

My name is Michelle Green and I am a resident of Baltimore County. I support the MBQ program and the *Thompson* settlement because it may have saved my sons' lives. I have four boys. I understand that for young Black males the statistics do not look good. My oldest son and I lived in public housing in Lexington Terrace. Many of my family members lived in the same neighborhood. My sister and I often worried about our sons. We understood how difficult it is for decent boys who are trying to do the right thing to avoid violence in the neighborhood. Unfortunately, our fears realized in the worst way when my nephew was killed while walking home from our local convenience store. The robbers thought that he had money. He never got to finish high school; he never had a chance. I wanted to give my son a chance to live and a chance to graduate from high school, which was very rare in my neighborhood. The *Thompson* voucher gave him, and my sons that came later, that chance. I knew that the MBQ program would help me to move to a neighborhood that was safe. I also heard that you would not have to wait for 4, 5, or 6 years to get a voucher, like section 8 or public housing. I knew that 6 years could mean the difference between life and death for a young man in Baltimore City.

As soon as I got my voucher, I moved to a wonderful neighborhood in Columbia. My boys received a warm welcome and felt really safe there. Thankfully, my two oldest sons attended middle school and high school in Columbia. They were both very active in school sports and the coaches, the teachers, and the students loved them. The day that my oldest son graduated from high school was the proudest moment of my life. He is doing well and is getting licensed to be a forklift operator. My second son also graduated from high school and is planning to apply to colleges. They have made it past the most difficult age and are productive members of society. And they are safe.

Recently, I moved from Columbia to Baltimore County to be closer to the city to care for my grandmother. But, I would never move back into public housing. My two youngest sons are doing well in our new neighborhood in Catonsville. They get good grades, participate in sports, and are both determined to go to college. The neighbors love them and they even earn extra money by mowing the neighbors' lawns. I don't worry about my kids' safety anymore. I am less stressed and am able to go to work and even went back to school. I support the *Thompson* settlement because I believe that it can save lives.

Michelle Green