

An affordable apartment turns hardship into happiness

If you've had 13 strokes and a seizure by the time you're 54, you quickly learn to appreciate life.

"I don't regret anything," says Davee Satchell from his wheelchair. "Because when I wake up and see the daylight, I am so happy. It gives me a chance to make today better than yesterday."

Davee grew up in the Hill District of Pittsburgh. He didn't care much for school, and it seemed like he was suspended from class more days than he attended. But he was a worker.

From age 11 until well into his 30's, he stayed busy working odd jobs to pay the bills and take care of his mother. Washing windows, shoveling snow, hauling garbage, and recycling soda bottles—Davee was a hustler, in the best sense of the word.



The nearby Duquesne Brewery clock.

But then Davee’s health began to suffer. Eventually he had to have his legs amputated, and his right side was paralyzed. He couldn’t work anymore, so he was living on disability income.

Over the years, it became harder to find an apartment that could accommodate his needs while meeting his budget. It looked like Davee might have to live at a shelter.

Davee now lives in a clean, comfortable apartment—with something special

Davee’s fortunes changed after lots of persistent phone calls by his caregiver and a caring response from Tia Tarrant at ACTION-Housing Inc., an affordable housing provider in western Pennsylvania. Funded, in part, with tax credits awarded by PHFA, ACTION-Housing was building two multifamily apartment buildings in the neighborhood where Davee grew up. Called Uptown Lofts on Fifth, they included some handicap-accessible units.

Davee received more good news when Potter’s House Ministries in Pittsburgh provided his security deposit.

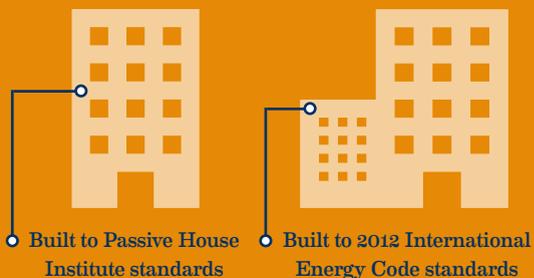
“Oh, man, help me with the words,” Davee says, his emotions rising. “To me, it’s like a blessing from God. I’m grateful to the people that helped me get in the building, because it’s a place that can’t get any better. I love it here.”

His apartment has an accessible kitchen, living room, two bedrooms, and bathroom—at a rent he can afford. The apartment also held a special surprise, because the view from his unit includes a local landmark—the Duquesne Brewery clock—well known to Pittsburghers since 1933. For Davee, it added a reassuring sense of comfort.

“When I moved here, I could see the clock,” he says, gazing off. “I was blown away because I grew up with the clock. And in my room, the clock is right there [through the window]. I sit around and cry [when I see it]. I get emotional. But it’s a good cry. It’s not always a sad cry.”

It’s nice to know that Davee has finally found his way home.

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The two buildings at Uptown Lofts on Fifth will demonstrate the energy efficiency benefits of two different construction standards.

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— Davee Satchell

Living at Uptown Lofts on Fifth has not only provided Davee with much-needed housing—it's allowed him to maintain his independence in surroundings familiar to him from his youth. Also, family, friends and his caregiver are nearby to assist him. 🏠

