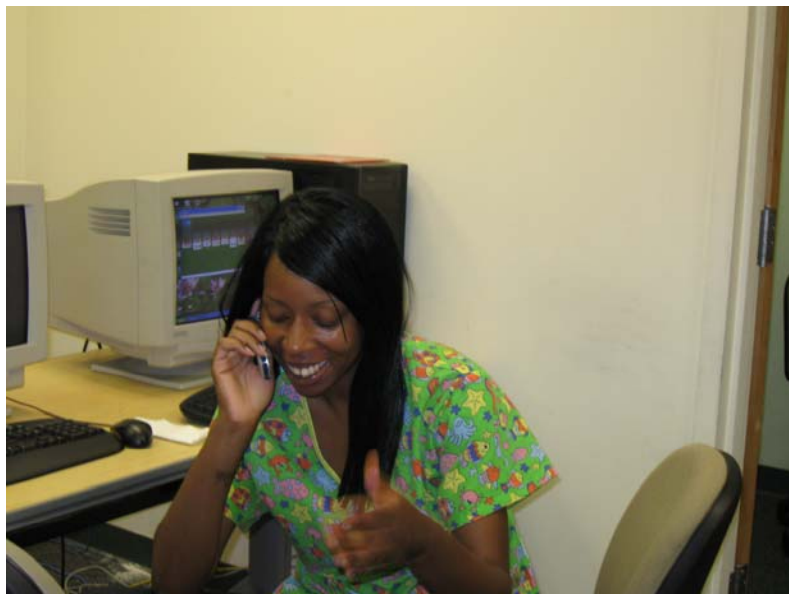


Witnesses to Hunger

Nadja

Nadja is twenty and the mother of two daughters, aged three and four. Nadja lived in a homeless shelter for teens a few years ago with her older daughter, and through the shelter she was able to get the subsidized housing that she lives in now. Nadja finished high school and was sent to phlebotomy training through a Welfare to Work program, and she is frustrated by the requirements of the Welfare to Work system. After receiving their phlebotomy training, Nadja and her classmates are required to return to the school four days a week to job search—which amounts to time in front of the computer without any guidance. Nadja explains that they go to the school in order to continue receiving their welfare checks, but that the attendance requirement actually hinders their job searches because it prevents them from applying at places in person.

The father of Nadja's two daughters is in prison serving a long sentence, so he is not a part of his children's lives. Nadja receives cash assistance and Food Stamps, but sometimes the Food Stamps don't last and Nadja will eat less so that her children have enough to eat.



This is a Welfare to Work School Program... All you want us to do is sit in the room, gossip and go on the internet, email, go on MySpace, Facebook. Like you want us to do stuff like that and it don't matter, as long as we waste our time there... Why do we have to job search on the computer? I can go to different nursing homes and get a job better than sitting on the computer sending an email.



Witnesses to Hunger

My mom didn't really like [that I went to a shelter]. She told me she think I should try to go live with my grand mom or something but, I said I got to do what I got to do. And going to go live with this person or



live with that person ain't going to get me a place to stay. That's just hiding from house to house, plus I didn't want to keep confusing her. I wanted her to be in stable setting, somewhere where she like okay we right here now, but I know we going to be somewhere better soon.

Policy Issues:

- Welfare to Work programs

- Food Stamps
- Homelessness support

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