



### A Future & A Hope...

Did just that, it gave us hope and gave our family the future God had always designed for us.

As many of you know, Matt is Active Duty Army. About 4 years ago, we were faced with back to back deployments, totaling almost 3 full years of him being gone. Our marriage had its normal ups and downs but overall we thought we were doing pretty well...until. Until we had spent so much time apart we had forgotten how to be together. And as all married couples can relate, one argument would lead into another and another, before we knew it, we were filing for divorce. Now working at Windwood and being a member, my troubles at home weren't exactly my topic of choice. Then a church friend came to me and said "Go talk to Pat, she can help". We were both so full of anger and pain, a happy ending seemed like a far cry, but we went. First separately, then together. What we learned in those sessions, forever changed us as individuals, as a married couple, as parents, and as Christians. We learned how to communicate, how to forgive, how to pray for one another and how to bring God into the center of our marriage. Now while not each day is filled with roses (although most are), we are happy to share that one year after divorce papers were filed, we renewed ours vows (with Pat of course) and we just celebrated our 10<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary! What Pat has done for our family, we will never forget and we can certainly not put a price on it, but we can tell you, this ministry and the hearts that stand behind A Future and A Hope are truly a gift not only to our church family, but to community filled with hurting families. I encourage you to share the good news of this fast growing ministry.

*A testimony from, Matt & Rachel Bragg  
Grateful recipients of Christian Counseling*



I remember every moment of reluctantly walking through the doors to my first DivorceCare class and meeting Dr. Pat Ryan. As the weeks went on I knew the fellowship amongst my broken hearted classmates was helping me, but I needed more to not only help me trust God's Word, but to create healthy boundaries for the hearts and minds of my children and myself. I reached out to Pat about setting an appointment, and my only regret is that I didn't do it much sooner. She took me on a self-discovery journey that I never would have broached without her guidance. I had revelations about my relationship with my ex husband, my children, family, and especially God. I worked

diligently each day to apply what I learned through our sessions, but relied on the sense of knowing that when it was too hard I had a place to call and seek help. To this day I'm not sure the many people who pour their hearts, time, and money into AFAH understand the blessing it was knowing I could make that call and deal with the emotions at hand without looking at my checkbook first to see if I could afford a problem that day. I was greeted with open arms, love, and prayer, and finances were not made to be another hurdle on an already difficult path.

It has been an honor to see her calling from God for ***A Future and A Hope Ministries*** come to fruition. There hasn't been a time that an announcement about the progress of this amazing project has been made that I wasn't crying tears of joy. I can't imagine how many lives will be touched by Dr. Ryan and this group who truly want to be a blessing by providing biblical counseling to our suffering community.

Blessings and peace,

*Brandi Emerson*