



Income Story Raising Wages Through Workforce Trainings

Working Hard and **Struggling** to Survive



Across the Chicago Region,

1 IN 3

HOUSEHOLDS

are walking a financial tightrope with no ability to save for a 'rainy day.'



A family of four
in Illinois must earn

AT LEAST
\$33.13 PER HOUR*

to achieve a modest household survival budget.

55% of jobs in Illinois pay

LESS THAN
\$20 PER HOUR*

Two years ago, Senait, a young woman from Ethiopia, picked up her life and moved to the United States. When she first arrived in the city, she held two jobs, working as a cashier for both Dunkin Donuts and 7-Eleven, while also taking an English class at her local community college. **Unfortunately, Senait's employers would only offer her late-night, part-time hours at her jobs. As a result of being underemployed, she wasn't earning enough for a living wage, making it difficult for her to provide for herself or plan for the future.**

To secure a quality, well-paid job, Senait sought help from the Chinese Mutual Aid Association (CMAA), a United Way of Metro Chicago partner that offers a wide range of services to low-income immigrants and refugees in our region.

Like many United Way partners, CMAA takes a "whole person" approach to serving our neighbors, providing education, employment, immigration and other services to address individuals' and families' varying and interconnected needs. We know that when families are supported and their basic needs are met, they can support their households and contribute to their community and local economy.

During her time in CMAA's employment program, Senait learned valuable interview and job skills. CMAA also let her use their computer lab to apply for jobs and even referred her to employers who were hiring.

It didn't take long for Senait to secure a quality position that allowed her to pursue her dreams. CMAA helped her complete the hiring paperwork, too.

Today, Senait's working full-time at a luxury hotel, where she's increased her hourly wages by 72 percent! With this additional income, she's been able to finish another ESL class, which will put her in a position to keep advancing her career. ■

DONATE TODAY! ➔ With your support, we are building a stronger, more equitable Chicago region where all our neighbors can thrive.

Give online at LIVEUNITEDchicago.org/donate.