



## Robert written with Julie Kudrna

*In January, 2010, Robert came for a stay at the Primavera's Men Shelter. This is his story in his own words:*

I've been a general contractor all my life, building since I was twelve. I grew up in Denver, and a neighbor would get us kids in the morning and pay us \$1.50 an hour to nail floors all day. This continued through high school. I got into building and never left. In those days, a trade was good. I was making so much money I left school.

I came here to Tucson to work and get away from Denver. At the time I was drinking heavily. I would go in and out of the Primavera shelter and work program. Every time I was in the program I found a good job, but I didn't stop drinking. I'd lose the job and then go back to Primavera, get another job and lose it. Now, I haven't drank since 2004. I finally quit because I can't handle it anymore. That stuff ruined my life. Alcohol follows you around even though you quit. Your history, your references, they follow you around and you're in a rut.

Most recently, the company I was doing maintenance for downsized. I was the low man on the totem pole so I lost the job and came back to Primavera again. It's going to be hard for me to find a job this time because of the economy. I'm afraid I'm going to be out on the streets if I don't find a job. I've never really been out on the streets except for one time. Now, I'm gonna be forced there. If you're out on the streets, all your time is spent looking for food and shelter. How can you look for a job? Being on the streets scares me. It's dangerous. I don't even live on the streets and I've been attacked three times. I can't fight with them now. I'm too old to fight, and I can't run.

Aside from the violence, if you're out on the streets, all your time is spent looking for food and shelter. How can you look for a job? But, I'm not gonna quit. I'm a survivor.



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