



My name is Hannah Maddox. I live in McCalla, Alabama. I am married with four children and four beautiful grandchildren. I have been in nursing for 15 years. I started out as a nursing assistant, and by the grace of God, I now have my Masters of Science in Nursing with a concentration in family nursing practice.

About fifteen years ago, I went to see my primary care physician to have him evaluate the increased swelling in my lower legs. The physician sent me home with a 24-hour urine collection jug and asked me to bring the specimen back to my next appointment. During my follow-up appointment, I received the devastating news that I had 4 grams of protein in my urine. I was told to protect the veins in my arms from needle sticks and blood pressures because I was one day going to have to go on dialysis. All I could think about when I was presented with this devastating news was “What about my children? How am I going to provide for my babies?” I felt like I had been given a death sentence, but did not know when it was going to occur. It later occurred to me that my mom is on dialysis. How can I help take care of her if I am in the same predicament? I was upset about the situation, but I knew I still had to go on and live for my family.

I continued to work and keep my checkups as ordered. I continued to take care of my mom. Six years after the diagnoses of protein in my urine, my kidneys started to shut down. It only took about a month before I had to go on dialysis. My mom and I were dialyzing together in order to live. I was told about my options concerning treatment of this disease and I decided that kidney transplantation was the best option for me and my family. I was morbidly obese and was told this disqualified me from being a candidate. I knew I needed to lose over 150 pounds, but didn't know how I would lose this much weight on my own. Seven months after starting dialysis, I had a gastric bypass. I lost 250 pounds and was approved for the transplant list! While on dialysis, I was able to spend more time with my family, care for my mom, travel, earn my bachelors and masters degrees. I received my kidney transplant on August 30, 2013.

The AKF provided me with so many things I needed in order to keep the lights on and to keep my insurance. They also provided my mom with invaluable services such as paying her monthly insurance premium, assisting with her light and gas bill, and helping with her transportation needs. I made a promise that I was going to give back and help the organization in every way I could. Not only am I a volunteer for life, so is my family! All of my family members are organ donors now because of this experience. My life and my circumstances have improved because I had kidney disease.