

LeeAnn and her husband Jerome were forced to move away from New Orleans after Hurricane Katrina. After moving 18 times in five years (including four different states) they settled in Price Hill. Jerome's criminal history made it difficult to find a landlord that would rent to them, so they moved into an apartment above a bar, next to a building that was frequently raided for narcotics by the police. They felt unsafe and so they moved again, this time into an apartment where the landlord refused to make repairs. After attending Santa Maria's Tenant Education class, LeeAnn felt empowered to make one final move, this time to a quality apartment that met her family's needs. She is now working with the Price Hill Financial Opportunity Center to improve her employment opportunities and has been attending Santa Maria's Best Budgeter classes. When she started coming to the program, LeeAnn expressed a distrust of banks because she had had difficulty accessing her money after Hurricane Katrina. After the "Banking Basics" class, LeeAnn began to understand the benefits of having a relationship with a financial institution. A few weeks later she called to say that she had opened a bank account for the first time in five years.