



## Caroline's Story



**When Caroline's husband** David was diagnosed with Multiple Myeloma, a cancer of the plasma cells, her whole world was shattered. In a day's time, everything she'd imagined for her family—her husband, her two sons, and herself—had been destroyed.

Caroline watched her husband battle the disease with courage, grace and determination for five years. David passed away at home at age 64.

David's death was the beginning of an overwhelming period for Caroline. David had always handled the finances for her and for their son who has Down Syndrome. She was left with the tasks of selling her home, preparing her taxes and completing the paperwork for her son's housing benefits. She was overwhelmed by grief, confusion and stress and didn't know where to turn. "I felt like I was going to go under because I didn't even know how to approach all of this," said Caroline.

"And then this flyer came in the mail about tax services for people with a certain income. I felt like I had won the lottery" recalls Caroline about a mailing from the Center for Economic Progress, a United Way agency partner. CEP advisors helped Caroline file her taxes and obtain a tax refund, report the sale of her home and make sure that she had filed the correct paperwork for her son's housing benefits.

Caroline was feeling stable again, and then confident about new possibilities.

She once again turned to the Financial Capability department at CEP. At the age of 64, Caroline completed the paperwork for an educational loan and will be going back to school for medical transcription.

Without United Way and the Center for Economic Progress, Caroline believes she would not have been able to overcome the grief and confusion after the loss of her husband. She would not have had the financial support to overcome her challenges.

Caroline's story—and thousands more like it—changed because of people like you.

In 2013, United Way invested \$3.8 million in 68 agencies across the region that provide high quality workforce and economic development services to communities and people who will benefit from them the most.

Through proven strategies and quality programs, United Way measurably improves lives for individuals, families and our region. Join us, and change the story for those in need in greater Chicago.



Caroline's story changed because of people like you. Help us continue to *change* the story.