

# **Pathways** TO INDEPENDENCE™

## GRADUATION

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On Sunday June 22nd, Pathways staff, volunteers, clients and alumni joined in Rossmoor, CA to celebrate our 2025 graduates. This year, we honored four phenomenal young women at the event: **Andrea Clarey, Cherokee Evans, Jessica King** and **Jessica Serrano**, all of whom graduated with a bachelor's degree. We also celebrated the December graduation of **Jackie Manuel-Perez** who was unable to attend due to career conflict.

The graduation ceremony began as many of our special events do - with a moment of gratitude, led by Executive Director Diana Hill. Shortly after, clients and guests enjoyed the opportunity to connect with one another at our reception dinner.

After, Diana Hill kicked off the awards ceremony with a special reflection and by sharing the music and lyrics of the 1970's classic, 'I am Woman' by Helen Reddy. With its triumphant statement, "I am strong, I am invincible, I am woman", the tone for the evening was powerfully set.

In addition to college and program graduates, our June graduation ceremony also recognizes other high achieving students. This semester, 2/3 of Pathways clients completed with a 3.0 GPA or higher. Of these students,



eight clients ended the semester with a 3.5-3.9 GPA and nine clients with a 4.0. Each of these students were recognized by name and with much applause.

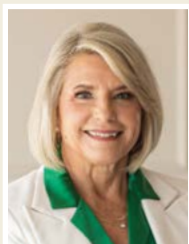
Character Awards were also distributed to sixteen different clients this year. This is a wonderful tradition where our mentors acknowledge the outstanding

accomplishments of their mentees, showcasing the loving partnership created during a client's time in Pathways.

To many, our 2025 graduate presentations are the most profoundly touching moments of the year. Each graduate is presented by her Client Coordinator, then given the opportunity to speak about her experience in Pathways and her educational journey. Each of the amazing four women, different in many ways, are a demonstration of resilience, strong work ethic and outstanding character.

To conclude the ceremony and cement their status as graduates, the special story of transformation symbolized by a butterfly is shared. Each graduate of Pathways to Independence is presented with a beautiful, custom-made butterfly pendant to commemorate their years of dedication to their own personal and professional growth.

This year's graduation was nothing short of remarkable. It is this special tradition which is at the heart of our organization, as a graduate from college is the truest testament to our mission at Pathways to Independence.



It's hard to believe we're already more than halfway through the year! Things have been busy here at Pathways—and for our clients as well.

When I joined Pathways over three years ago, one of my goals was to create meaningful opportunities for our clients to connect with the broader community of donors and volunteers, to showcase who they are beyond their circumstances. I'm proud to share that, with the incredible support of the Port of Long Beach, we just hosted our inaugural **Pathways Art Show!**

Eleven of our clients courageously shared their artwork, all centered around the theme of **Transformation**. They participated in the VIP opening reception and had the chance to meet and hear from respected Long Beach artist **Bob Senske**, who generously shared his story and encouragement. The following day, the exhibit was open to the public at the **LBCC Art Gallery**, where our entire community was invited to experience their creativity and resilience.

This show wouldn't have been possible without the support of so many people. Thank you to:

- **The Port of Long Beach** and **Long Beach City College**
- **Cara Lies and Sheryl Overcast**, our Art Show Committee, for your passion and vision
- **Karla Aguiniga**, LBCC Art Gallery & Exhibition Manager, for your professional eye and attention to detail
- **Paul Kaminski**, Executive Director of the LBCC Foundation, for connecting us to the gallery and championing this event
- **Bob Senske**, for your insight, encouragement, and inspiration
- And **The Grand**, for your generosity and support

Also this month, we proudly celebrated the **graduation of five clients**—a powerful and emotional milestone. In addition to honoring our graduates, we recognized academic excellence. Over **two-thirds of our clients maintain a GPA of 3.0 or higher**, and several were

## CLIENT INITIALS &amp; GPA

AC - 3.93	JM - 4	NM - 3.79
BG - 4	KD - 3.75	PH - 4
CH - 4	KA - 3.93	SS - 4
EA - 3.67	LS - 4	TS - 3.67
HB - 4	LP - 3.64	XN - 3.67
JK - 4	MS - 4	

recognized for achieving **3.5+ and 4.0 GPAs**. They are an extraordinary group of young women, and we are so proud of their hard work and perseverance.

In April, we released our **2024 Impact Report**. If you haven't had a chance to read it yet, please take a moment to scan the QR code below. As a social impact organization, we measure our success not only through powerful stories of transformation but also through meaningful data that shows real, lasting change.

Speaking of transformation, I want to share a message that truly moved me. One evening, I received this from a client:

*"Hi Diana! I saw in my emails that one year ago today, you called to tell me I was accepted into Pathways. I still remember exactly where I was and what I was doing when I got that call. I was filled with so much gratitude and excitement, but even then, I couldn't have imagined how much my life would change in such a short time because of this program. I'm still in shock every day and always so thankful for everything..."*

This is just one example of the profound impact you help us make each day. Your support creates ripples—a **butterfly effect**—that multiplies far beyond what we can see.

Love and Light,  
Diana



**TRANSFORMATIONS**  
Pathways Client Art Show  
Gallery Opening July 23rd



Art still available for  
sale see website





# PRESENTS Rodeo Roundup

**SATURDAY**  
**OCTOBER 4 2025**  
**CSULB**

**HOWDY, PARTNER!**  
**LET'S MOSEY ON OVER TO MAKE**  
**A DIFFERENCE TOGETHER!**

This isn't our first rodeo, and it won't be our last!  
Join us for an unforgettable evening under the stars filled with great food and beverages from 35 local spots, lively entertainment, and the chance to support a cause that truly matters.

## SPONSOR OR UNDERWRITE

Starting as low as \$500, includes Recognition and Event tickets

- \* **Date:** October 4, 2025 at 5:30 PM
- \* **Location:** California State University, Long Beach (CSULB)
- \* **Dress Code:** Western-inspired
- \* **Entertainment:** Live music by Gold Rush Country
- \* **Fun:** Line dancing under the stars!

## ATTEND

Purchase tickets at  
[pathwaystoindependence.org](http://pathwaystoindependence.org)  
Event is 21 years of age & over

Together, we'll celebrate our successes, rally for our mission, and create a brighter future. Don't miss this chance to make a difference and have some fun!

## DONATE

Can't attend? You can still make a tax-deductible contribution to support all our Pathways programs.

**Visit:** [pathwaystoindependence.org/events/](http://pathwaystoindependence.org/events/)

## BID

Support our epic online auction when it launches before the event. Bid on items (or donate one to be auctioned off)  
All proceeds benefit Pathways programs.  
Auction Contact: [cathy.hansen@pathwaystoindependence.org](mailto:cathy.hansen@pathwaystoindependence.org)

If you would like to support Pathways to Independence, give online at [www.pathwaystoindependence.org](http://www.pathwaystoindependence.org) or mail a check to P.O. Box 43, Los Alamitos, CA 90720

## LEARN MORE

Contact  
[Jane.emfinger@pathwaystoindependence.org](mailto:Jane.emfinger@pathwaystoindependence.org)  
or (714) 334-9581





# A BIG THANK YOU TO OUR HEADLINE SPONSORS!

COMMITTED!

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Jean & Jerry Green

## SILVER SPONSORSHIP - \$2,500

- 6 tickets to event
- ½ page ad in the event program (5.5"w x 4.25"h)
- Recognition on website and signage at the event

## BRONZE SPONSORSHIP - \$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 SPONSORSHIP - \$500

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

## UNDERWRITING OPPORTUNITIES

### CENTERPIECES - \$2,500

- 6 tickets to event
- ½ page ad in event program (5.5"w x 4.25"h)
- Recognition on website and signage at event

### GENERAL UNDERWRITING - ANY AMOUNT

- Donate funds to be used where needed
- Recognition on website and in program

## Your Opportunities for Sponsorship



### DIAMOND SPONSORSHIP - \$15,000

- 20 guest passes for the VIP Lounge
- 2 premier tables for 10, including table service with fine wines
- Priority check-in & out
- 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 the event

### RUBY SPONSORSHIP - \$10,000

- 10 guest passes for the VIP Lounge
- 1 premier table for 10, including table service with fine wines
- Priority check-in & out
- 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 the event

### PLATINUM SPONSORSHIP - \$7,500

- 10 guest passes for the VIP Lounge
- 1 premier table for 10, including table service with premium wines
- Priority check-in & out
- Full-page color ad in event program (5.5"w x 8.5"h)
- Recognition during opening remarks
- Recognition on website throughout the year and signage at the event

### GOLD SPONSORSHIP - \$5,000

- 8 guest passes for VIP Lounge
- 1 table for 8
- ¾ 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 the event



Meet Joanna, Pathways Alum, making an impact on the world around her, and driven by her passion—service to others in the non-profit sector.

Our Pathways grads are unrivaled in their commitment to “pay it forward “ by making their world a better place, and no one embodies this spirit of giving better than Joanna, who received her degree back in 2009.

Since her graduation from Pathways to Independence, she has held roles in program management, event planning, and fundraising with organizations such as the Children’s Defense Fund—Beat the Odds Program (in California and New York), Mount Sinai Health System in New York, and the Pratt Institute in Brooklyn.

After 12 years in nonprofit endeavors, she has served as an event planner in the private sector for the past three years. In retrospect, Joanna notes, “While I gained valuable insights and skills during this time, I’m planning to return to the nonprofit space this fall, where my passion truly lies.”

Joanna learned of Pathways from her older sister, who encouraged her to apply. A product of a very unstable home life, she found that Pathways to Independence was the perfect fit for her: “Pathways helped clear the roadblocks that were holding me back and gave me the support to move forward, both in my education and personal growth.”

She cites access to therapy as one of the most important parts of her experience in Pathways—“Therapy gave me the tools to process my past, build confidence, and truly start to heal.”

Following graduation, Joanna literally “jumped” right into her commitment to service to the community: “While living in California, I was a mentor for the Jumpstart Program, which had offered me support while I was in high school.”

Later she began work for the Children’s Defense Fund’s Beat the Odds Program, where she had the chance to give back in a deeper way. Joanna was able to use her personal experience and the positive impact of programs like Jumpstart and Pathways to Independence to expand and strengthen the Beat the Odds Initiative.

Joanna’s success has not been limited to her professional life. She speaks proudly of her family, which includes an incredible husband who has been her partner for 15 years, as well as their two beautiful daughters, ages 6 and 5, plus two cats, “As a family, we love to travel, go to the beach, watch movies, and cook or bake together. We also enjoy going to the theater, exploring art, and spending time painting—creativity is a big part of our lives.”

Though the family has enjoyed their 10 wonderful years living in New York, and their current home in Miami, Joanna and her husband miss California deeply and plan to move back in the next couple years. And her Pathways family here will be thrilled to welcome Joanna and her family back “home” one day in the near future.



# Friends of Pathways Welcomes 10 new members!



We're thrilled to welcome our newest members to Friends of Pathways! If you're just getting to know us, Friends of Pathways is a dedicated volunteer group that supports the life-changing work of Pathways to Independence. Our members raise critical funds, plan meaningful events, and share their time and talents to empower clients on their journey to independence. Their energy, generosity, and compassion help make Pathways so impactful, and we're so grateful they are now part of it.

Eileen Smith  
Jennifer Golles  
Julie Jones  
Karen Nolta  
Laura Duvall

LeAnn Roughton  
Lori Gallagher  
Mary Diligent  
Michelle Fiset  
Suzanne Watts



## EMERGING PHILANTHROPISTS OF PATHWAYS (EPP)

Emerging Philanthropist of Pathways has been busy and thriving! This spring, we hosted our first-ever **Yoga with Purpose** event, a huge success that raised funds for Pathways. The energy was incredible, and we're hoping that Yoga with Purpose will become an annual tradition! As summer rolled in, we had the joy of assembling **goodie bags for clients** heading into finals week, a small gesture to remind them that they're supported and cheered on. We've loved every opportunity to show up for the Pathways community, including **attending** the beautiful **graduation ceremony** in June. It was a moving celebration of resilience and achievement, and we are grateful to support the event. We're now gearing up for our next big fundraiser: **Pickleball with Purpose** on September 6th. **Everyone is welcome!**

**Mark your calendars! We can't wait to see you there.**

EMERGING PHILANTHROPISTS OF PATHWAYS PRESENTS

# Pickleball with PURPOSE

SAT SEPT 6TH  
2PM-4PM  
BILLIE JEAN KING COURTS  
1040 PARK AVENUE LONG BEACH, CA 90801



**\$50 A TEAM**

USE CODE: EARLYBIRD FOR \$10 OFF

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.....  
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## It's Back to School Time!

And we need help! Scan the QR code below to  
donate to the clients back to school supplies  
and basic lounge supplies all year long. Your  
generosity is greatly appreciated.

The Amazon logo, featuring the word "amazon" in a bold, lowercase sans-serif font, with a curved orange arrow underneath it pointing from the letter 'a' to the letter 'z'.

