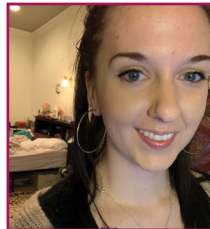


Pathways Graduation 2021 *Congratulations Grads!*

Whether a Pathways graduation ceremony is in person or virtual, it is always one of the most moving and powerful events imaginable for everyone attending. “Each of the graduates being honored today fought for their success and persevered through some very hard challenges,” said Executive Director Goretty Ramos as she introduced five beaming graduates via Zoom on June 27. “It really fills my heart to see their incredible journeys and their transformations.”



“Visualize your highest self. Start showing up as her.”

**LIZ O'REAR
CSUF, BACHELORS OF
ARTS IN PSYCHOLOGY**

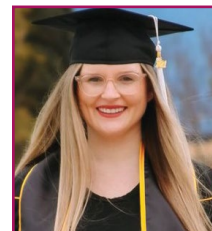
proudly. Jessica’s advice to new clients? “Use every single resource available to you and call your mentor, don’t worry about bothering people, reach out.”



“Thank you to everyone who has helped me reach this milestone, including the Pathways program, my mentors, therapists, team, and tutors. I am so incredibly grateful and lucky to have been chosen to be a part of this program. I am looking forward to a promising future!”

**JAVANNA
CSULB,
HUMAN DEVELOPMENT
GPA 3.7**

Heather Biddinger, who completed her degree in Business Administration, had been a straight A student on a scholarship before her world fell apart. “It was a race to rock bottom, and I never thought I would go back to school.” Once in Pathways and back in school, she credits her amazing team for getting her through many ups and downs and helping her cross the finish line. “They said we’re not here to tell you what to do, we’re here to lift you up, we’re here to support you and love you through all of this.” Heather graduated with a 3.7 GPA, was part of three honor societies and received many recognitions and awards.

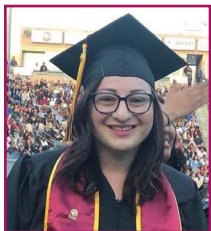


“In this world there is no force equal to the strength of a woman determined to rise” -

W.E.B Du Bois

**JESSICA CLINARD
CSULB, PSYCHOLOGY
GPA 3.7**

Pathways to Independence graduates have shown the world they are strong, resilient and persistent. They make the entire Pathways community proud as they go out and take on the world. The very best of luck to our June 2021 graduates.



**JULIE GREENWOOD
CSUDH, CHILD
DEVELOPMENT,
TEACHING
CREDENTIAL/
SINGLE SUBJECT
GPA 3.68**

A Pathways to Independence graduation ceremony is like no other, because many of the graduates had to overcome very serious problems like addiction, homelessness, incarceration and abuse before starting on the long path toward graduation. Hopelessness and low self-esteem also held them back before they were accepted into Pathways.

All five women spoke of the transformation that Pathways brought to their lives and expressed their deep gratitude for the caring and generous volunteers, staff, professionals and donors who helped them turn their lives around, get an education and put them on a path to success.



“Never take your foot off the gas pedal”

**HEATHER BIDDINGER
CSUF, BUSINESS:
ACCOUNTING
GPA 3.7**

Jessica Clinard, who graduated with a BA in Psychology, had been living on her own since she was 15, doing whatever she could to survive, before being accepted into Pathways. “It forever changed my life,” says Jessica. “I used every resource that was available to me. I saw the tutor twice a week at times. In spite of the panic attacks and other challenges, this high school dropout turned out to be a scholar,” she said



Sts Simon & Jude Catholic Church Raises Funds for Pathways!

During the 4th week of Lent, Saints Simon & Jude Catholic Church (SSJ) fundraised fiercely on behalf of our young women at Pathways. Their donations ensured that our students had support during the ongoing pandemic. Vanessa, a double major in Art and Women Studies confides, "As a full-time student dealing with job loss due to covid, it has been tough!" She went on to share her appreciation for SSJ, stating that with her new gift cards, she was able to buy groceries for the month and that she "didn't have to worry about her next meal".

The love and support that poured in during March was nothing short of miraculous and we would be remiss not to mention our very own PTI Mentor, Chris Sumpter, who spearheaded these efforts. She assured me, however, that she was working with a full Pathways team, elaborating, "mentor Elaine Smith was most helpful as she had a leadership role in the entire outreach program, mentor Mary Zant was a marvelous supporter of the process and I must also acknowledge that when people learned that mentor Patsi Wagner plays a key role within the organization, it helped people understand the important mission of Pathways."

Hats off to these wonderful ladies for their continued leadership and commitment to our mission at Pathways!

"I am so appreciative to Sts Simon and Jude church for their generous gift card donations. Classes tend to become more demanding as the semester goes on, so they couldn't have come at a better time. The essentials add up and it was such a help to have one less thing to worry about during the stressful semester."

- CARISSA, PSYCHOLOGY

"During the pandemic, my work hours were cut and I have been very cautious about spending money. I have been so blessed with assistance from many angels who have helped, the gift cards that I received from Sts. Simon and Jude Church bridged the gap so that I went without nothing this month! I was able to get all the groceries I needed AND am looking forward to the joy of using the restaurant gift card! Thank you Sts. Simon and Jude Church!"

**- JULIE, CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT/ TEACHING
CREDENTIAL SINGLE SUBJECT**

"I would like to say thank you to Sts. Simon and Jude church for their generous donations of gift cards. I've gained weight due to Covid quarantine, and was really struggling with affording new clothes that fit. Thanks to the gift cards, I was able to go get clothes that fit and made me feel more comfortable in my own skin."

- MAGGIE, ASSOCIATES IN SCIENCE



Lisa Mais, the embodiment of the name “FRIENDS of Pathways”

How to explain the unrivaled success of Friends of Pathways’ fundraising endeavors? Johnna Bryant, FOP member, sums it up:

“IT’S ALL BECAUSE OF LISA!”



of Pathways’ financial struggles and agreed to mobilize community members to lend their support.

The first ever “Party in the Park,” a progressive dinner held in the beautiful Park Estates neighborhood of Long Beach, garnered nearly \$40,000. As the meal progressed, food ran short, and some guests were served microwaved burritos right out of Gayle’s freezer! Undaunted by the less-than-gourmet fare, that initial group of generous guests raised enough funds to support 12 young women in their quest for a college degree.

Each successive event outstripped the previous year’s proceeds.

Lisa continued to volunteer countless hours to enable the growing success of FOP. After 14 years as a volunteer,

Friends of Pathways has raised \$7.5 million to support Pathways to Independence. Friends of Pathways was first launched in 1996 at the invitation of Gayle Wright, who had learned

she became our official FUND DEVELOPER. Under her inspirational guidance, the Pathways’ auxiliary has continued to grow, both in membership (from just a few to our current roster of almost 90 members), as well as in earning power, garnering over \$750,000 in 2019.

According to her dear friend, Johnna, this success has been due to Lisa Mais’ “leadership, goal-setting, organizational skills, and ability to reach out to the community.”

During her 25-year tenure, our annual event has become the largest



fundraising effort in the greater Long Beach area. In 2020, under the restrictive COVID-19 guidelines, our online auction and virtual concert with Country star Brett Young raised the most ever, nearly \$900,000. With

the Friends of Pathways unable to meet/plan in person, Lisa shouldered the bulk of the work.

Lisa was honored at the kickoff for this year's event, "Passport to Pathways, European Adventure." The tremendous outpouring of love, admiration, and gratitude for Lisa's dedicated service could have easily been a sad affair. It truly was not. We are all confident that our dear leader will continue to be involved with the organization she loves; and her replacement, ERIN WILSON, is supremely qualified to continue the success of Friends of Pathways.

Erin Wilson comes equipped with expertise, experience, and enthusiasm.

A candidate for her Master's degree in Public Administration from CSULB, our new Fund Developer has worked in the non-profit arena for 16 years, having previously served four local charities. Most recently she has spearheaded fundraising for Precious Lamb Preschool, which serves Long Beach-area homeless families. Her responsibilities have included managing all fundraising events, grants, website/media, as well as donor cultivation and retention. A 2017 alum of Leadership Long Beach, where she also

sits on the Board, Erin is currently a classmate of the Non-Profit Partnership's Emerging Leaders group. She makes time in her busy schedule to volunteer at church and at her sons' schools. In her spare time, she also teaches fitness classes!



We warmly welcome this thoroughly qualified new staff member. Please help Erin Wilson to continue the legacy of success that Friends of Pathways has enjoyed.

Email her: erin.wilson@pathwaystoindependence.org with your suggestions for sponsorships, donations, grants, underwriting, etc. Let's keep building the momentum to support this vital effort, which represents 50% of Pathways' annual budget.



Want to Become a Volunteer?

Learn how you can make a huge difference.



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- 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!

Goretty.ramos@pathwaystoindependence.org



Heather Biddinger

CLIENT SPOTLIGHT

Heather Biddinger is a Pathways graduate, a Business Administration major at CSUF, and one of our first clients to present multiple Peer-to-Peer workshops on Budgeting and Financial Literacy.

These 4 successful workshops were delivered earlier this year via Zoom and were recorded for current and future women in our program. Heather's goal is to become a certified public accountant and is currently working on completing multiple test and hours to achieve this. Below is a condensed excerpt from a recent interview with her.

Eydie: How would you describe the person you were before you entered Pathways?

Heather: Before I got to Pathways, I was convinced that I had no value or no place. I always believed that I was never good enough.

Eydie: How would you describe the person you are today after graduating Pathways?

Heather: I remember that everyone is always fighting their own battles and to try to meet people where they are at. As a result of that, I have become more flexible and more patient in my life. I have also learned that my self-worth is not dependent on outside circumstances.

Interviewer: How did Pathways help you achieve your goals?

Heather: They helped me achieve my goals by setting me up for success and by giving me the tools and confidence to move forward through my obstacles.

Eydie: Tell me a little about your background with Budgets.

Heather: In community college I took an Excel class and made my first budget. After that experience I was in love with the idea that budgets are there to help you spend the money the way that you want to.

Eydie: How did it feel to collaborate with PTI Board Member, Raymond Cervantes, for the Financial Literacy workshop you two presented in April?

Heather: I felt absolutely grateful to be able to work with a well-respected professional and to gain insight from his year of experience on this topic.

Eydie: Would you be interested in providing these workshops needs to the new scholarship awardees coming into the program? No pressure.

Heather: Absolutely! I think that budgeting is an essential tool and with the background that PTI clients have, it will give them some power and control over their lives. I think that all PTI clients deserve to have the confidence to know how to manage money properly.

Heather is one of our first clients to present multiple Peer-to-Peer workshops on Budgeting and Financial Literacy.



Evaluate Your Financial Health



- Record all expenses for the last three months (including federal, state, social security taxes)
- Record all forms of income (wages, salary, bonuses, tips, commissions)
- Compare your income to expenses
- Consider the 50-20-30 rule of a money management
- Determine which categories you can reduce or eliminate



10 · 2 · 2021

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Support our epic on-line auction when it launches before the event. Buy an item (or donate one to be auctioned off); all proceeds benefit Pathways programs. Contact smgwin@gmail.com to learn more.

If you would like to support Pathways to Independence, give online at www.pathwaysgives.com or mail a check to P.O.Box 43, Los Alamitos, CA 90720

*Learn
more*

erin.wilson@pathwaystoindependence.org
562-221-6726



In return for your contributions to support Pathways to Independence the following benefits (dependent on sponsorship level) will include:

Diamond - \$20,000

- One table of ten at the city (party) of your choice
- Full page color ad on front inside or back cover
- Logo included on all Social Media posts
- Recognition during event
- Recognition on website, program and auction
- Bottomless champagne

Ruby - \$10,000

- One table of ten at the city (party) of your choice
- Full page color ad
- Logo featured in screen presentation
- Recognition on website, program and social media
- Bottomless champagne

Platinum - \$7,500

- Eight tickets to the city (party) of your choice
- Full page ad
- Recognition on website, program and auction
- Logo featured on all digital platforms

Gold - \$5,000

- Six tickets to the city (party) of your choice
- ½ page ad
- Recognition on website, program and auction
- Logo featured on all digital platforms

Silver - \$2,500

- Four tickets to the city (party) of your choice
- ¼ page ad
- Recognition on website, program and auction

Bronze - \$1,000

- Two tickets to the city (party) of your choice
- Business Card Ad
- Recognition on website and program

Copper - \$500

- Two tickets to the city (party) of your choice
- Recognition on website and program



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- Sharon Dickson, LCSW

-  Sarah Nguyen
-  Michelle Matthews
- Lindsey Mais – *Board Treasurer*
- Janet Horenstein

 *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

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