

CEDAR VALLEY UNITED WAY

Cedar Valley United Way supports partner agencies in the Cedar Valley who fight for the health, education, financial stability and emergency and basic needs of our community. The success stories below are shared by our community partners as examples of your support in action.



Mari's Story

Allen Women's Health had been serving a pregnant woman who didn't speak English (using an interpreter), from another country, with her husband in the room or in the waiting room. One day, she requested a special appointment to discuss insurance, and requested that her husband remain in the waiting room. She began the visit asking questions about insurance. As the visit continued, the woman became tearful, and shared that she had been a victim of domestic violence, but was afraid to share this information because in her country, you weren't supposed to tell anyone. She had no family or friends here and she had been homeless prior to meeting and marrying her husband. She was being abused, sometimes with physical objects, locked inside rooms, and even starved. It was arranged through another agency specializing in shelter for domestic violence via a telephone interpreter, that a taxi would pick her up at an exit in the back and take her to an undisclosed hotel. Through her bravery, she was able to safely leave, and remain safe afterwards as well! She continued to work with many community agencies throughout her pregnancy, as she didn't have any income, transportation, or support, and was starting all over in a new country. She delivered a healthy birthweight baby, and has now secured safe housing for herself and her baby! Allen Women's Health was proud to have helped her do that.

**UnityPoint Health - Allen Hospital:
Enhanced Maternal Health Program**

Isiah's Story

Isiah joined the iJAG program at George Washington Carver Academy after moving to Waterloo from Milwaukee. The move greatly impacted Isiah, and when he first arrived at school he was completely withdrawn and refusing to engage in classes or with other students. Isiah lives with his dad, and he knew of the iJAG program so reached out to the middle school specialist for help. When our specialist first met with Isiah, he wouldn't talk with anyone. His iJAG specialist encouraged him to open up through journaling, and the specialist would respond with motivational notes of encouragement. As Isiah became more comfortable, he opened up first with his iJAG teacher and then with other students. He has now had a complete attitude change and is becoming involved in school and trying in class. He began completing all of his assignments and succeeded in all of his classes in the first semester, keeping him on track to advance to the next grade level. Isiah is also becoming more involved in school and decided to join the basketball team this winter. His increased school involvement will keep him engaged in school and gives him more reasons to participate and succeed in his classes. Isiah could have easily remained withdrawn and fallen behind his peers by refusing to participate in school. Because of iJAG's intervention, Isiah is back on track and thriving in his new community.

iJag: Bridging the Gap Between High School and Careers



Dominique's Story

Dominique graduated from The Job Foundation in 2019 and recently bought his first car! Using the budgeting skills he learned during the High School financial lessons, he determined that he could afford a \$200 per month payment towards a car loan. Dominique did research with different banks and credit unions to find the best interest rate. His positive credit score allowed him to obtain a \$10k loan with low interest. When Dominique discovered that his payments would be \$213 per month (slightly over his budget), he quickly came up with a plan. Dominique has been employed at Target while taking online classes at Iowa State University. With the uncertainty of the pandemic, Dominique feared the security of his job. He decided to speak with her supervisor about his concerns. His supervisor brought these concerns to the head manager, who then called Dominique to assure him that his job is secure. Dominique now feels assured that he can afford the payments of the car loan and then accepted the loan offer with the bank. He currently attends Iowa State University studying Education. Dominique is looking forward to having this independence to continue building a brighter financial future!

The Job Foundation: Financial Stewardship Mentoring Program

*Names are all changed for privacy