

Success Story: Alexis Rousseau



Alexis uses three adjectives to describe his life: driven, ambitious and committed. However, he was not always the successful person these adjectives describe. Alexis was born and raised in Atlanta, and experienced a relatively normal childhood. He grew up with four brothers and sisters and with both parents present, and he was involved in high school sports such as soccer and football. He also found a new interest in acting and standup comedy.

Several years after graduating from high school, Alexis married a woman named Cindy, and shortly after had two sons. Unfortunately, his marriage ended in divorce. Pursuing a career as an actor, Alexis traveled to Los Angeles, and managed to land some roles in a few television series. Unfortunately, life in Los Angeles proved to be too expensive. Alexis moved back to Atlanta to live with his mother and siblings. Living with his mother became tumultuous for Alexis, as conflicting attitudes and beliefs caused many disputes between them. Alexis was forced to move out, left

without a place to call home. Alexis couch surfed with different friends for six months, trying to keep a roof over his head while he continued to pursue his acting career. Yet Alexis was unable to find steady work, and continued to remain homeless.

For another six months, Alexis tried living in shelters but found staying in shelters frightening and uncomfortable. He soon found a spot outside of a local church that he could stay without feeling unsafe. Here he stayed for the remainder of the time he spent homeless. Alexis prayed that his time being homeless would not last long. He wanted to find a place to stay that he could call home and where he could feel safe and unharmed. "Going to shelters was atrocious because people steal and have so many problems," says Alexis. People try to sabotage anything you have." Never giving up hope, Alexis continued to look for work, determined to get off the street. When Alexis decided it was time for him to try his luck again in Los Angeles, he contacted **Traveler's Aid of Atlanta**. Traveler's Aid serves as a safety net for low-income travelers, providing housing, outreach, prevention and emergency services. They helped him reunify with a friend who offered to give him a home until he found work and a place of his own.

This time around, Alexis succeeded. He found a job working in a high-class restaurant, and landed several acting roles. Alexis is also working as a motivational speaker, speaking about relationships and health at churches and hospitals. He says his goal is to "positively motivate others to do good things with their lives and to make better choices for themselves." He now encourages those who are in a tough situation to also strive to be driven, ambitious and committed.

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