



MALAUNDJA'S STORY OF SUCCESS

Malaundja, 21, has experienced some of life's lowest points and put her own perseverance to its ultimate test.

By 18, Malaundja had been fending for herself on the streets for nearly three years. She was forced to spend nights riding the length of the CTA Blue Line in warm train cars or sleeping outside at bus stops. But as the temperatures began to drop, that ceased to be a suitable alternative—and she had nowhere else to go.

Finding shelter after shelter filled to capacity, she was eventually referred to TLP by the Street Outreach Team, who provides emergency services and referrals to safe housing for youth who are homeless. Within a week, she finally had a room to call her own. That first day she stepped foot in Belfort House, Malaundja fell in love with TLP.

"I walked in and they were cooking dinner. I was cold and hungry and they were all so friendly to me and were always asking me what I needed," Malaundja said. "It's been like a blessing to me."

After more than a year in the Belfort House Program, Malaundja recently found out that she had been selected for the CaSSA program, TLP's independent living program, where she will have her own apartment.

"When I first came here I had this chip on my shoulder, but the people at TLP showed me how to care and love. They gave me guidance," Malaundja said. "Anything you need to build a brighter future, they offer that here."

