Shirley needed a place to live that was far away from the Long Island neighborhood that kept her in trouble—but what she found was much more than a home. After years of bouncing between prison and shelters, Shirley accepted an offer to enter supportive housing and began a journey she never expected. A casual interest in cooking led Shirley to a Culinary Arts program where she began to fine tune her craft. Her love and passion for cooking became apparent as she attended daily classes, excelled, and graduated with honors.

After completing her coursework she decided to take additional classes, including a workshop in business opportunities. Shirley’s new love and expertise in cooking led her to start her own catering business which she named Shirley’s Kitchen 360 Degrees because of the complete turn around she has had in her life due in part to the supportive housing she receives at Castle Gardens.

“I knew I wanted to do something different, I just didn’t know how. They gave me a new beginning.”