

## 12 Days of HOPE 4 Youth: Day 3



On the third day of Christmas, we celebrate the two year anniversary of the first young person moving into our transitional housing program, HOPE Place. His name is Beau and this is his story.

Beau became homeless when he left his adopted parents house to remove himself from their toxic environment. Beau packed his bags and moved to Minnesota to live with his sister. Unfortunately, that didn't last long and he found himself homeless. He eventually found his way to SteppingStone.

Soon after arriving there, and because Beau was young, SteppingStone staff told him about HOPE 4 Youth. Beau was shy when he first walked into the HOPE 4 Youth Drop-In Center. He immediately met with a case manager to dig in and figure out what resources and services he needed. Beau has said his favorite thing about HOPE 4 Youth is the people. "The stuff that they provide to you is nice, but more than that, it's the people that help you not give up and see to it that you move forward," he added. During this time, Beau took the Coordinated Entry assessment to find the housing that was right for him. At the Drop-In Center Beau ate hot meals, accessed the food and hygiene pantry, picked out clothing in the clothing closet, worked with Jenilee from the Anoka County Workforce Center and met with on-site providers for haircuts and to meet his medical needs at HOPE Clinic.

He remembers the day he was able to come to HOPE Place. Case Manager Eddie told him that he was going to be the very first person to move into our new transitional housing facility. Beau asked, "For real?" On December 15th, our Director of Programs, Sara, drove Beau and his two bags of belongings to HOPE Place. When he walked in the door the first time, he was so excited that this was where he was going to change, grow up and be responsible and do what he needs to do to succeed in life.

Beau set goals when he first got to HOPE Place. He wanted to go to school every day, which he did and he even received an award for perfect attendance. He wanted to get glasses to see in class, and he did. He wanted to drive, so with the help of some of our volunteers and our staff, he took his driving test - and passed! He joined a local faith partner, Chain of Lakes Church, and has participated in many activities there. He attends HOPE TreeHouse often, as he continues on his faith journey. He often worked out in the fitness room, played at the basketball hoop, and learned how to eat right which helped him lose more than 40 pounds. Beau also worked with Jenilee from the Anoka County Workforce Center through a grant from the Sundance Family Foundation and was able to

obtain jobs at Savers through the work experience program and later a job at Adventures Plus at a local elementary school. The kids there just love Beau. Beau continues to work at both jobs while he takes general courses at Anoka Tech. He is studying to become a Teacher's Aide.

On December 1, 2018, nearing his 24 months at HOPE Place, Beau moved into his very own one bedroom apartment. Our Housing Heroes team helped him furnish his apartment so that he can call it a home. HOPE 4 Youth staff will continue to work with Beau to help him stay an independent, self-sustained adult.

Beau thanks everyone who has made this possible for him and says, "The best thing about HOPE 4 Youth is providing us hope and love. If I never met HOPE 4 Youth, I wouldn't be here. They are compassionate to help us accomplish and move forward. The staff and volunteers listen to us and understand when we mess up. They will still stand by us."

Please consider making a gift this holiday season in honor of Beau, so that we can continue to provide programs to change the lives of even more homeless young people. You can make a gift online at [www.HOPE4YouthMN.org/Donate](http://www.HOPE4YouthMN.org/Donate) or via mail to HOPE 4 Youth, 2191 Northdale Blvd NW, Coon Rapids, MN 55433. Any amount and all gifts are appreciated.