

THINKING TWICE



Alphonse with Coach Bernie Hereth

“*Extra Mile* changed me into a totally different person. I stopped wasting my money and learned to plan ahead. I learned patience and how to stick with my budget instead of spending everything right away. The best part for me was the accountability. My coach kept me on track.” Alphonse Sathoud Mboumba, age 19, enrolled in LoveINC’s *Extra Mile* money management program shortly after he graduated from Hickman High School in May 2014. His coach, Bernie Hereth, taught him how to create a budget, track expenses and start a savings account. Alphonse says he knows of only two others his age who practice such money management skills.

Alphonse came to the United States at age 12 as a refugee from Gabon. He, his parents and two of his five siblings currently live in Columbia. Alphonse has completed one year at Moberly Area Community College (MACC) and works at Wal-Mart. Through his hard work and the money management skills he has learned, he will enter his second year of college with no school debt. He plans to transfer to the University of Missouri to study computer science after completing one more year at MACC. Alphonse says his life in America has been very blessed. His family immediately became part of a local church and through participation in the church youth group, his faith became personal to him in 2013. A family in the church helped him realize his boyhood dream of going to Disney World. “Even in the refugee camp we had all heard about Disney World.”

Alphonse said he has often been told that he is a leader so he has looked for ways to develop leadership qualities. *Extra Mile* helped provide the discipline to develop habits that he desired. It was initially difficult for him to keep all his receipts and divulge his spending practices to his coach but he began to see that this type of transparency and accountability were exactly what he needed.

Alphonse and Bernie have continued to meet after completing the 16 week *Extra Mile* program. They are working on college and career goals and further honing money management skills. Alphonse says he has learned the importance of choosing the right people with whom to associate and avoiding situations that could cause him to get into trouble. Spending time with Bernie and her family has been a key to keeping him on the road to success.

When Alphonse was asked if he would recommend *Extra Mile* to someone, he said, “Yes, it did great things in my life. I think twice now about doing anything.”



Kelly Hill, Extra Mile Coordinator, with Alphonse