



SOFI Chronicle | September 2021

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We've made an IMPACT!

Family Success Story

Linda and her family are an excellent example of what dedication and determination do for those struggling with poverty.

Linda says,

I did everything, legal of course to make extra money: I donated plasma, I would go in to the ETC section of the jobs in craigslist, I would do focus group, mock juries, I did a commercial for face cream that aired on QVC, I racked up my credit card and took out a loan both with very high interest rates. We literally didn't have food, so I would go to the food pantry just so they could eat. I didn't care about myself. I had to find a job that would allow me to be home when most of the time



when my kids were home. In 2019 my daughter showed me a job opening for a food service manager for the Palm Beach School District. January 1 2020 I was hired as a manager intern, right up my alley. I have worked in food service since I was 18. I got the job and then COVID happened. I know this is terrible to say because many people lost their jobs but I was an essential worker and worked every single day, I was receiving double pay and bonuses. April of 2020 I was able to pay off the \$3,000 loan and \$2,300 credit card bill. I bought my daughter a car with cash so she didn't have to keep using mine and could go to work and school. I was able to buy new beds, things that we never had before, everything was always used. by October of 2020 I was back to a regular pay check and had received a raise. I started putting money away, I was so proud when I had a thousand dollars in my savings account, it could have been a million dollars to me. In November 2020 I became a manager at a school, I was not an intern anymore. I now have a \$10,000 line of credit and I have raised my credit score well over a hundred points. I have \$15,500.00 saved for a house and money in my checking account. Bank of America just gave me preferred banking for having over \$20,000 in the bank for more than three months. I have received a \$7,000.00 yearly increase in less than 9 months of working there. I have a very low car payment and basic bills. I will not touch that money, I have to make sure that my oldest daughter will have a home always when I am gone. One day I will write a book after I buy my house as this is a very small portion of my life details. I am sending pictures of my most proudest moment ever, Christmas 2020. I bought a live tree, and every single present under that tree by myself, no help from anyone, not cheap things to be able to let them have something. I used to cry every single Christmas because I always felt so bad, this year I cried because of what I have accomplished. I have not yet reached my goal. If I didn't have a section 8 voucher, I would have been homeless and would have to send my kids to live with my sister, food stamps. were minimal but it did help.

I lost a lot of benefits including food stamps, and my portion of rent is half a month of my salary of because of my income, making you more dependent on the system. I want to be one the people who can break that cycle. I am very scared of losing my voucher because of my savings though until I can buy a house.

What is the hardest thing to say to your children? I am sorry, we cannot afford it...

***If you have a family success story that you want highlighted in our newsletter, send them to Jodie Boisvert. Please have the family sign this consent form. ***

[Photo Consent Form](#)

Agency Spotlight



ADOPT-A-FAMILY
of the Palm Beaches, Inc.

Adopt-A-Family of the Palm Beaches, Inc. is a not-for-profit organization dedicated to strengthening families with children in their efforts to achieve stability and self-sufficiency. The agency is committed to decreasing and preventing family homelessness in Palm Beach County while ensuring that children raised in poverty have an increased chance to succeed.

Adopt-A-Family has walked beside more than 54,500 struggling households since its founding in 1983, becoming one of Palm Beach County's leading service provider for families with children. Last year, the agency worked with 1,516 households and ended/prevented an episode of homelessness for 728 families and their 1,418 children. Adopt-A-Family's goal is to ensure families have a safe home they can afford. This foundation makes everything else possible – steady employment, better parenting, education, good health, and economic growth. Raising a family in poverty means that one's daily aspirations are often limited to finding a place to sleep and food to eat, but stable housing allows for families to focus on ways to improve their wellbeing and earning potential. Through a comprehensive continuum of services including emergency shelter, affordable housing, financial assistance, youth educational programming, mental health services, and trauma-informed case management, families are better equipped to emerge from an episode of homeless and conquer instability and poverty. For families that have stabilized and established a steady income, the agency offers a residential program that prepares low-income households to achieve homeownership and build generational wealth. In addition, Adopt-A-Family recently launched a Job Coach Program, because

families cannot lift themselves out of poverty without the ability to earn a living wage. The agency is working to help families recover from crisis, find safe and stable homes, and overcome the economic and systemic inequities that have prevented homeless and low-income households from reaching their full potential.

Funding Opportunity

Cigna has just opened the **Health and Well-Being** grant cycle. Cigna is looking to fund nonprofits that are **addressing the root causes of health inequity**, including supporting under-resourced and systemically disadvantaged communities with poor social determinants of health.



Programs should focus on **chronic disease treatment and prevention, mental and/or behavioral health conditions, dental health, wellness programs, and maternal, prenatal, and newborn health.**

Health is an important aspect to what we do - **without health and mental well-being our families are unable to maintain a suitable job.**

The deadline to submit an application is September 24, 2021

[Click here to APPLY](#)

Policy Spotlight

The US Census Bureau released its income and poverty data for the nation this September. Elise Gould with the Economic Policy Institute summarized the key findings of the US Census Bureau data.



- Median Household income dropped 2.9% in 2020 compared to 2019.
- Poverty rate increased by 1% between 2019 and 2020.
- Childhood poverty increased by 1.6%.
- **Stimulus payments moved 11.7 million people out of poverty.**
- **Extended unemployment benefits moved 5.5 million people out of poverty.**

This is clear evidence that policies designed to truly reduce poverty work to the benefit of families of low-income.

You can read the full article [HERE](#).

Employment Opportunities

1. Construction Worker/Assistant | Belle Glade | No minimum education + 12 months of experience | \$14-\$18/hour
2. Outreach Care Coordinator | West Palm Beach | Associate's Degree + 24 months of experience | \$34,000-\$36,000/year
3. Carpenter | Lantana | HS diploma or equivalent + 24 months of experience | \$18-\$20/hour
4. Call Center Representative | West Palm Beach | No HS diploma + No experience | \$18-\$21/hour

For more jobs, click [here](#).



Upcoming Events

Moving Upstream: Preventing Evictions Webinar:
September 24

Poverty Awareness Week

- Career Fair: October 16 10am-1pm



- Proclamation: October 25 9am-10am (will be streamed on Facebook Live)
- [United Way Poverty Simulation: October 26 12pm-1pm](#)
- [Racial Wealth Gap Simulation: October 27 6pm-8pm](#)
- [Book Club \(Automating Inequality by Virginia Eubanks\): October 28 7pm-8pm](#)
- [SOFI/Policy Webinar: October 29 1pm-3pm](#)

SOFI Workgroup Meeting

- September 23 at 1pm
- October 28 at 1pm

