



PATHWAY of HOPE®

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“Oh boy! where do I start?” Abby replied when asked about Pathway of Hope (POH). One cannot, however, appreciate her success without knowing Abby’s past struggles.

At eight years old, living in the Black Hills, Abby’s mother worked the day shift; Mom’s paramour, Bill, worked the night shift... leaving him alone with Abby during the day. When Abby asked for lunch money, Bill demanded sexual favors. Abby remembers frequently being hungry at school. One year later, after Abby’s deposition, Bill was convicted of child molestation and rape.

It wasn’t until young adulthood that Abby’s life spiraled out-of-control. She began abusing methamphetamine, alcohol, and opiates. She now states, “If there was a bottle of alcohol in the house, I couldn’t keep my hands off of it.” Abby’s numbing was a way she now contributes to “my way of running...running from problems.” It was during a lengthy inebriation that South Dakota’s DFS took Abby’s second child, and ultimately terminated her parental rights. Abby shared this was a very low point in her life.

In 2011, Abby had had enough, and called her Iowa DHS worker. She said she was ready to change her life around. For the next two years, Abby started her quest to sobriety. She began in the local Jackson Recovery Center, Fort Dodge’s half-way house, and lastly Sioux City’s Sanctuary House. During this time, Abby was diagnosed with co-occurring posttraumatic stress disorder and bipolar disorder.

While in the Sanctuary House, Abby met with



POH Family Receiving Graduation Certificate from Rob Ouellette, Sioux City Corps Program Director

Rob Ouellette, Program Director for Sioux City’s Salvation Army corps (TSA). She quickly agreed to participate concurrently in two of the local TSA’s programs-- Salvation Army’s Vision to Empowerment (S.A.V.E.) and POH. The former provided structured group and individual counseling; the latter case management. Rob recently said, “April’s the kind of person that if she says she’s going to do something, she’ll do it... she showed up all the time [for meetings].”

Abby now shares, “If it wasn’t for Pathway...” she paused briefly, “I learned it [molestation] wasn’t my fault.” She continued, “I learned my strengths, be a better budgeter, to be strong, and be a better parent.” When asked to elaborate on learned strengths, Abby said, “[I] have more strengths than I give myself credit for-- I’m a good mom, have an awesome work ethic, love my job,” and affirmative to the question from this writer: *And a thriver?*

By Mark Dougherty

(Name of participant changed)