

Frida Giannini, a contemporary Italian fashion designer, once advocated that, *“if we give girls and women the chance to change their lives, they can change the world.”* The graduates of Spring 2023 represent the promise of rebirth, recovery, and resilience found in Giannini’s quote as they leave the small Pathways community to face the larger world and make it better.

Written by current Pathways client, Jessica

In the spring of 2023, Pathways to Independence celebrated the graduation of six women who gathered strength from their community and sprouted wings with their amazing accomplishments and victories. Two new clients, still growing and thriving in their own cocoons, were joyfully welcomed by current clients, mentors and staff members into our program. The graduation ceremony sparked yet another cycle of genesis and departure of Pathways women gathering the courage and determination to pursue their glorious ambitions of change.

In the advocacy of developing lifelong skills, Pathways to Independence invited Tiombe Wallace, MFT to the graduation ceremony for a presentation on healthy boundaries

and self-care. She is a trauma specialist and feminist therapist whose goal is to build a community based on communication, connection, and compassion. Using an interdisciplinary approach to engage the clients, she explained how boundaries are an essential aspect of all relationships, including with oneself, and she gave examples of various types of relationships where they can be formed or even challenged. By answering questions and opening the floor to clients to share their insights, she taught them how to build and maintain healthy boundaries in relationships as a prominent skill for independence.

To initiate the graduation ceremony, Executive Director, Diana Hill highlighted the

accomplishments of our six graduating clients, the introduction of our two newest clients, and changes involving our volunteer staff to usher in the next stage of growth for Pathways to Independence. By building new relationships with our next chapter, she asserted, all individuals within the community can embrace positive change and create space for new things—and people—to grow.

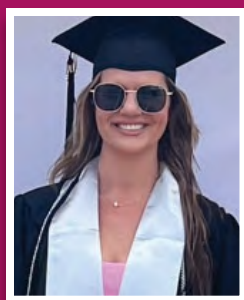
To accentuate her point, she and Program Director Eydie Pasicel invited the attendees to applaud and celebrate the clients that were nominated for the GPA Award and the Character Award. Eight clients were recipients of the GPA Award for earning 3.5+ GPA this past semester while maintaining a full-time academic workload.



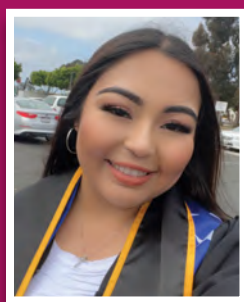
Fourteen clients were nominated by their mentors for the Character Award, highlighting their strengths as students and individual women. All the nominees were presented a small monetary gift in recognition of their academic prowess, mental resilience, and individual successes this past spring and since their arrival into Pathways. Finally reaching the highlight of the graduation ceremony, Diana and Eydie welcomed to the stage Pathways' butterflies, newly sprung from their cocoons of change, to take flight from multiple universities with new dreams to discover and achieve.



Ashley graduated with a BA in Human Services from California State University, Fullerton. In her speech, she shared that Pathways helped her "heal from [her] past wounds and build a foundation for a bright future," achieving the accomplishment of being credentialed as a gym trainer at her workplace. She aspires to pay it forward by providing workout sessions to current and future Pathways clients, pushing them to achieve their gym goals and improve their overall health.

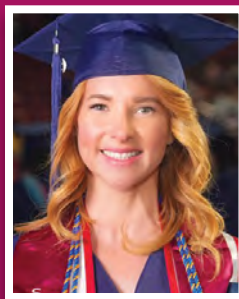


Brittany graduated with a BA in Social Work from California State University, Los Angeles, and was inducted as a member of the National Society of Leadership and Success. Inspired by the kindness Pathways has extended to her, she strives to pay the kindness forward by being the person who will "hug the hurt, kiss the broken, befriend the lost, and love the lonely."

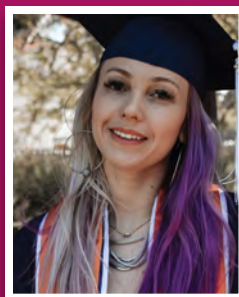


Carolins graduated with a BS in Criminal Justice and two minors in Spanish and sociology from California State University, Dominguez Hills. Before going to graduate school, she plans on taking a break to travel and support nonprofit organizations.

Erika graduated with a BS in Healthcare Administration with a 4.0 GPA from the University of Arizona Global Campus. A prominent and well-loved member of the community, she shared her narrative of receiving inspiration from her peers to study endlessly and advocate



for herself as a woman with grace and strength. She cited Mary Davis as she spoke of her healing journey, "The more grateful I am, the more beauty I see." She emphasized her excitement to give back to Pathways through volunteerism; she wants to help with fundraising efforts to bring more resources to the program and dedicate her time to current and future clients' successes. With her degree, she wants to help seniors in retirement thrive and enjoy their golden years, providing them the best support and care possible.



Erin graduated with a BA in Psychology from California State University, Fullerton. In addition to her degree, she attained membership to the Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society and was also named to the Dean's List multiple times. To give back to the community and help others through the grieving process, she recently initiated an online support group for those who have experienced loss due to the fentanyl crisis.

Etta graduated from California State University, Fullerton with a BA in Psychology, and she celebrated the accomplishment of being accepted in every graduate school she has applied for. She has already enrolled in an accelerated master's program in San Diego and plans to engage policy and community development with a local nonprofit.

To conclude Spring 2023's ceremony, the graduates shared their final message that Pathways to Independence is a lifestyle change for the better, and no one must be perfect to become strong, beautiful, independent women that will impact the world.

On this special night, six beautiful butterflies took flight, changing lives for the better. In the following dawn, more strong women will join this mission as Pathways to Independence thrives and expands to accept more clients into its community of cocoons.





Wow! I cannot believe we are half-way through 2023. I am so excited for what the next half of the year holds in store for Pathways to Independence. One important moment will be the upcoming strategic planning retreat for PTI, which will provide us an opportunity to chart

the course for our organization's future. This pivotal event will bring together key stakeholders, including board members and staff, to engage in a collaborative process aimed at setting clear objectives and defining strategies to achieve them. By harnessing collective wisdom, this retreat will lay the foundation for PTI's growth, sustainability, and impact in the years to come.

During the retreat, the primary focus will be on setting well-defined objectives that align with our mission and vision. These objectives will serve as guideposts for decision-making and will help prioritize initiatives, allocate resources, and measure progress. It is crucial to involve all stakeholders in this process, encouraging open dialogue and diverse perspectives to ensure comprehensive and inclusive goal setting.

To facilitate informed decision-making, the retreat will include a comprehensive strategic analysis of PTI's internal and external environment. By examining strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats, the board can gain a holistic understanding of the organization's current position and identify areas of improvement or growth. This analysis will serve as a basis for developing effective strategies and action plans that address identified challenges and leverage opportunities.

Building upon the strategic analysis, the retreat will focus on creating actionable strategies to achieve the defined objectives. This stage involves brainstorming, evaluating various approaches, and selecting the most feasible and impactful options. The board will discuss resource allocation, potential partnerships, and potential risks to ensure robust strategies that can adapt to changing circumstances. To promote accountability and implementation, the retreat will also explore methods for monitoring progress and adjusting strategies as needed.

The retreat presents a valuable opportunity

for board members and staff to engage in collaborative discussions and strengthen relationships. It is essential to foster an environment of open communication, trust, and mutual respect. By actively involving all participants, the retreat can tap into the collective expertise and diverse experiences to generate innovative ideas and cultivate a sense of ownership and commitment to the strategic plan.

The strategic planning retreat will not only address immediate challenges but also focus on long-term sustainability and impact. It will encourage participants to envision the future and identify innovative approaches that will strengthen PTI's position as a leader in its field. By integrating elements of innovation, technology, and community engagement, the retreat will help us adapt to the changing landscape, seize emerging opportunities, and ultimately maximize its positive influence on our clients and community.

As we prepare for the upcoming strategic planning retreat, it is crucial to recognize the significance of this event in shaping the future of our organization. By setting clear objectives, conducting a comprehensive strategic analysis, developing actionable strategies, and fostering collaboration, the retreat will empower our board and staff to steer PTI towards sustainable growth, enhanced effectiveness, and increased social impact. As we embrace this opportunity to harness collective wisdom and chart a course that will drive PTI's success in the years ahead, we look forward to sharing the priorities we set and we are confident we will be a much stronger organization from our strategic plan.



What has been happening at Pathways so far in 2023? Well, a lot of great things. Here are a few highlights.

NEW PATHWAYS CLIENTS:

We are excited to welcome two new clients to Pathways this summer:

PH she will be studying cosmetology and getting her AA degree at Golden West College

FB she will study biology and hope to work in the medical field once she gets her BS. She is starting her education at Fullerton College.

We introduced these new clients at the Graduation, and they were given “High 5’s” to be welcomed by their peers. We are working through 18 applications and hope to welcome 5-7 more clients this fall. It is an exciting time.

DEVELOPMENT OF YPP:



while supporting the young women of Pathways to Independence.

If you haven’t heard, we are starting a Pathways Networking group called YPP (Young Philanthropist of Pathways) to create a group of fun, motivated younger people who want to ultimately build social and business relationships while supporting the young women of Pathways to Independence. YPP members will work together to raise awareness, money, volunteer time, and talents, network with a group of like-minded individuals, and support Pathways and its mission. Please reach out to Lisa Mais if you are interested in attending a future gathering. Lisa.Mais@pathwaystoindpendence.org

6 NEW GRADUATES & OUR PARTNERSHIPS:

We are beyond excited to have launched six more grads (see Jessica’s article about our graduation). A special thank you to some of our partners for supporting our Grads. Spark Studios for hosting our grads for professional headshots



to take out with them into their professional life.

The Assistance League® of Huntington Beach also supports our grads



as they put together their professional wardrobes. Working Wardrobes also provide our clients with styling, but more than just that, they help with job searches, resume building, and interviewing skills. These partnerships enhance our grads’ experience as they move into the next phase of their lives and journeys.

2022 PATHWAYS IMPACT REPORT:



We are excited and proud to share Pathways’ first Impact Report. This comprehensive document provides a detailed account of the organization’s transformative work and its profound impact on the lives of the women it serves. The impact report highlights the various programs and initiatives undertaken by Pathways to Independence, showcasing

the remarkable achievements and milestones reached in 2022, from providing vital support services to our clients. Through testimonials, success stories, our budget, and statistical data, this impact report serves as a testament to the gap that Pathways fills. We are so grateful for a board that provides the organization with a clear vision of its mission and supports the work we do each day. If you didn’t receive the Impact Report, it can be found on the front page of our website.

STRATEGIC PLANNING IN MOTION:

Pathways to Independence has embarked on an exciting new endeavor by undertaking its first-ever strategic planning process. With a commitment to continuously improving its services and maximizing its impact, Pathways to Independence is strategically mapping out its future direction and goals. This comprehensive planning process thoroughly assesses the organization’s current programs, resources, and community needs. We want to thank all the key stakeholders, including the board, alum, clients, staff members, community partners, and dedicated supporters. Through this strategic planning exercise, Pathways to Independence ensures that diverse perspectives and expertise contribute to the planning process. This initiative aims to identify innovative approaches, set measurable objectives, and establish a roadmap for the organization’s growth and sustainability. Pathways to Independence’s

dedication to strategic planning demonstrates its unwavering commitment to providing our valued clients with the highest quality support and services. Stay tuned for more information on the results of this forward-thinking endeavor.

MAKING NEW CONNECTIONS IN ORANGE COUNTY:

We were honored to accept the Impact Giving Grant earlier this summer. This is a fantastic group of philanthropic women who come together to support non-profits worldwide. They had 43 applications, and Pathways was



the 2nd highest recipient. This is a beautiful opportunity for us to replace a retiring longtime volunteer Lisa Fluke with a new staff member as an education coordinator. It is also great to be associated with Impact Giving and the many new doors to partnerships and volunteers they open.



Love and Light
Diana D. Hill



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Opportunities For Sponsorship

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- Full-page color ad on front or back cover of event program (5.5"w x 8.5"h)
- Recognition during opening remarks
- New sponsor social media post, recognition on website throughout the year and signage at event

Ruby \$10,000

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- One premier table for 10, including table service, with 4 premium wines
- Priority checkout
- Full-page color ad in event program (5.5"w x 8.5"h)
- Recognition during opening remarks
- New sponsor social media post, recognition on website throughout the year and signage at event

Platinum \$7,500

- 10 guests for pre-event VIP party, with champagne and entertainment
- One premier table for 10, including table service with 4 premium wines
- Priority checkout
- 3/4 page color ad in event program (5.5"w x 6.3"h)
- Recognition during opening remarks, recognition on the website throughout the year and signage at event

Gold \$5,000

- 8 guests for pre-event VIP party with champagne and entertainment
- One table for 8
- 3/4 page ad in event program (5.5"w x 6.3"h)
- Recognition during opening remarks
- Recognition on website throughout the year and signage at event

Silver \$2,500

- 6 tickets to event
- 1/2 page ad in event program (5.5"w x 4.25"h)
- Recognition on website and signage at event

Bronze \$1,000

- 4 tickets to event
- Business card size ad in event program (2.75"w x 4.25"h)
- Recognition on website and signage at event

Copper \$500

- 2 tickets to event
- Recognition in program and signage at event

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— Lisa & Frank —
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Stephanie Alumna

CLIENT SPOTLIGHT

Seven years ago, I was accepted and became a part of Pathways and began my journey to become the person I was meant to be.

I had just graduated and transferred from El Camino College into CSULB; it was perfect timing. I subsequently graduated from CSULB with a major in Hospitality Management and a minor in Event Planning and Management. During my college career, I was involved in several organizations, serving as founder and president of the event planning organization on campus. I also became a member of one of the honor societies and made the President's List for my last four consecutive semesters.

I was able to be successful and focused while in college due to all the services Pathways provided me which included: my monthly stipend, a car, medical services,

school supplies, furniture, a laptop, my apartment in the Pathways' building and most importantly, they provided emotional support.

Through the therapy provided by Pathways, I came to realize the importance of mental health so I currently continue in regular therapy sessions.

Lisa Mais made a huge impact in my life, teaching me how to be courageous, fearless and confident to ask for what I need. Not only was I her mentee, I was also her assistant in Friends of Pathways, where I was surrounded by successful, inspiring and supportive people, who encouraged me to continue following my goals.

One of the most significant of many blessings I received in Pathways to Independence was from a Pathways alum volunteer. She volunteered her services to cover up a tattoo that reminded me of the painful past and shame that haunted me.

Fast forward to my life now: I have completed a master's in public administration (also from CSULB), and in the fall I will begin teaching a course at my alma mater while also maintaining my full-time career. In my personal life, I recently became engaged to a loving and respectful partner. Most importantly, I just celebrated 10 years of continuous sobriety and could not be happier or prouder. In my spare time I enjoy traveling, spending time with my two maltipoo dogs and I am also busy planning our wedding. My long-term plans include earning a PhD and starting a family after a few years of marriage.

I am proud to have joined the newly formed YPP (Young Professionals of Pathways), as a way of "paying it forward" to Pathways.





P.O. Box 43
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.....
Diana Hill – *Executive Director*

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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Diana.hill@pathwaystoIndependence.org

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