

A home of her own and a brand new start

For Lisa Edwards, as for many people, the path to a better financial life started with one small step.

For her, it began when she found a brochure about improving one's credit score. The desire to improve her life, after leaving a relationship marked by domestic violence, led her to a series of financial seminars. She ultimately became a client of Pathstone Community Improvement in Orange County, New York.

The not-for-profit organization helped her enroll in the Federal Home Loan Bank of New York's "First Home Club" program, which helps first-time home buyers save for a house. Participants meeting



LISA EDWARDS WITH HER NEW HOME

the income requirements can receive a \$4 grant for every \$1 saved toward a home. After participating in some introductory financial counseling sessions, Ms. Edwards began saving in July 2007. She set aside \$1,884 and got the maximum \$7,500 matching grant.

M&T helped 157 people purchase homes in New York through the First Home Club in 2010. Those customers received \$1.2 million of grants and \$15.2 million of M&T mortgage financing.

M&T Bank is one of the largest providers of First Home Club mortgages, and Ms. Edwards was ultimately introduced to Richard Heese, M&T Bank mortgage originator and Al DeSalvo, regional community reinvestment manager.

"It was about a three-year process from the time I started in the program. And the M&T professionals were really committed. They went beyond the call of duty a number of times, I think because they just didn't want to let me down," Ms. Edwards said.

She found her home in Newburgh, NY. The two-family home gave her a rental unit she can use to generate income. Having improved her financial situation, and settled into her own home in Newburgh, Ms. Edwards has set her sights on helping others in the community.

She's volunteering with an urban renewal program through AmeriCorps, with the goal of improving her neighborhood.

"I feel community involvement is very important. We need to protect and preserve what we have," she said.

She's also been actively involved with organizations in the Lower Hudson Valley, speaking out against the crime of domestic violence by telling her own story and pointing out flaws in the judicial system.

"I've tried to help people who have suffered from domestic violence crimes, because it's a very, very difficult process," Ms. Edwards said.

Helping finance the American dream

Mortgages within M&T's branch footprint in 2010

	PURCHASE		REFINANCE		TOTAL	
	\$ in 000s	Units	\$ in 000s	Units	\$ in 000s	Units
New York	\$731,190	4,219	\$936,123	5,351	\$1,667,313	9,570
Mid-Atlantic	\$255,632	1,019	\$450,433	1,927	\$706,065	2,946
Pennsylvania	\$183,099	1,210	\$413,650	2,461	\$596,749	3,671
Total	\$1,169,921	6,448	\$1,800,203	9,739	\$2,970,127	6,448

Mid-Atlantic consists of MD, DC, VA, DE and WV