“...they asked me when I last had my eyes checked... my response was, ‘Never’.”

- Grace Hilton

A Life Transformed

Grace Hilton spent much of her adult life struggling with drug addiction and poverty. By 1991, unable to keep a job, she was living on the streets and caught in a destructive way of life. Although it seemed impossible, Grace knew she’d like to go to school in order to turn her life around. “I was stuck in the poverty mentality, but something inside me always told me that I could break the cycle and do better than what I was doing,” says Grace.

Determined not to be defeated, Grace hung on to the notion of changing her situation, but with no health insurance nor family support, hope for a future seemed bleak. A turning point came in 2007, when Grace learned about the Fresh Start Women’s Program at Lighthouse Mission Ministries. Through Fresh Start, Grace was introduced to the Baptist Operation Outreach mobile health care clinic. For the first time in years, Grace received medical, dental and vision exams, all at no cost, and was welcomed with respect and dignity.

Davis Vision & Baptist Memorial Health Care

In January 2010, Davis Vision’s Focus on America® program launched a partnership with Baptist Memorial Health Care, offering free eyewear to patients...
visiting Baptist’s mobile health care clinic. Grace was one of the first patients to benefit from the partnership. Because she had been experiencing vision problems such as headaches, eye strain and trouble seeing a computer screen, she was worried she would not be able to attend school. After a thorough examination, proper eyewear was provided and Grace took her first step to a brighter future by enrolling in courses at the University of Phoenix, where she is studying Psychology.

While receiving her vision exam from the Southern College of Optometry, Grace was asked about her medical history. “One of the first things they asked me was when I last had my eyes checked, and my response was ‘never’,” Grace recalls. She is adamant that her trifocals played an integral part in her hope for a future. “Davis Vision even let me choose my frames,” says Grace. “They provided the eyeglasses that helped me to fulfill my dreams. It is hard to express in words how much I appreciate what Davis Vision has done, but I know it would be impossible for me to continue my schooling without them.”

“My life has been transformed by these services”
- Grace Hilton

Ricky and Sheila Floyd from the Pursuit of God Transformation Center in Memphis, she knows that vision services were a major part of her ability to move forward. “My life has been transformed by these services,” Grace says. “I am now able to choose how I want to live. I’m excited I have the opportunity to give other women hope and make life better for someone else.”

In addition to her thriving academic career and long-term goals, Grace’s mental outlook is vastly improved. She is motivated, upbeat and eager to share her story, wanting others to know that the mind and body can be renewed. “I know today I’m not a victim of society…I’m a survivor,” says Grace.

“Amazing Grace”
Grace’s hard work in school has paid off (she has a 92.47% average), but it is not the only way in which her life has changed. Grace currently devotes time to working with women living as she once did—women who are homeless and battling addiction. With the help of Peggy Bowie from Fresh Start, Grace is able to support others on their path to recovery.

Grace’s goal is to one day open a facility for women in need, where she can help to improve their entire physical state as well as their mental and spiritual health, enabling them to get jobs, move into a home, and have hope. Although many people inspired Grace’s progress, such as pastors