

# Jewel employee wins new car from Homewood Chevy Cares

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*(Editor's note: Because of an early deadline, we were unable to get this story in the January issue.)*

On Thursday, Dec. 23, LaToya Glover didn't own a car. She got to her job as a supervisor at Homewood's Jewel on Halsted Street by taking the bus or hiring a ride service.

The next day, on Christmas Eve, Glover drove home in her brand new, dark red 2022 Chevy Spark, courtesy of Chevrolet of Homewood. First, though, she brought it over to the Jewel store to show her coworkers.

"You see this stuff on TV — someone getting the big car with the bow on it — but it isn't something I thought would happen to me," Glover said.

It's fitting that Glover wanted to take the car to work first. She will never pass a coworker without offering a ride home, she said, as many have done for her. The way she sees it, Glover said, the win is a way for her to bless others.

Glover also found out about the car giveaway at work, she said, when

a manager asked her to post flyers about it around the store. She entered the contest by submitting an essay, then recording her story as a finalist.

Only two years ago, Glover was newly homeless and recovering from drug addiction. A friend living in Homewood took her in temporarily, and she got hired at Jewel in February. Now Glover has her own apartment and said she wants to enter Jewel's managerial training program.

To keep advancing at work, Glover said she needs a car. She now has a new vehicle; and Chevrolet of Homewood also paid the taxes and registration.

"I have been saving for a car, but I never could have done this on my own," Glover said. "I work so hard and I give so much of myself, and it always comes back to me."

Glover, who can be found at Jewel's customer service desk, likens her work to a ministry. It's this attitude that garnered attention from some of the 120 employees at Chevrolet of Homewood and Ford of Homewood, who each year decide the winner by voting for the finalist they found most deserving.



Carole Sharwarko/H-F Chronicle  
LaToya Glover stands next to her new Chevy Spark presented to her by Chevrolet of Homewood on Christmas Eve.

Steve Phillipos, owner of the auto dealerships, said the car is "loaded" and gets good gas mileage. It also comes with a full tank of gas, three free oil changes, and "we're helping Ms. Glover out with the insurance, too," he said.

"The goal is for the winners to get in there and be completely stress-free

when they drive away," Phillipos said. "We try to create this miracle for someone every year."

Now in its seventh year, Phillipos started the car giveaway after bouncing back from the auto industry recession. With his business in dire straits, he prayed to make it through and promised God that he would help people if he did.

"It was very eye-opening and humbling," Phillipos said. "I didn't even know if we would reopen. We came back with three employees and 10 cars."

To give Glover news of her win, Phillipos coordinated an at-work surprise with her managers at Jewel. Previously told the winner would get a call that morning, Glover said she already had given up hope.

"It was an extreme surprise," she said. "Then I had to go back to work."

It's a busy season at grocery stores, and Glover said she worked until midnight before heading to the dealership in the morning to be interviewed, congratulated and finally to drive away in her shiny new car.

"This is the best Christmas ever," Glover said.



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