



## THE FUTURE BEYOND DAY 1

“I have been sober for 1 day.”

Last year, I handed a \$100 Aldis gift card to a woman Veteran to help with food insecurity. It was part of \$3000 of funds in the form of gift cards I provided that day with my partner Rhea to Veterans who were in the HUD/VASH transition out of homeless program at the VA Clinic. After talking to her for a couple of minutes, she told me about her newly established sobriety.

One day.

A lifetime for those women Veterans, and other Veterans who struggle every one of those day ones to find hope that Day One brings Day 2. I admit I occasionally tend to verbosity and the dramatic in my writing. But those 7 words are stripped of any hyperbole. They are simple and raw and an example of the declarations I encountered over the last three years from other women Veterans who exist in what seems perpetual Day Ones.

There is worry about finding a roof over their head, combined with counting pennies to eat, and for many, issues of addiction and getting buffeted about by currents of stress, anxiety, and depression stemming from surviving trauma.

Ratchet all of that up if they are parents.

Nichelle was also not too long ago mired in that web of constant uncertainty. With primarily her own resilience and with the support of organizations like ours, and friends, Nichelle began living in a future that seemed unobtainable not too long ago. An apartment, a job, and a semblance of security were the cobbles in her nascent path onward.

Starting or continuing a program of learning is important to paving that path. Nichelle enrolled in her first college classes this January. Pamlico Rose, along with the Daughters of American Revolution, Susanna Coutanch Evans Chapter and East Carolina Veterans Coalition collaborated and bought a laptop for Nichelle, every college student needs as laptop. She and I picked one out two weeks ago at Best Buy. We keep in contact; she loves college and is managing the everyday conundrum of job and school.

The one-day sober Veteran I met months ago, and I also stay in touch with, is now six months sober and like Nichelle, is attending college.

We celebrate the hard journey of hope when it becomes reality.



Nichelle displaying her newly purchased laptop!