



## *Demario's Full Story*

"My parents mean the world to me and my family. They are excellent grandparents. Excellent teachers. Excellent friends. It's a different dynamic lately—as my mother Lorena (age 72) and father Jesse (age 75) get older, I feel more and more responsible for their wellbeing. They have guided me so much in life and provided endlessly, I feel like it's my duty as their only son to make sure they're safe and sound, especially as the pandemic continues to affect us all. If there is anything I've learned since COVID started, it's that there's nothing more important to me than family.

My wife Vanessa and I have two beautiful children, Elijah (age 6), and Amara (age 8). I want to give my children the same wonderful upbringing my parents gave me—filled with important lessons, love, and laughter. It been increasingly difficult for me and Vanessa, as we're both working from home, trying to implement at-home learning for our young children, and worrying about the health and safety of my parents who live just a few blocks down from us.

As the activities my parents used to enjoy doing with their friends have dwindled during COVID, they have become increasingly stir-crazy at home. Thankfully, about a month ago, my mother Lorena heard that the organization Silver Key Senior Services needed volunteers. She called Silver Key and got herself and my dad signed up to volunteer in the kitchen preparing meals for homebound seniors three days a week. My parents seem to really enjoy volunteering. They have been able to make a few new friends, all while helping other older adults in our community.

An additional benefit my parents found at Silver Key was the Five Wishes program. One day after volunteering, my mom and dad brought back a couple of booklets and asked if they could talk about them with Vanessa and myself. As it turns out, these Five Wishes booklets were legal advanced directive documents. Surprisingly, Five Wishes made the conversation very approachable and an overall positive experience. Now Vanessa and I know exactly what they both want when that time comes. In fact, Vanessa and I have both completed one as well so that our children and other family members won't have to struggle with those decisions, should anything happen to us.

Thank you, Silver Key. You have helped my family in more ways than I ever realized possible. Your services have touched not only my parents Jesse and Lorena, but each member of my family as well. Thank you for being a light during a very dark time in our history."

-Demario