



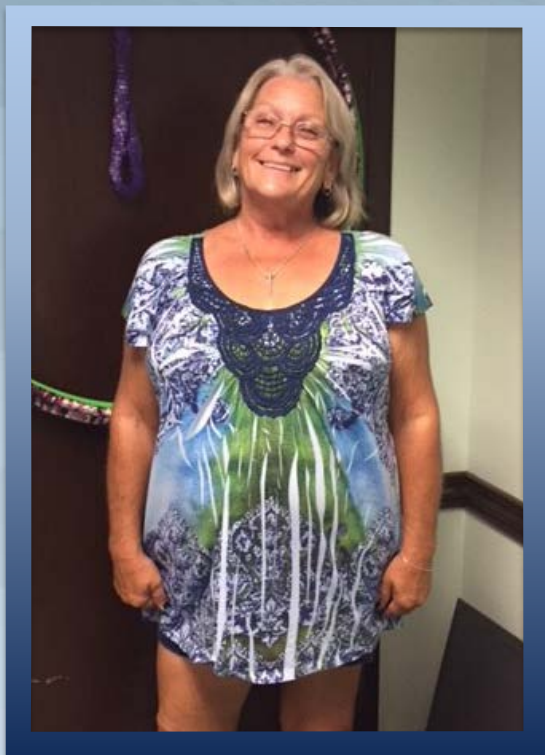
Success Stories

Healthy Living Matters. Prevention Works.

Building a New Life

VETERAN TONYIA BARELA ASSUMED SHE WOULD NEED SURGERY TO HELP HER LOSE WEIGHT.

Then Tonyia discovered the MOVE! Program. Now, she has lost over 40 pounds *without* surgery—and is building herself a brand new home!



MOVE!-ing to a new outlook.

There was never a doubt in Tonyia Barela's mind: She would need bariatric surgery to lose weight. "My mother had surgery," Tonyia said, "so I felt I [also] needed this to be successful with weight loss."

Like many people, Tonyia believed she could not lose weight on her own. It took a visit to her VHA clinic in Fort Smith, AR, for her to imagine a new possibility.

"Dr. [Charles] Parker told me about the MOVE! Program when I came in for my annual physical. He asked if I wanted to see the dietitian, and I enrolled in MOVE! with [dietitian] Tammy Hamilton that very day."

MOVE! makes all the difference.

Tonyia started with MOVE! in April of 2017. She soon found that lifestyle change—not surgery—was her key to success.

“I learned that ‘yes, I can do this.’ I always felt I could not lose weight without weight-loss surgery. But I have learned that I am able to lose weight just [through] hard work and being able to stick to a meal plan.

“Tammy Hamilton, my MOVE! dietitian, helped me to set initial goals for myself. I did them—plus many more!”

Tonyia nears her weight-loss goal.

Tonyia quickly convinced everyone on her MOVE! team that she had what it took to lose weight. Eventually, she even turned around her biggest doubter: herself. In just a few months, Tonyia lost some 22 percent of her body weight!

“I have lost 43.6 pounds, and 7.5 inches from my waist,” she proudly states. “My BMI went from 37 to 29! I have been able to maintain this loss for several months, but I want to lose an additional 10 pounds.”

Finding a new life with MOVE!

With her weight loss, Tonyia has gained both newfound energy and a positive attitude about herself. And by “energy,” we aren’t kidding. She and her fiancé are literally building a new home together!

“**MOVE! is a great program. They will believe in you—and help you to believe in yourself.**”

– Tonyia Barela



That’s just one of the reasons Tonyia can sum up her experience with MOVE! in one sentence: “I am able to do things that I once thought were impossible.”