a wheelchair for life.

"I really hit rock bottom," Victor said in his soft, gravelly voice. "Every day I woke up and just wanted to die."



A case worker introduced Victor to Foundation Communities and with our affordable housing and support services, Victor saw a way to rebuild his life. Soon afterwards he moved to the 6th floor of Skyline Terrace, one of Foundation Communities' apartment complexes for single adults, "and I wake up every morning with a wonderful view of the river and the downtown skyline. I feel grateful to be here," he said. "I feel like the competitive athlete inside me is back," he continued. "I want to make something of my life and motivate others who are struggling."

Today, Victor is a volunteer advocate at his dialysis center, speaking on behalf of other patients. He also wants to go out and speak to kids about fitness and nutrition – and how obesity can lead to kidney failure. "And I'm training for the Capital 10K," he reported.

As a teenager, Victor ran in the first Capital 10K, and with his new focus and better health he has his eyes set on competing in the wheelchair division. This December, Victor was

featured in the Austin American Statesman's "Season for Caring," which spurred much generosity from the community including an anonymous donation – a lightweight, titanium racing wheelchair. "I feel like I've traded in my old Ford for a Ferrari," he laughed. "Come March – I'm ready to race!"

"I used to wonder what my purpose was," Victor mused. "Because of Foundation Communities and the fight I've still got inside me – I believe I've found it."

## Supper Clubs offer a chance to serve those in need and build community

Looking for a great opportunity to serve with your family, friends, neighbors, colleagues, fellow church or book club members? Host a Supper Club at one of our properties for low-income families or single adults. You'll help us build community by providing a warm, nutritious meal to our residents. We promise you a rewarding experience.

Contact Lisa Sciorilli at (512) 634-7137 or [Lisa.Sciorilli@foundcom.org](mailto:Lisa.Sciorilli@foundcom.org) to sign up!





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Foundation Communities is a local non-profit providing first class, affordable homes and support services for thousands of low-income families and individuals, empowering them with the tools they need to succeed.

We own and operate 16 properties in Austin and North Texas providing affordable homes to over 2,500 families, create enriched learning environments for over 700 children as well as ongoing adult education and financial coaching, and help over 18,000 low income residents file their taxes free of charge every year.

# FC updates



## Holiday Assistance Program helps a record number of families find joy in the season

Thank you to our holiday sponsors and community partners for making this our best Holiday Assistance Program yet! The program helps match families in need with sponsors to provide clothing, toys, and gift cards for the holidays. This year we had a 70% increase in applications with 222 families requesting assistance. In the end, we were able to help 100% of them fulfill their wish lists. We are so very grateful for your generosity and support. Thank you from the bottom of our hearts.

Holiday Assistance Program Community Partners: Innography, Hewlett Packard, Maudie's, BookPeople, Spansion, Keller Williams, KGSR / Greater Texas Federal Credit Union, and Randolph Brooks Federal Credit Union

## New affordable community, Arbor Terrace, on track to open this summer

Construction is underway on our fourth property for low-income single adults – Arbor Terrace at I-35 and Oltorf. We are rehabilitating the old Suburban Lodge into affordable, quality efficiency apartments. 120 Austinites will have a safe, supportive place to call home starting this summer. Stay tuned! We'll keep you posted on our progress.



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