

## Hawthorne Place Apartments Resident Profile



### Phyllisha Gregory advances career path

Phyllisha Gregory called Hawthorne Place Apartments home from April 2015 until recently this year. During her residency, she worked hard and leveraged Hawthorne resources like the Family Self-Sufficiency (FSS) and Community Services League (CSL) programs to accomplish some impressive goals.

When Phyllisha moved into Hawthorne, the single mother of two young children worked full-time at the Community Service League Plasma Center, carried a full load at a Kansas City career college and attended a community college on a part-time basis. While she attended school, Phyllisha covered living expenses with paid short-term internships through Kansas City's Full Employment Council and grant money.

She had limited work experience and, therefore, few job skills. But Phyllisha was determined to change that. She ultimately earned a certification in medical office administration and an associate's degree in business and logistics management from Metropolitan Community College.

After graduation, Phyllisha held various full-time and temporary positions including stints with the Internal Revenue Service and a retail call center. Now she is a city carrier with the U.S. Postal Service, where she started work in the fall of 2018. It's a good job with full benefits, and she earned a raise within three months. She enjoys what she does and is more confident than ever before about her ability to care for herself and her kids – now ages 2, 5 and 9.

"I'm finally at the point in my life where I can think about the future instead of worrying about things like not having enough gas to get to work," Phyllisha said.

Hawthorne's Small Wonders cared for and educated her toddler until he started kindergarten, where he scored in the top 10 percent of his class. Her then-5-year-old thrived through a partnership with the on-site Boys and Girls Club. Both of her older children have received Club achievement awards and are thriving in school.

Even with a new baby born in 2016, Phyllisha continued making progress. Since then, she has used money from her FSS account and knowledge from CSL career development and money management classes to reduce debt, obtain much-needed dental work and find better jobs.

"I am so grateful to Hawthorne for all of the opportunities I've had to better my life," Phyllisha said. "I couldn't believe a program like FSS existed, and I don't know if I would have been this successful without Hawthorne's help and CSL financial and career coaches like Jeff and Rose. My kids and I made a fresh start at Hawthorne, and our future looks bright."

