

### **UHMS Success Story**

#### ***Each One Reach One... The Legacy of Paying It Forward***

*My story was not too different from Kim's\*. Some would have called her a "troubled teen" but that is an oversimplified word for who she really was – a girl struggling to find their way in the midst of a difficult childhood.*

*When Kim first enrolled with UHMS, she was just 12 years old. At that time you could say she was on a rampage... She had severe behavior problems – cursing at just about everyone except her grandmother, disrespectful, acting out... Over the years, she has been in and out of residential treatment facilities. She was uncontrollable, but UHMS never gave up on her and we wouldn't let her give up on herself either.*

*Step by step, Kim's therapist and team of community support workers helped her get back on track and by age 16 she had successfully graduated from a DC public charter school. She went on to become a certified home health aid.*

*Now at 19 years old, Kim works with the elderly and takes care of her 2 year old son. She has done an outstanding job of maintaining high expectations for her own personal, educational and spiritual growth. Kim has dreams of furthering her education and becoming a nurse. She will be enrolling in nursing classes in June 2011.*

*As I reflect on my own story, I know that my own struggles are what have driven my passion to help the next generation. Seeing a beautiful young woman like Kim work diligently to overcome obstacles, achieve self-sufficiency and dedicate her life to helping others makes it all worthwhile.*

*I applaud Kim for all of her academic, career and personal successes.*

*\*Kisha B is a Community Support Worker, social work student and proud mother of two children.*

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\* Name has been changed to protect privacy.