

**NAME:**  
Denise Miller

**RESIDENCE:**  
Phoenix House  
Apartments  
Atlanta, GA  
69 Apartments

**AFFORDABILITY:**  
- PBRA  
- Low-Income Housing  
Tax  
Credit  
(Income Restricted)

\*Last updated in 2018

# VOICES OUT LOUD

## Denise MILLER

**The benefits of living at the Phoenix House [is] that they have several programs [where] you can go in and take classes to be a peer specialist...**

Originally from Baton Rouge, Louisiana, Denise Miller began her career as a nursery school teacher after graduating from Southern University College in the 1970s.

While a student, she also worked in the nursing home her mother founded. It was during those years she said she developed her deep compassion for the elderly and children.

In 2012, Denise lost her mother and brother within the span of a year. She shared that at that time, her life took a tragic and unexpected turn, and she became homeless for the first time in her life.

"When you lose someone in death, a loved one – I felt like I was by myself, all alone. So, I turned to alcohol and drugs. And...my job ended...I became homeless."

Denise had never been to a shelter.

"It was a new experience for me," she remembers. "I had never been around the type of people that they had in a shelter before... I didn't understand them, and they didn't understand me."

Despite her fears, it was at the shelter where Denise began her road to recovery. She was diagnosed with post-traumatic stress and anxiety caused by the sudden loss of her mother and brother. One of these counselors at the shelter recommended her to Phoenix House, where she was admitted under the condition that she continued to pursue her rehabilitation.

"At first, I'll tell you, I was very skeptical," she admits. With time, though, Denise says discovered that she loved to meet different people from all walks of life and can understand what they're going through.

At Phoenix House, Denise continues to receive the support she needs. The staff help her with transportation to the store, doctor's appointments and other important trips. Additionally, her case manager helps make sure she is keeping up with her rehabilitation and is managing her mental health.

Denise says she is thankful for Phoenix House, especially considering she never expected to find herself in these circumstances.

**"A lot of people I hear, especially when you're homeless [say], 'Well I'm never going to be like that.' But you never know what will happen."**

