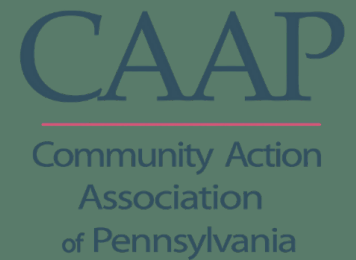


Meet Chelsey Sirmons

CAAP January 2021 Agency Spotlight Newsletter Story



Chelsey Sirmons

A Community Action Client
& Business Owner

Spotlight On Pittsburgh Community Services, Inc. (PCSI)



"There are 13 other PCSI clients who also stepped up and took control of their lives. They got and maintained employment despite their backgrounds. Because of our partners in the community, they are all currently working or have a business going," says A. Odell Richardson, E.D.

PCSI Training & Support Was There When Chelsey Set New Goals For Change

Chelsey Sirmons faced serious personal barriers, back in 2016, when he was connected with Pittsburgh Community Services, Inc. (PCSI). Chelsey was unemployed, required workforce development assistance, experienced traumatic physical & mental health issues, had no means of transportation, and held a criminal record. To help him start recovery from his overwhelming situation, he was immediately introduced to PCSI's Case Management, Re-Entrant Services, Training and Workshops, Workforce and Entrepreneurial Skills Development classes.

"PCSI helped me obtain my goals through multiple levels of support, training, and resources. When I walked into PCSI, I was tired of my old way of life and was looking for the opportunity to change. I just was in search of that one something that would allow me to make my poison my medicine," says Chelsey of his PCSI experience.

Chelsey's eyes were opened to skill-building training and support at PCSI that allowed him to:

- learn job readiness skills for interviewing, resume writing & applying,
- connect with employers and locate job opportunities,
- get connected to resources,
- attend training and workshops,
- start a business,
- and manage the pardon and expungement process.

He is a model example of someone who has benefited from working with PCSI. He started with the program four years ago as a drug user, drug addict and was even shot with a firearm once. Since starting his personal work with the PCSI staff, Chelsey went through rehab, got his recovery certificate, became a certified Peer Support Counselor, and started his own non-profit to provide counseling services. PCSI helped him get that non-profit business up and going.

Chelsey is just awesome. He's a great speaker, and he is driven. He is just really a good guy that benefited from PCSI's help. We worked with him every step of the way," shares A. Odell Richardson, PCSI Executive Director.

Chelsey has used the set of new skills and support he received at PCSI to move forward in life not only self-sufficiently, but with an eye toward giving back to others. He is now a part of the Community Action community itself and the staff at PCSI could not be any prouder of his work ethic.

"Since then, I maintain a life of recovery. I am a CADIC, CRS, TSS, GCDF, and Peer Specialist. I have also started a non-profit called Metanoias Inc., to which I am the President/CEO. That business involves Mentee/Mentorship, Culture Competency, Substance Abuse Prevention, Mental Health Awareness, and Advocacy," says Chelsey of his experience working with PCSI.

Congratulations, Chelsey! You made a big batch of lemonade out of those lemons.