

## SSI Ohio Project Success Story: Mr. James

The SSI Ohio Project aims to help individuals experiencing mental illness and/or homelessness obtain Social Security benefits. Still in the pilot phase, the program has already achieved success in numbers. However, it is important to remember that there is a story behind every statistic.

SSI Ohio Specialist Goldia McCall assisted \*Mr. James, a client living with depression, anxiety, and COPD, with his application.

Mr. James had no income and was living in a supportive housing building. He had “been applying for [Social Security] benefits many times” but was never approved.

With new management contracts for the building, Mr. James was fearful he would lose the place he called home because he could not pay.

Fortunately, he was linked with a local agency that is also a SSI Ohio Project site and began to work with Specialist McCall.

When asked about working with McCall he says, “From my experience I think she went above and beyond. She took me to night appointments and informed me of things that I had no clue would benefit me.”

The assistance from McCall paid off. Mr. James’ Social Security application was finally approved within 6 months. He was able to afford his rent and stay in his apartment. Social Security benefits have also helped with necessities such as health care and money to buy food.

Mr. James explained that, “Before I would get my meals at a local church. Since I’ve gotten Social Security, I have gained weight. One meal a day wasn’t cutting it. I have choice. I can’t even fit in my pants that used to be loose!”

Goldia McCall and other dedicated SSI Ohio Specialists ensure that clients like Mr. James achieve stable housing and improvements in their quality of life. If you are interested in learning more about the SSI Ohio Project, please visit <http://www.cohhio.org/SSI-2010.php>.

*\* Client’s name has been changed to protect privacy.*