

Staying Close to Home



Washington, D.C. native Mike Green didn't realize he was ready to purchase a home until he met Willemena Samuels, a homeownership counselor at NeighborWorks organization Manna. "I thought I was several years away from owning a home," he said.

An Information Technology contractor, Mike was already familiar with Manna and their programs, since his company provides network support for them. Willemena convinced him that homeownership was something that could happen sooner rather than later. She had asked him to consider buying a home for the past couple of years. "I would always put it off saying

I wasn't ready."

The process of finding the right home was easy. Willemena knew Mike was born and raised in southeast Washington, D.C., and that he wanted to remain in the area. In 2009, she told him Manna had the perfect property for him in the Hillcrest Heights neighborhood of southeast Washington, D.C.

Mike agreed to see the property under Manna's Belgrove project and everything took off from there. Manna provided homeownership classes as well as budget and credit advice. Even though the process was much easier than he expected, it could be very stressful at times. "Being educated on the process by Willemena made me believe I could do this," he said. "The most difficult part of the buying process was the paper work. Turning in paystubs, bank statements, employment verification, and rental history reports were a big pain."

But he knows it has all been worth it. Mike has been in his new home since May 2010.