

## Congratulations Grads!

Pathways to Independence celebrated the achievements of eight outstanding client-graduates through a virtual graduation ceremony on June 28th, hosted by executive director Goretty Ramos. Due to the corona virus pandemic, we could not physically celebrate with one another; instead, all current clients, mentors, directors, Friends of Pathways members, and other volunteers attended the virtual event.

It was an emotional end to the time our amazing graduates spent in Pathways. Together, during the virtual event, we laughed and cried as the graduates shared their incredible life stories, detailing their pasts, their struggles, how they've grown throughout their time in the program, and how they have used Pathways as a stepping stone towards overcoming life's obstacles. Each graduate also shared the gratitude they felt for Pathways and for everyone who helped them along the way. With their stories, they brought the insight that life never will be perfect, and even with the most deliberate of planning, nothing happens exactly the way you mean it to. All we can do is decide how we make the most of the situations that arise.



The audience was overcome with empathy, gratitude, optimism, and inspiration. The stories of the graduates' lives help us remember that none of us are alone in our struggles, and that together, we can overcome anything. Our accomplished graduates made the best of their situations with determination and hard work, I hope it inspires us all to do the same.

*"Grow through what you go through."*

**CHEYENNE M. • CSULB, HEALTHCARE ADMINISTRATION/HUMAN RESOURCES**



*"You are the author of your own destiny"*

**DANIELLE S. • CSUF, PSYCHOLOGY**

*"Pathways gave me a life I deserved but never thought possible. This program has changed my life"*

**ALYSSA G. • CSULB, COMMUNICATION STUDIES**



*"With my associates degree in nursing. I will be attending CSULB in the fall for my BSN."*

**ALEX P. • GWC, SCHOOL OF NURSING**

*"I can breathe now. I can walk now. I can stand on my own. Pathways to Independence has given me the space to grow lungs, legs, and a voice."*

**ATHENNA ANN L. • CPP, ARCHITECTURE**



*"Challenges are what make life interesting and overcoming them is what makes life meaningful." - Joshua J. Marine*

**JILL L. • CSUF, PUBLIC HEALTH**



*"She believe she could and so she did"*

**SIERRA • CSUF, HUMAN SERVICES**



*"Life is amazing. And then it's awful. And then it's amazing again..."*

**SERENA V. • CSUF, PSYCHOLOGY**

# Where Are They Now?

## ERIN'S STORY

Before becoming acquainted with Pathways to Independence, I was one of many in a population of millennials devastated by the Great Recession and a lack of opportunity in a new-found American socioeconomic landscape. At 21, I was commuting by bus all across Orange County to two minimum-wage jobs in counter-service dining so I could pay rent in a dilapidated, converted-garage apartment that was not up to building code. Black mold was spawning in circular patterns on the drywall. Every day I would wake up around 3 am, electrified by anxiety and the very real thought that my life could very well continue like this forever -- or worse. I had about two pairs of jeans that I would rotate and about three shirts that were donated to me. Every morning I woke up, packed a backpack with everything I might need for the next 16 or more hours, and headed out on my long trek, returning at dark, exhausted, with sore feet.

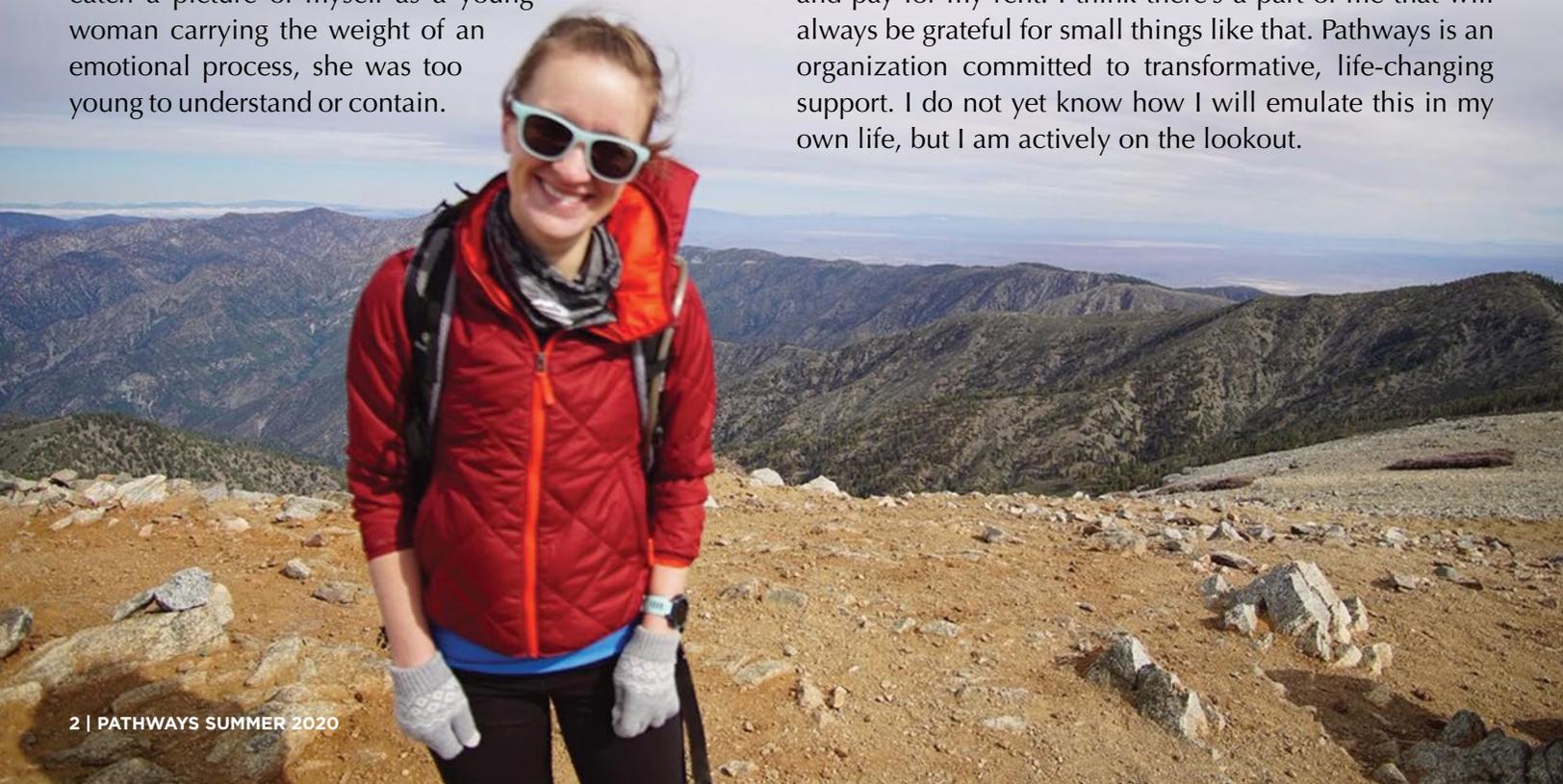
How did I come to this? To this day, I am still piecing the entire story together into a cohesive timeline. I think it started somewhere around my freshman year of high school when I was 14. My father had died suddenly of a heart attack and my mother, buried in her own grief, disconnected from me almost entirely. There are large gaps in my memory still in the years that followed. Every so often when I am driving home from work, I think backwards and catch a picture of myself as a young woman carrying the weight of an emotional process, she was too young to understand or contain.

By the time I was 21 and living in the moldy garage apartment, I had been working toward sobriety for quite a few months. In between my jobs, I attended 12-step meetings almost every single day. It was there that I first heard about Pathways.

I was in Pathways for about 4 years, there was no corner of my life that was left in the dark and no stone unturned. I met with a therapist immediately and once a week for the entire duration of my time. Hers is the voice that continues to echo in my heart and head. I met with a dentist, Dr. Tormey, who never once shamed me, instead, he gave me the best set of teeth I could hope for, I get compliments ALL the time on my teeth.

After my time in Pathways and graduating from UCLA, I couldn't think of a better direction to go then to fulfill my commitment to Pathways to give back. I went on to get a Master's at UCLA in Social Welfare in Justice, I graduated at the top of my class, again!

Today, my life is very calm and peaceful, I have always wanted that. I work in community mental health as a social worker, gaining hours towards licensure to be an LCSW. It's still such a tickling experience not to worry about things like where I will live, how I will feed myself and pay for my rent. I think there's a part of me that will always be grateful for small things like that. Pathways is an organization committed to transformative, life-changing support. I do not yet know how I will emulate this in my own life, but I am actively on the lookout.



## Wellness and Self-Care for Clients

Pathways to Independence cares about the mental health and emotional wellbeing of our clients. Now, more than ever, they need tools to cope with the added challenges they face. We are happy to be collaborating with two local organizations that help us bring the benefits of meditation, and art therapy services, to our clients.

Insight LA, a nonprofit meditation center, is providing remote Mindfulness Meditation classes to our clients every week. Mindfulness Meditation has had a powerful and positive effect on our clients.

Pathways us also collaborating with A Window Between Worlds, an organization that empowers individuals and communities impacted by violence and trauma through a transformative healing arts program. Art groups, known as "Wellness Wednesdays" are held once a month, and are also available on an individual basis for clients who need the extra support.



## Want to Become a Volunteer?

Learn how you can make a huge difference.



- MENTORS • PRIMARY CARE PHYSICIANS & SPECIALISTS
- LICENSED THERAPISTS • EXPERIENCED MECHANICS
- DENTISTS & ORTHODONTISTS • OPTOMETRISTS
- JOIN FRIENDS OF PATHWAYS

Pathways to Independence relies on the generosity of over 300 annual volunteers. Our volunteers are essential to the transformation and incredible growth of the young women we serve, women who come from circumstances devastated by homelessness, abuse and neglect.

**EMAIL US TODAY!**

Gorety.ramos@pathwaystoindependence.org

## Pathways Feels the Love

### COMMUNITY SUPPORT DURING THE PANDEMIC

COVID continues to impact all aspects of our clients' lives, and we at Pathways continue our commitment to provide transformative services to the women in our program. As we grapple with on-going restrictions and continued isolation, we are grateful for our connection to the wonderful community that makes it all possible!

A few sweet and thoughtful Friends of Pathways made a mask for each of our clients at Pathways. Jane Haxton, spent approximately an hour on each mask and was thrilled when her dear friend, Donna Adle offered to pitch in and then mailed her the finished masks all the way from Nevada! Dr. Misha Heller was kind enough to donate enough filters for at last half of these beautiful and thoughtful masks.



Thank you for your kindness and generosity. Our clients loved them!

Pathways clients were also the grateful recipients of hand sanitizers, as well as additional KN95 masks, both highly valued and essential for keeping safe!

The sanitizers were donated by Friends of Pathways, Terese Parkin and Michelle Jamieson, and the KN95 masks were donated by Mark & Teri Cole, CI Solutions.

We were touched by Terese Parkin's generosity, who, in addition to her donation of sanitizers, also hosted a Lemongrass Fundraiser, which raised \$250 for our program. Moreover, we were the fortunate recipients of Primal Alchemy Catering's fundraiser, hosted by Paul and Dana Buchanan in May, which raised \$1,000 for our program.

A BIG THANK YOU TO YOU ALL! The young women in our program deeply appreciate the much-needed relief through these difficult times.

# Friends of Pathways Car Parade

HELD SATURDAY JULY 11TH, 2020

For the past 24 years, in the autumn, the Park Estates neighborhood has hosted the annual fundraiser for Pathways to Independence, put on by Friends of Pathways (FOP). With all of the health concerns around the coronavirus, the outdoor event, which has drawn as many as 750 people with food from 30+ restaurants, is going virtual this year. The FOP wanted to be sure to let the neighborhood know how much they've been appreciated these last two decades plus, and they held an Appreciation Parade for them on Saturday, July 11th.

Decorated cars, the band Tanner Howe, sponsored by Realtors Andy Dane Carter, Kathie Sitton and Janel Winston

of The Address, with balloons and banners from National Charity League and waters from Farmers & Merchants Bank, made their way through the neighborhood honking, calling out thank you's. Earlier, thank you cards and plants had been delivered to the neighbors with an invitation to come out for their parade.

After the parade, the FOP gathered, with masks and social distancing, to listen to Tanner Howe and enjoy pizza donated by Rance's Chicago Pizza. A BIG thank you to Park Estates! For more information, including details on the virtual event with country star Brett Young, go to [www.pathwaystoindependence.org](http://www.pathwaystoindependence.org).



THE ADDRESS



# Support - A - Student

## SUPPORT-A-STUDENT BY CONTRIBUTING TODAY!

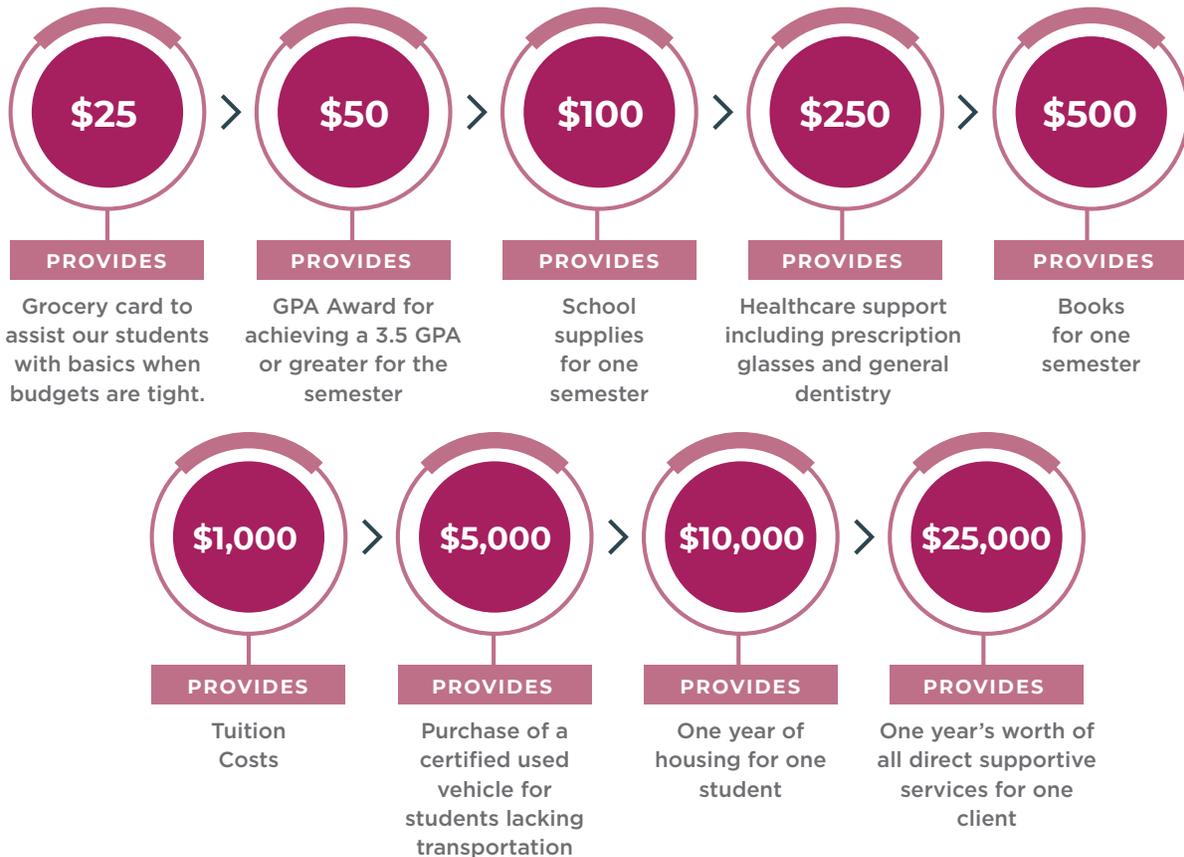
Pathways to Independence provides young women with an opportunity to achieve their dreams of self-sustainability by attaining a college degree, or further developing a technical or trade skill. Our participants are all college students between 18-35 years of age; they have survived many difficult situations, have experienced homelessness, neglect, abuse, and abandonment, which has led to many complications along their journey towards obtaining higher education. Despite the challenges, our students show an incredible amount of strength, determination, and gratitude.

We know Pathways provides the support our students need to be successful, and with your generous donations our students shine and thrive! We are proud of the young women of Pathways and what they accomplish. Upon graduation, our students are prepared to enter the professional world and to become contributing members of their communities. Many students prefer careers that directly give back, such as nursing, teaching, psychology and social work, others contribute to their communities through majors in the arts and sciences; 90% of our graduates obtain a bachelor's degree.

Pathways to Independence provides on-going support for approximately 3-5 years. Our core programs address 5 major needs to becoming stable and self-sufficient 1) obtain higher education 2) heal from past trauma through therapy 3) gain life-skills and social connections through workshops and mentorship 4) maintain stable and safe housing and transportation 5) increase physical health and emotional wellness.

In this new COVID world, Pathways is invested in the future and stability of our students. Although we cannot come together in person, we can still show the women in our program that we care about them, and that their goals are worth pursuing. No contribution is too small, all our donors make a difference and help us advance our transformative mission.

## YOUR DONATIONS PROVIDE THE FOLLOWING:



*Friends of Pathways Presents*

COUNTRY ARTIST

# BRETT YOUNG

OCTOBER 2<sup>ND</sup>

7:30 PM PDT

Greetings friends!

Friends of Pathways is hard at work planning an exciting VIRTUAL event for this year. We wish we could be together in person on that first Saturday in October as we have for the past 23 years, but we will have to wait.

Instead, please join us on Friday, October 2nd - virtually - for an incredible evening of fundraising and entertainment with 2018 Country Music Awards' New Male Vocalist of the Year, Brett Young! In addition to being a talented musician and award-winning singer-songwriter, Brett is a Southern California native who grew up in Huntington Beach. Brett has graciously agreed to perform some of his fan-favorites". He loves our Pathways mission and is excited to help us raise money for our Pathways clients.

As you all know, our annual event is known for our incredible silent auction. This year, we plan to bring you the same high-quality, must-have items and experiences for a unique online bidding opportunity. The intimate, live-streaming concert with Brett will be the icing on the cake to our exciting online auction.

We hope you will join us as we strive to provide the same level of financial support to the Pathways to Independence clients that they have come to rely upon. These are difficult and unprecedented times for sure, but we hope you'll agree that programs like Pathways need our help more than ever. We look forward to partying with all of you – and Brett of course – on October 2nd!



# OPPORTUNITIES FOR SPONSORSHIP

## DIAMOND \$20,000

Some benefits include:

- **PLAN A:** 10 GUESTS FOR VIP WATCH PARTY **OR** **PLAN B:** PARTY PACK AND 6 BOTTLES OF WINE DELIVERED TO YOUR OWN HOME\*

*More benefits include recognition online and via social media. Contact us for a full list!*

## RUBY \$10,000

Some benefits include:

- **PLAN A:** 10 GUESTS FOR VIP WATCH PARTY **OR** **PLAN B:** PARTY PACK AND 4 BOTTLES OF WINE DELIVERED TO YOUR OWN HOME\*

*More benefits include recognition online and via social media. Contact us for a full list!*

## PLATINUM \$7,500

Some benefits include:

- **PLAN A:** 8 GUESTS FOR VIP WATCH PARTY **OR** **PLAN B:** PARTY PACK AND 4 BOTTLES OF WINE DELIVERED TO YOUR OWN HOME\*

*More benefits include recognition online and via social media. Contact us for a full list!*

## GOLD \$5,000

Some benefits include:

- **PLAN A:** 6 GUESTS FOR VIP WATCH PARTY **OR** **PLAN B:** PARTY PACK AND 2 BOTTLES OF WINE DELIVERED TO YOUR OWN HOME\*

*More benefits include recognition online and via social media. Contact us for a full list!*

## SILVER \$2,500

Some benefits include:

- 2 GUESTS FOR VIP WATCH PARTY
- 1/2 PAGE ACKNOWLEDGMENT IN ONLINE PROGRAM (5.5" W X 4.25" H)
- RECOGNITION ON WEBSITE AND ON AUCTION SOFTWARE APPLICATION

## BRONZE \$1,000

Some benefits include:

- BUSINESS CARD ACKNOWLEDGMENT IN ONLINE PROGRAM (2.75 W X 4.5 H)
- RECOGNITION ON WEBSITE AND ON AUCTION SOFTWARE APPLICATION

## COPPER \$500

Some benefits include:

- RECOGNITION ON WEBSITE AND ON AUCTION SOFTWARE APPLICATION
- NAME OR BUSINESS NAME LISTED IN ONLINE PROGRAM

*\*Plan to be chosen based on COVID-19 restrictions at the time of event.*

## CORPORATE, BUSINESS OR INDIVIDUAL: (Please Print)

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Contact Person: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone (Day): \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Nature of Business \_\_\_\_\_  Sorry, I am unable to attend virtually. Please accept my donation of \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**DEADLINE: All checks and graphics must be received by September 13th in order to be recognized in the program.**

## THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT!!

**Please mail this form and a check to:**

Friends of Pathways  
Attention: Lisa Mais  
P.O. Box 43, Los Alamitos, CA 90720  
lisa.mais@pathwaysto independence.org

How would you like your name or business name to be displayed on signage at the event?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## For More Info About Program Ad:

Lindsay Mais | 562.260.7052  
lindsaymais@gmail.com

## Options on submitting info/graphics for program:

- I've mailed a hard copy of the graphics to be scanned to Lindsay Mais  
3751 Locust Avenue, Long Beach, Ca 90807
- I've emailed the graphics to lindsaymais@gmail.com

Federal Tax Id # 33-0148082



P.O. Box 43  
Los Alamitos, CA 90720  
562.493.9048  
PathwaystoIndependence.org

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Anita Beltran  
Kathy Erlick  
Diana Hill  
Elizabeth Hogrebe – *Board Chair*  
Tracey Hutton  
Nikki Harris, M.A., LMFT  
Joe Dzida  
Jerry Green  
Raymond Cervantez  
Tiffany Jacobs  
Sharon Dickson, LCSW  
Janica Jesson  
Jeff Barke, M.D. – *Emeritus*

### *Graduate*

Through your donations to Pathways, our clients learn independence and their futures are changed for the better. Thank you for your consideration in contributing to Pathways.

Since its inception in 1991, over 300 young women have participated in the program. Pathways is appreciative of its personal, corporate and service organization sponsors, as well as the health care providers who donate their services without charge to improve the quality of life of Pathways clients.

For more info call, 562-493-9048

### **DONATE YOUR CAR!**



Contact our volunteer Auto Coordinator, Glen Simpson at 714/579-5256 or [glen.simpson@carsonhonda.net](mailto:glen.simpson@carsonhonda.net)

## Want to Become a Mentor?

### JOIN OUR MENTOR TRAINING THIS FALL!

Due to the COVID-19 outbreak, Pathways will be offering our Fall Mentor Training through an online platform. Materials and Zoom links will be provided prior to each training date.

We will be bringing the same valuable topics covered during our in-person training, through a series of weekly

presentations; topics will include, but are not limited to Substance Abuse, Effects of Violence on a Survivor's Brain, LGBTQ Competency, and many others!

Please contact Eydie Pasicel right away, at [Eydie.pasicel@pathwaystoindependence.org](mailto:Eydie.pasicel@pathwaystoindependence.org) to sign-up, training dates start in September.