



**Christine at Volunteers
of America Michigan**
VOAMI HPOG – Detroit

Strength is a quality we cannot measure until it is all we have left.



Christine Rowsey's strength allowed her to turn personal pain into power. It also led her to an HPOG program that allowed her to turn pain into professional purpose.

Christine's path to a career in the health care field began early in life. She was inspired by her mother, who raised Christine and her three older siblings alone. Following her mother's example, Christine became the first person in her immediate family to graduate from college. She had a career, a good paying job, and a young son. Despite all that, something was missing in her life; there was a gnawing lack of fulfillment that Christine felt in her core.

In 2011, Christine celebrated the birth of her second son, Christian. Christian's birth was miraculous, considering Christine had fertility issues and had given up hopes of having another child. Her joy over Christian's birth was quickly replaced with concern. Christian was born premature and faced major health issues. Christine became a tireless advocate and champion for her infant son, immersing herself in all aspects of the health care system in an attempt to help her son overcome an increasingly desperate medical situation. Despite all his mother's efforts, at age 7 months, Christian's fight ended. Christine was devastated, but her resolve and purpose were strengthened. During his brief time with her, Christian taught his mother something about herself; she had a passion for health care and for helping others. Christine was particularly inspired by the nurses who were always there to offer not just medical help, but also love and support for her family. Gradually, after a period of counseling and self-reflection, Christine came to the realization that her future was tied to a career in health care.

The hardest part of any journey is often finding where it begins, and such was the case with Christine. She weighed her options and did her research, finally deciding that she needed to pursue a career in nursing. After re-enrolling in college to complete some required courses, Christine was accepted into nursing school. To ensure that she successfully completed the program, she quit her job with the idea of focusing on her studies full-time. However, this move left Christine without a dime to pay for her education. It was around this time that HPOG became part of her story. [Volunteers of America Michigan](#), an HPOG program funded by the Office of Family Assistance, was able to assist Christine by paying the balance of her tuition. With a huge financial weight lifted off her shoulders, Christine was able to focus on her studies, and in September 2016, she became a licensed practical nurse. Christine's journey has been full of many lows and many highs, but she says she will never forget the day she was selected for the HPOG grant. It was assistance that allowed her to chart a new career and a new life.

"I will be eternally grateful for this opportunity," she says. "HPOG has given me the opportunity to draw my life the way I want it to go."

February 2017