“With Circles, I’m not just living, I have a life!”

Though she was a teen mom, Tiana was doing well. She had a full-time job and was a full-time nursing student when things changed. She saw a volatile economy claim her job and her significant other, with whom she shared financial responsibilities, walked out.

Unable to make ends meet, she lost her apartment, dropped out of school, and was completely consumed by the tyranny of the moment. She and her daughter sought refuge with family and friends, but the only support they were willing to provide was a list of homeless shelters.

After being accepted into a local homeless program for families with children, life was more stable, but still hard. She had to move each week, endured 15-hour days looking for work, was depressed, and believed she had no say in what happened to her.

On the verge of giving up, she found employment as a CNA and was able to get her own apartment. Tiana learned of Circle Leader training and enrolled. It was the moment she had been waiting for. Her life would finally be about what she wanted to do.

Now, having been a Circle Leader for six months, she has found the support that she had been lacking. Her Allies assist her with financial management, time management, decision making and cultural exposure. The once shy and introverted Tiana is now more confident and ready to take the lead. She has seen her social capital increase and soon, so will her finances as she has re-enrolled in the nursing program! Tiana is back in school, working full-time, and being intentional about how she spends her time with her elementary age daughter. When describing where she will be in the coming years her Ally says it best, “She’s resilient, determined, motivated and considering what life has thrown at her, shockingly optimistic. The sky’s the limit!”

