



**CITY YOUTH
M A T R I X®**

THE CITY YOUTH MATRIX HERO

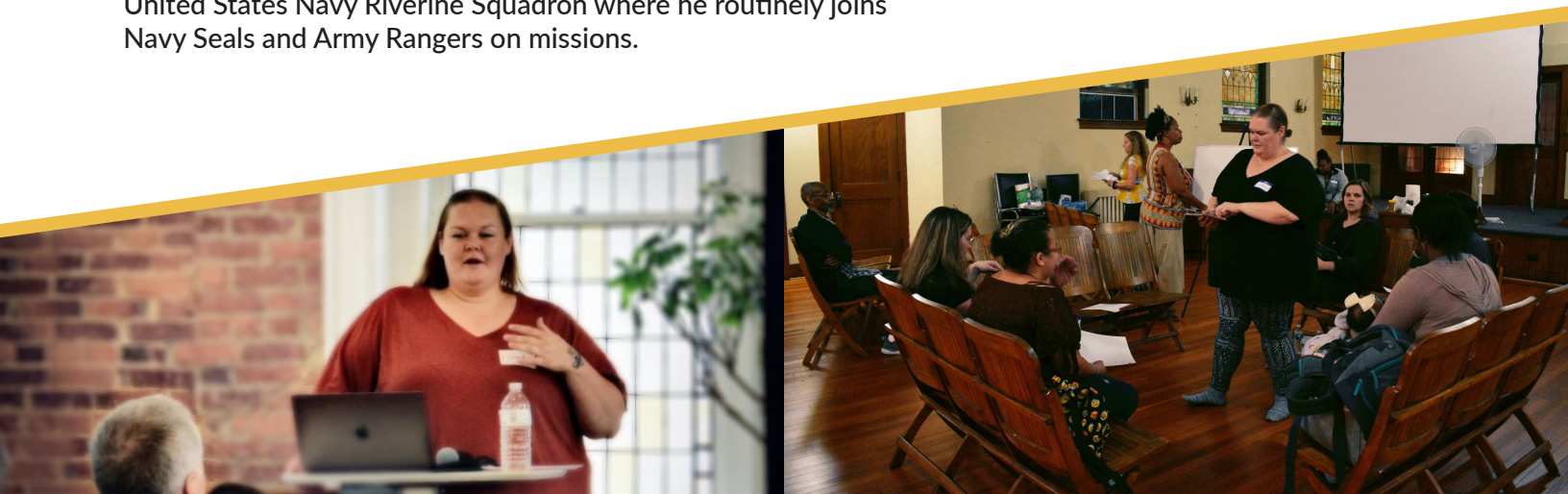
“For them I’d risk it all, because of her I will not fall”

She wouldn’t tell you she’s our Hero or leader, we know otherwise. We met her before we even had our official name. It was around 2007 at a school that used to be called South Frederick Elementary. She had been walking on a dark and lonely path. Her glimmer of light? Ask her if you want to know more about her story, she might tell you.

This is the point in the story where her climb to leadership in City Youth Matrix began. Heartly House, Inc. and Advocates for Homeless Families, Inc., and the aforementioned South Frederick Elementary School (SFES) wrapped around our Hero at this time, we call this The Matrix. We provided her and her four children hope, joy, and love. Our Hero leaned into our arms and somehow found motivation. Again, I’ll let you ask her where that came from. We can only theorize where her motivation came from. Maybe it was ignited by lost dreams, but nonetheless it led her to enroll in classes at FCC. The Matrix was overjoyed that she was modeling the value of education to her four children.

The early years were really rough though. Her youngest son was in second grade at the time. He frequently did not make it through a class and needed to be pulled by the guidance counselor or school administration. It was about this time in 2009 that our Hero officially got registered with City Youth Matrix services and paired up with one of our family liaisons. Our family liaisons are individuals that help the parent of vulnerable children become more empowered. We do this by connecting the child to the wealth of local extracurricular enrichment programs by removing barriers related to registration, cost, and transportation. We support the parent/guardian and child as they experience the wonderful benefits produced as a result of connections to more relationships. Some people call us a relationship factory. Others call us the quarterback of the extracurriculars. These additional and vital relationships have been proven to literally heal a child’s brain from traumatic experiences. There is some research on it called ACES. Our Hero appreciated the hope, joy, and love demonstrated by The Matrix.

Again, at that time The Matrix consisted of staff from SFES, Heartly House, and Advocates for Homeless. The Matrix and the family liaison helped lead the mom to enrolling her youngest son in an intensive one to one (child to adult) mentor program called RISE. Her son got paired up with a mentor that continues to walk with him today. The Matrix helped connect this son to additional programs such as basketball. Her son recently finished first in his Navy bootcamp class and is now a member of the United States Navy Riverine Squadron where he routinely joins Navy Seals and Army Rangers on missions.



Lets get back to our Hero. After getting her degree in nursing she started working in the senior care industry where she still works today. Sometimes she logs as many as 70 hours per week. In addition to this job she has a wonderful hobby where she bakes cakes and cupcakes for her friends. Stay tuned on that one. Through the years she has been a staunch advocate for her children in their natural ups and downs of life. City Youth Matrix now connects the two daughters to extracurricular enrichment programs just as we did for the son. The younger daughter we connect to ice skating lessons at Skate Frederick. As a result she demonstrated an almost immediate boost in her confidence, both outside of the classroom in social environments and inside the classroom with her teachers. This dramatically improved her core academic performance. CYM has connected the older daughter who is in high school, to the Buckets of Hope project and lessons. The family liaison also encourages her interests in cosmetology. Our Hero indicated to the family liaison that her daughter was struggling to get a job to earn some money. The family liaison is in the process of connecting her with a mentor and job training experience to prepare her better so she can get her first job.

Our Hero has become a leader in the City Youth Matrix family empowerment program. She was the keynote speaker at our first public event in the summer of 2019. She is a group facilitator at our quarterly family empowerment evenings. She is on the cusp of leaving precarious housing and owning her first home. She very truly is the story of City Youth Matrix. She is Our Hero.

Her greatest name though is mom. That's what she is to those four beautiful children. One sixth grader, one sophomore in high school, one in the US Navy, and her oldest son. Oh yeah, that wonderful oldest son, he's got a pretty amazing story too. He was also inspired by his mom, and is now a leader in the United States Army and is stationed in Colorado. Mom gleams with pride when you mention any of her children. They are the very greatest thing in the world to her and they each see her show them how special they truly are on a daily basis.

She has demonstrated the benefits of hard work and the value of education to her children. They are listening but will still encounter the inevitable challenges of this life. She lives a story of overcoming challenges each and every day. She is no different than any human. What sets her apart is that she steps into the Arena every day, and for that she is very special to City Youth Matrix. Not everyone has the courage and resilience to step into the Arena every day. She profoundly loves her children and sometimes she teaches them tough love. It's ok, she's got this, remember, she is our Hero. Perhaps the greatest way to summarize her Hero name is written on her and her youngest son's wrists. Her tattoo says, "For them I'd risk it all". The son, and the next generation, his tattoo says, "Because of her I will not fall".

**Yes indeed, she is the Hero
of City Youth Matrix.**



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