Ashley Shares Her Story



When Ashley arrived at The Path in November 2020, she was on the edge. Her husband was incarcerated. She was living in a motel with her children. And, addiction was consuming her life. "I was always chasing my next high," she recalls. "Always worried, always stressed." When the money finally ran out and the family was about to be living on the street, The Path was her family's last hope.

What changed everything? Structure. Accountability. A community rooted in faith. The Path gave Ashley and her children the spiritual foundation and practical support they needed to begin rebuilding — together.

Ashley earned her driver's license for the first time, secured a job at Dunkin' Donuts, and worked her way into management — biking to a 3:30 a.m. shift on a pedal bicycle before our community partners rallied to get her an electric bike. Later, the family was able to purchase a van.

"Now I can be an example of hope to the women who come work here — proof that no matter how bad it gets, you should never give up on yourself."

Ashley completed The Path's New Life Program and is living fully sober today with her husband, Tommy, and their four children in a home of their own.

"This program has brought my family back together and changed my life," Ashley says. "Now I can be an example of hope to the women who come work here — proof that no matter how bad it gets, you should never give up on yourself."

Through The Path, your generosity, and stubborn determination, Ashley turned the tragedy in her life into inspiration.

Because of You...



Dear Friends,

After 25 years, my heart is different. I no longer run around to complete 100 things a day, and I have a great staff. It's hard to comprehend when I go to work every day. I woke up this morning and was stunned by the realization that 4,000 clients have come through the doors of The Path's rescue mission—**a place you helped to build with me**. Sometimes I pause to listen to all the children playing and laughing because they feel safe. Most of all I'm grateful because today, all of The Path is debt free – thanks to you.

The future is very bright for the homeless families and their children in our community.

In His Service,

DuWayne Sipper
Executive Director

MEMBER:

CITYGATE NETWORK MISSION MEMBER ACCREDITED DISTINGUISHED

www.CitygateNetwork.org

PathOfCitrus.org

The Path of Citrus County P.O. Box 3024 • Inverness, FL 34451

Lecanto Bargain Store 1729 W. Gulf to Lake Highway • Lecanto, FL 34461
Mon.–Fri. 9 a.m.–5 p.m. and Sat. 9 a.m.–4 p.m.

The Path of Marion County P.O. Box 77-1739 • Ocala, FL 34477

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***Names may have been changed to protect privacy**





MAKING AN *Impact* FOR 25 YEARS

THE PATH
25 YEARS OF SERVICE
AND HE SHALL DIRECT YOUR PATH Prov. 3:6





Erica's Journey



Erica struggled with alcoholism for more than 20 years. Her two children largely raised themselves while she fought a losing battle with addiction. In 2021, she came to The Path — not for herself, but for her kids. But she wasn't ready, and left after 30 days.

What followed was devastating. She lost her home, her vehicle, and then her son, who was removed from her care. She ended up hospitalized, fighting for her life. "I hit rock bottom — again," she says.

Erica came back to The Path.

This time, something shifted. She stopped going through the motions and surrendered fully — to the program, and to God. "You have to be serious and do what you have to do," she says. "I admitted I was powerless over my addiction without God." Three months into The Path's New Life program, she regained custody of her son. He moved into The Path with her, thrived in school and sports, and together they grew stronger in their faith.

> **"I admitted I was powerless over my addiction without God."**

Today, Erica is a CNA — her license reinstated and her career advancing. She owns a Habitat for Humanity home. Her family is whole. And she volunteers with recovery programs, showing up for others the way The Path once showed up for her.

> **"If God helped someone like me, He can help you."**

"If God helped someone like me, He can help you."

She says: “I am able to witness and be an example of hope to never give up on yourself, no matter how bad it gets."

THE *Journey* OF 25 YEARS FROM VISION TO VICTORY

Era 1: The Foundation (1997–2001)

1997: Founder DuWayne Sipper begins sharing the vision for a biblically-based rescue mission.

1999: The Path is established as a 501(c)(3) nonprofit.

2000: The first **Shelter Bargain Store** opens to build community awareness.

2001: Official Grand Opening. Two houses acquired and renovated—one house to shelter men and the other to shelter women and their children.





2000

2001

Era 2: Sowing & Sustaining (2005–2013)

2005: The Path Farm is established on 15 acres, introducing fresh food and another type of "work therapy."

2010: Farm Co-op launches to provide community residents with locally grown food year-round.

2010–2013: Rapid growth with **four additional houses** acquired for expanding shelter capacity, plus offices for administration and client services.

2005

2010

Era 3: Record Impact & The Campus (2015–2019)

2015: Milestone Year: **11,000 lbs of food produced**; 10 additional acres of fruit trees planted in a joint project with local Rotary Clubs; over 26,400 meals served.

2015–2018: The **$3M Capital Campaign** to purchase and renovate a run-down motel property into a rescue mission that can shelter single mothers or dads with their children, and families.

2019: The Campus Unites: Men's and Women's wings open; Family Wing opens; all operations moved to this campus.



First family with children welcomed

Era 4: Completion & A Debt-Free Future (2020–2026)

2020–2025: Major campus renovations completed, including new roofs, generators, and secure gated entry.

2026: THE CELEBRATION. Kitchen and Child Care room renovations complete.

2026: All debt paid in full.

DEBT FREE

2026

THE *Impact* YOU HAVE MADE OVER THE PAST 25 YEARS

- ✓ **July 2001** – Doors opened
- ✓ Today, approximately **4,000 men, women,** and **children** have been served
- ✓ 3 times/day x 365 days/year x 25 years = **4,400,000 meals** have been served for adults and their children at The Path.
- ✓ **1,500,000** of **bed-nights** have been provided to **adults** and their **children** over 25 years

When you partner with The Path through your giving, you provide men, women and children time to recover, re-train and escape poverty. You are supporting a change of heart that lasts forever! Everyone at The Path is grateful, and we thank you.

Programs encompass a holistic approach in place for the past 25years:

Rescue — Crisis Stabilization

- Meet basic short-term needs (food, clothing, safe shelter, childcare, medical attention, etc.)
- Assess current situation of individuals & family
- Assess needs for addiction recovery as well as other physical, emotional or mental health issues of adults & children

Recovery — Healing Guidance

- Goal-directed case management
- Healthy, productive life skills & relationship skills
- Access to community resources, addiction recovery & health services
- Counseling for adults, children & the family unit
- Supervised programs for children

Restoration — Transition to Self-Sufficiency

- Provide re-training opportunities
- Facilitate transition to other programs when determined The Path no longer meets goals & needs
- Facilitate transition to healthy support systems & self-sufficient living