



*Amos was a published author and a U.S. veteran, when he became homeless.*

Amos grew up on Chicago's South Side, with his sister and parents. His dad was an electrician for GE and his mom worked in the office of the Chicago Board of Education. They went to private parochial school. Throughout his school years he developed his passions for writing, music and skateboarding. When depression and anxiety started to affect him in high school, he turned to drugs. He would later be diagnosed with clinical depression.

He attended Northern Illinois University for two years then left to join the military where he served for 3 years as an airborne infantry and artillery soldier stationed in Louisiana, Georgia and then South Korea. After the military, he started writing for Focus Skate Magazine where he met and married his wife and became an instant dad to her 7 year-old daughter. They later had a son.

He continued to struggle with substance abuse in the military. Prescribed medications made him feel lethargic and apathetic. The addiction put a strain on his family and led to his divorce. This also led to his first homeless experience. He sought support from the VA's long-term substance abuse program, stopped using, and was clean for 15 years. He found work as a technology teacher, reconnected with his children and moved into his own apartment.

Things seemed to be in place, he wrote his first book and published it soon after. But, his book didn't sell, he put in all of his savings and resources, however despite his efforts, he failed. He found himself in great debt and unable to pay his rent and was evicted. After being clean for more than 15 years, he relapsed. In February of last year, he reconnected to the health and substance abuse services at the Hines VA Hospital and in April was referred to Housing Forward.

Within a month, while working with his housing case manager, he was placed in his apartment. He secured work from the VA work therapy program and continues to work with his case manager to stay on track with his doctor appointments, budgeting and on his journey to stability.

Since working with Housing Forward, he is able to focus on rebuilding his life, work with healthcare professionals to manage his depression, and reconnect with his children and family after 3 years of separation. Last December, he spent a warm, cozy and lazy holiday at his sister's house with his mom, son and family. Finally, he is feeling like a part of his family again, and it feels really good.

