Meet Mr. Danford
Read William’s Story on How he Found Good Days

William Danford is ready for his next opportunity to serve others. He has considerable experience, having served his country as a sailor in the United States Navy, followed by serving local communities as a pastor in the Caribbean islands, and later in life coordinating assistance for victims of devastating storms across the country as a disaster relief specialist.

“Life’s been a blessing to me all along,” says William, who turns 79 on December 27th and now lives in Kissimmee, Florida, with his wife of 33 years. “I have not let my physical problems deter me and I continue to serve as a member of my church.”

Born in Alabama and raised in Georgia, William went straight into the Navy after high school. One of his first assignments was in Barbados, an island he would return to live in years later with his Baptist Church to establish Christian churches and schools. His work with the church would bring him to Puerto Rico where he eventually transitioned into a business role with the U.S. Chamber of Commerce before retiring.

But an unpreventable, unexpected and debilitating blood condition threatened to stop his life short 15 years ago. After experiencing increasing bouts of uncomfortable itching sensations all over his body, William sought help from a series of doctors who would confirm he was suffering from polycythemia vera, a rare blood cancer that affects just two out of every 100,000 people. Left untreated, the condition can cause a host of problems, from dangerous blood clotting to leukemia.

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After initial treatments that included regularly having to give blood stopped working, William’s
hematologist prescribed a new medication that would enable him to enjoy a much better quality of life. Except the out-of-pocket costs were thousands of dollars more per month than he was able to afford. William was surprised when his hematologist told him that Good Days could provide assistance with the costs of his prescribed treatments not covered by his Medicare plan.

“I had no idea that an organization like this existed to specifically help with medication expenses,” says William. “When I was approved, I was jumping for joy. There is no way to describe the joy and emotions I felt to be able to have help to pay for the cost of my medicine. It’s a lifesaver for me.”

With access to these treatments, William can continue to give back to others. Last year, he worked as a disaster relief specialist with the Small Business Administration, fielding up to 100 calls per day from people impacted by hurricanes and severe storms in Puerto Rico, Texas, Florida and North Carolina. His role included providing homeowners and small businesses with financial assistance information so that they can get back on their feet.

“I have never slacked off or given up on anything that I've been allowed to do,” says William.

A RECAP OF THE 2019 EXCHANGE CONFERENCE

To recognize and celebrate the strong and positive attitudes of the people we support, the theme of our 11th annual The Exchange from Good Days was Be Relentless. The Exchange brings together the people we assist and healthcare stakeholders who share in our goals for a day of learning and laughter. Here are some of the inspiring words we heard from our featured speakers this year:

“It's okay to feel angry and it's okay to feel sad, but it's not okay to let those feelings to allow you to become blind to the blessings you have in life,” says Jake Olson about his fight with retinoblastoma that left him fully blind at the age of 12. “If you change the way you look at things, the things you look at change.”

“Cancer saved my life. What you think is the worst thing that could ever happen saved my life,” says Courtney Clark, who discovered a brain aneurysm during a follow up scan for her cancer treatments. “Your life story is about how you deal, not what you're dealt.”

“I believe in the power of hope. I believe in the power of love,” says country music superstar and six-time Grammy winner Naomi Judd. “Your body hears everything your mind says.”

(Jake Olson, USC Football Longsnapper)

(Courtney Clark, Motivational Speaker)

(Naomi Judd, Country Singer)
PARTNER PROFILE

When Kat Harrison finished recovering from two intense surgeries, she was feeling isolated and desperate to speak with others who understood what she was going through. After her first visit to The Mighty, an online community where she connected with individuals and health professionals who had experiences she could relate to, she started feeling empowered.

“It was then that I realized The Mighty can do things no other health-minded community can – it takes the darkest aspects of living with a health condition or disability and exposes that inner light through shared experiences,” says Kat, who is now a community manager with The Mighty.

As a community manager, it is Kat's responsibility to make sure people's questions are being answered, provide support when needed, and direct individuals to available resources through their network of non-profit partners, including Good Days.

The Mighty covers more than 600 rare and chronic conditions and has nearly three million registered users, making it the number one platform for community engagement on health topics. Good Days was proud to partner with The Mighty on several special collaborations this past year, including hosting a Financial Literacy Week that offered helpful tips for improving finances related to your health, and a week-long Ask Me Anything forum during which The Mighty's community members shared questions and received individual responses on available resources for their conditions and related access to care guidance from Clorinda Walley and the Good Days team.

“Whether you're looking to connect with like-minded individuals or find information and resources, The Mighty community is here at every stage for your or your loved one's health journey,” says Kat. “The Mighty is a reminder we're not alone.”

You can connect with other individuals who share similar experiences, links to our programs and resources within people’s heartfelt stories, and stories written by Good Days at www.TheMighty.com.

WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU

Please take this brief survey on your satisfaction with Good Days: www.mygooddays.org/survey

Your feedback helps us improve our services in meaningful ways!
As we approach the end of the year, our organization is immensely proud of the impact we’ve made in 2019 and we look forward to having an even greater impact in 2020.

Charitable patient assistance programs are the last resort for thousands of Americans and the sole vehicle through which Medicare beneficiaries can receive help for obtaining lifesaving treatments. This is a responsibility that our charity takes very seriously, and we work hard to provide support to as many individuals in need as possible.

Throughout 2019 we were fortunate to open several new funds, including an innovative program for HIV/AIDS treatment and prevention. At the same time, our ability to help patients has expanded in new ways. Thanks to partnerships with both of the leading private care hailing platforms, Uber and Lyft, our helping hand now extends to making sure lack of transportation is not a barrier to access to care.

Our hard work has not gone unnoticed. This year we were again awarded top recognitions from the leading independent non-profit rating organizations. Good Days has earned a 2019 GuideStar Platinum rating for the second year in a row, the highest recognition from the world's largest source of information on non-profit organizations. Additionally, we are proud to be consecutively named a 2019 Top-Rated Non-Profit by GreatNonprofits, the leading provider of user reviews of charities.

These recognitions highlight the positive effect that Good Days has had for people in urgent need of access to care as well as our commitment to utmost transparency as a charitable organization. It is our long-held belief that transparency is key to understanding our work. I encourage everyone to visit our profiles on GuideStar and GreatNonprofits to learn more about our impact and to hear first-hand stories from those we’ve helped.

Last but not least, on behalf of our entire organization, Good Days wishes you and your loved ones a Merry Christmas and Happy Holidays. We hope that you can cherish this holiday season and spend quality time with those you love. We look forward to seeing you in the new year ahead.

Thank you for contributing to make our work possible. Your continued support enables us to help others in need.

Best Wishes,

Clorinda Walley, President
Good Days