

Pathways TO INDEPENDENCE™

GRADUATION

One of the most impactful events Pathways to Independence hosts each year is June graduation.



Clients, staff members, board members, volunteers and alumni join together to honor the incredible group of young women graduating from college. This year, we **honored six phenomenal young women:** Ariela, Charlotte, Citlali, Jessica, Maddie and Shawnee, all of whom completed their Bachelor's degree.



The special evening began with a message of love and light, led by Executive Director Diana Hill. This year, we set the tone for our special event with a kickoff song, 'This Girl Is On Fire' by Alicia Keys. The title says it all. We are here to **empower, motivate and support one another;** we know and see our community as unstoppable.

Shortly after, guests and participants were given the opportunity to socialize with one another during a lovely reception dinner, provided by longtime supporter **Baja Sonora**. This has also become a favorite time for client-mentor bonding; many of which choose to participate in the evening sharing a table with one another.

This year, **we welcomed a very special**

guest speaker and alumni of Pathways to Independence, Stephanie Martinez. She

graduated from Pathways to Independence in 2019 and is now the Event Services Coordinator for the City of Carson and a professor at CSULB. She was able to share her background and inspiring testimony of **transformation and triumph** with the younger generation of clients. Building our alumni community has been

a huge focus this year. The alumni panel at our annual retreat in January garnered a tremendously positive response from current clients that participated in the event. Building on that shared enthusiasm, we continue to expand our circle of alumni presence at our events tapping into this incredible resource. There was a great turnout of alumni guests and a special 'alumni table'

at graduation, where many of them were able to connect with one another. **We also take tremendous pride in the alumni that now serve as mentors, therapists and staff members.**

The pinnacle of our evening, of course, were the graduate speeches. Each of our 2026 graduates were presented





by their Client Coordinator and Mentor; a heartwarming acknowledgment of the overwhelming love and dedication over the years. Our graduates shared their incredible testimonials of resilience, determination, growth and the power of education.

The few of the notable accomplishments of this year's graduates include an EMT certification, completion of Nursing School, public speaking engagements at academic leadership summits and excellence in performance art, to name a few.

We conclude each graduation ceremony with the cherished tradition of sharing a story of resilience, symbolized by a butterfly. Each graduate of Pathways to Independence is given a custom-made butterfly pendant by jewelers Robert Chavira Inc. to commemorate her growth during her years in the program.

While the story of each client is unique, the message is the same: Pathways to Independence makes an incredible difference for our phenomenal clients. Congratulations to our spectacular graduates - you will **always** have a home with Pathways.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR CORNER



DIANA HILL

A Summer of Celebration, New Beginnings, and a Major Milestone

Summer is in full swing, and that means we are incredibly busy at Pathways to Independence!

We kicked off the season by celebrating one of our December graduates, along with our five Spring 2026 graduates. Watching these remarkable women cross the stage was both inspiring and emotional. The young women Pathways is sending out into the world will have an incredible impact on this generation, not only through their careers, but through the compassionate, resilient people they have become.

Each of them knows what it means to **work relentlessly** for a dream, **overcome obstacles** many cannot imagine, and then turn around to **encourage those just beginning** their own journeys. They inspired everyone in the room, but perhaps no one more than the current clients who watched them with hope, knowing that one day it would be their turn.

One of the greatest joys of graduation is that it creates space for new women to begin their own Pathways journey.

This year, we received **31 applications** from deserving young women. After an extensive admissions process, we are thrilled to welcome **six new clients** into the Pathways village for Fall 2026.

Even more exciting, these six women represent a milestone we could only have dreamed of 35 years ago. With their arrival, **we hit over 500 women served** since our founding in 1991: 504 lives transformed, 504 futures rewritten, and countless cycles of poverty, abuse, and adversity broken.

Meet Our Newest Pathways Clients

AM (32) 🍀 is attending California State University, Fullerton, majoring in Psychology. She dreams of conducting research while building a therapy practice that helps others heal. She is organized, determined, and ready to become everything she is capable of being.

MS (32) 🍀 attends Orange Coast College and plans to become a music teacher. Her love for music and children shines through in everything she does. She is articulate, kind, and deeply motivated to build an independent future.

RL (23) 🍀 is a Political Science major at Long Beach City College with plans to become an attorney. Determined and resilient, she refuses to let obstacles stand in her way. Her warmth, confidence, and willingness to speak up for others will undoubtedly serve her well.

RL (23) 🍀 recently completed her Pharmacy Technician certification and is now completing nursing prerequisites at Long Beach City College. She is resilient and determined to create a life far different from the one she experienced growing up.

AB (21) 🍀 is a Communications major at California State University, Northridge. Resourceful and joyful, she is committed to building a future that her own children will one day be proud of.

SR (26) 🍀 attends Orange Coast College and is currently an EMT while pursuing her Respiratory Therapy degree. She already dreams beyond that goal, envisioning a future as a physician. She is forthright, resourceful, and has a genuine heart for caring for others.

Throughout the admissions process, I was continually inspired by these women. Each one has chosen **courage over circumstance** and **possibility over the limitations** of their past. Their determination to ensure that their family of origin or past struggles does not define their future.

I truly believe this new class represents the next generation of leaders, professionals, caregivers, educators, and changemakers. We cannot wait to watch them grow.



**EACH OF THEM KNOWS
WHAT IT MEANS TO
WORK RELENTLESSLY
FOR A DREAM...**

As we mark serving more than **500 women**, I hope you'll join us in celebrating **35 years** of Pathways to Independence at our Annual Event on October 3rd at California State University, Long Beach.

If you've ever wondered how you can make a difference, now is the perfect time.

We are always looking for volunteers to serve through Friends of Pathways and throughout our program. Whether you mentor, volunteer at an event, or simply help spread our mission as an ambassador, you **become part of changing the world...** one strong, determined, empowered woman at a time.

Thank you for believing in our mission and for making stories like these possible.

Love and Light,

Diana

 Pathways TO INDEPENDENCE
30th Annual Fundraiser

Saturday,
October 3, 2026
5:30 PM

CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY
LONG BEACH

Rock the Yacht

Come Aboard. Make an Impact.

Celebrate 35 years of transforming lives at Pathways to Independence. Together, we'll honor the remarkable young women we serve while helping chart a course toward brighter futures.

 Live Yacht Rock
THE ASTRO YACHTS

 Silent and Live
Auctions

 35+ Local Restaurants
and Breweries

 Dancing Under
the Stars

 Signature
Cocktails

 Inspiring Stories
of Courage and
Perseverance

Learn More

Contact

Jane.emfinger@pathwaystoindependence.org
or (714) 334-9581

Sponsorships and Tickets

Scan the QR code to sponsor or buy
your tickets before they sell out.



Sponsor Or Underwrite

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

Attend

Purchase tickets at
pathwaystoindependence.org
Event is 21 years of age & over

Donate

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



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

Our Premier Sponsors

— Lisa & Frank —
CHAPMAN

Title Sponsor



Presenting Sponsor

Founding Members
Jean & Jerry Green

Legacy Sponsor

Your Opportunities for Sponsorship



Regatta - \$500

- 2 tickets to the event
- Recognition on the website and in the slideshow at event



Sailor - \$1,000

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



Navigator - \$2,500

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



First Mate - \$5,000

- 8 guest passes for VIP lounge
- One premier table for 8
- ¾ page size ad in event program (5.5"w x 6.3"h)
- Recognition on the website and in the slideshow at event



Underwriting Opportunities

Parking - \$1,200

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

GENERAL UNDERWRITING - ANY AMOUNT

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



Captain - \$7,500

- 10 guest passes for the VIP Lounge
- One premier table for 10, including service with wine.
- Priority Check-in & out
- Full-page color in event program (5.5"w x 8.5"h)
- Recognition during opening remarks
- New sponsor social media post (if applicable)
- Recognition on the website and in the slideshow at the event.



Commodore - \$10,000

- 10 guest passes for the VIP Lounge
- One premier table for 10, including table service with fine wine
- Priority Check-in & out
- Full-page color in event program (5.5"w x 8.5"h)
- Recognition during opening remarks, social media spotlight, recognition on website and in the slideshow at the event



Admiral - \$15,000

- 20 guest passes for the VIP Lounge
- Two Premier tables for 10, including table service with fine wine
- Priority Check-in & out
- Full-page color in event program (5.5"w x 8.5"h)
- Recognition during opening remarks, social media spotlight, recognition on website and in the slideshow at the event

Premier Sponsor Highlights

— Lisa & Frank — CHAPMAN

Lisa and Frank Chapman are extraordinary champions of Pathways to Independence through their generosity, compassion, and unwavering belief in the power of education. For 15 years, their generous sponsorship has helped advance our mission and transform lives, while generously supporting causes throughout our community.

Lisa shared, “My father was an educator, and he taught me early on that education is the greatest gift you can give someone, it doesn’t just change one life, it changes generations. When we learned about Pathways to Independence and the way it empowers young women to break the cycle of poverty through education, mentoring, and support, it felt like a natural extension of everything my dad instilled in me. My husband and I believe deeply in investing in women, especially the women in our own community, and we’ve seen firsthand how Pathways gives them not just an education, but the confidence and tools to build a future of their own choosing. Supporting this organization is our way of honoring both my father’s legacy and our shared commitment to lifting up the women around us.”



For nearly 30 years, Farmers & Merchants Bank has stood alongside Pathways to Independence, believing in the potential of every young woman we serve. Under the leadership of CEO W. Henry Walker, their partnership has been rooted in a shared commitment to helping young women overcome adversity, earn a college education, and build lives filled with confidence, purpose, and independence.

Our relationship reflects F&M Bank’s long-standing

commitment to strengthening the communities it serves and investing in opportunities that create lasting change. As a presenting sponsor and champion of Pathways’ work, the bank recognizes the transformative impact the program has on the lives of young women striving for independence and success.

“F&M Bank has been proudly supporting Pathways to Independence, that makes such a positive impact in the lives of at-risk young women in the communities we serve, for 27 years,” said Walker. For Henry and the bank, Pathways represents more than a community partnership. It embodies the shared belief that every young woman deserves the support, encouragement, and resources needed to build a brighter future and break the cycle of poverty and abuse.

Jean & Jerry Green

For many years, Jean and Jerry Green have been steadfast in their support of Pathways to Independence, they have given generously of their time, leadership, and hearts. Jean’s journey from an active Friend of Pathways to a valued Monarch reflects her enduring commitment to our mission, while Jerry’s years of dedicated service on our Board of Directors, and now as a member of our Emeritus Board, have helped shape the future of our organization. Their kindness, humility, and unwavering belief in the potential of every young woman inspire all of us.

“We’ve always believed that when you invest in a young woman’s education, confidence, and future, you create a ripple effect that changes generations. Supporting Pathways isn’t just something we do, it’s something we believe in with all our hearts.”



THE ART OF BECOMING



Our second annual Art Show “The Art of Becoming” celebrated the journey of transformation experienced by Pathways to Independence clients as they work toward becoming the best versions of themselves. With over 50 works of art from both our client artists and our local art community, the exhibition reflected resilience, growth, and possibility. Seven of Pathways’ clients showed their art, and one of our clients won the Legacy Award in recognition of honoring the impact art has on others and future generations.



Thank you to all the generous sponsors and supporters, including the **Port of Long Beach**, **Arts Council for Long Beach** and **Long Beach City College**. We were honored to share our message of healing and hope with the nearly 150 community members who came to view our show.

Special recognition to Karla Aguiniga, LBCC Art Gallery & Exhibitions Manager, who passionately embraced our mission. Also, the incredible Art Show committee, led by Sheryl Overcast and the team members Cara Lies, Linda McDonald, and Alison Cotter, none of this would have been possible without your energy and commitment.



A heartfelt thank you to AvalonBay Communities!

We are incredibly grateful to the AvalonBay team for bringing creativity, inspiration, and generosity to Pathways to Independence. Their employees recently transformed our gym with a beautiful mural celebrating the strength, courage, and resilience of women throughout history.



The artwork serves as a daily reminder to our young women that they, too, can make a lasting impact on the world. In addition to donating their time and talents, AvalonBay Communities generously contributed \$2,500 to support our mission. Thank you, AvalonBay Communities, for investing in the futures of the remarkable young women we serve!



Mural cast, organized by row, from left to right:

TOP ROW:

Alicia Keys, Frida Kahlo, Simone Biles, Dolly Parton, Rosa Parks, Ruth Bader Ginsburg

MIDDLE ROW:

Jane Goodall, Oprah Winfrey, Malala Yousafzai, Harriet Tubman, Sally Ride, Amelia Earhart, Alysia Liu

BOTTOM ROW:

Condoleezza Rice, Lucille Ball, Maya Angelou, Barbara Walters



Monarchs Summer Luncheon & Speaker Series

On July 10, our Monarchs gathered for a meaningful Summer Luncheon & Speaker Series focused on brain health. We were honored to welcome Dr. Chris Salazar from UCI MIND, who shared the latest research on Alzheimer's disease and cognitive decline, along with practical ways we can help protect our brain health.

The afternoon was made even more special when Pathways client Tessa shared her incredible story with our Monarchs, a powerful reminder of why our mission matters and the lives that are transformed through the support of our community. Guests also enjoyed a beautiful luncheon at the San Pedro Fish Market, featuring unique centerpieces of fresh fruits and vegetables, which everyone was invited to take home. A fitting reminder that healthy choices can begin with simple, everyday habits.

Our Monarchs are a special community of dedicated supporters who have worked side by side for many years to champion the mission of Pathways to Independence. We are deeply grateful for their continued fellowship, generosity, and commitment to the women we serve.



Pathways staff pictured here with Dr. Salazar.



Client Tessa shares her story.



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ADVOCACY, ENGAGEMENT,
AND ONGOING SUPPORT,
WHILE BUILDING LASTING
FRIENDSHIPS AND
ENJOYING TIME TOGETHER.



Monarch Terese enjoying the speaker.



Pathways to Independence played a life-changing role in my journey toward education, stability, and independence. I graduated from Pathways in 2019 with my bachelor's degree in Human Services, earning Summa Cum Laude honors. After graduating, I continued on to complete my master's degree in Social Work in 2021. In June of last year, I reached another major milestone by becoming a Licensed Clinical Social Worker. I now work as a therapist, supporting others who are facing challenges similar to ones

I have experienced in my own life. Being able to help others in this way feels like a meaningful full-circle moment and a way I get to give back every day.

Pathways gave me the support, encouragement, and confidence to keep going. Before entering Pathways, I had experienced homelessness, and having a safe place to live through the Pathways Apartments made an incredible difference in my ability to focus on school and build stability. The financial support I received was also life-changing because it helped me access the things I needed to be successful, including a laptop for school and a car to get to and from classes. Those supports may sound practical, but they opened doors and allowed me to keep moving forward.

The people of Pathways also had a lasting impact on me. My mentor, therapist, and so many of the women of Pathways made themselves available whenever I needed support, guidance, or encouragement. I always felt like there were people in my corner who believed in my potential, even during times when it was hard for me to fully see it myself.

The program's name feels especially meaningful to me now because Pathways truly helped me build a path toward independence. Today, I am fully self-supporting, working in a career I care deeply about, and I am currently in the process of trying to buy my first home. Considering where I was before entering Pathways, the life I am building now is something I once would have had a very hard time imagining for myself.



My cats were with me throughout my Pathways journey and brought me comfort and companionship during that season of growth. I have also recently added a dog to my little family, so my home life continues to be filled with love, fur, and plenty of personality.

When I think about Pathways, I think about transformation. Like the butterfly that represents growth and change, I feel that Pathways helped me move from simply surviving to truly becoming independent

and continuing to create a life I am proud of. I am so grateful for the support I received and for the opportunity to now use my education, experience, and compassion to support others.



Making Waves: Mentor & Client Beach Day

Several of our mentors and clients recently came together for a beautiful day at the beach, enjoying sunshine, volleyball, and a wonderful opportunity to connect outside of their everyday routines.

The bond between a Pathways client and her mentor is truly special. Experiences like these provide time to strengthen those relationships, get to know one another on a deeper level, and build connections among our clients as well. We cherish every opportunity to bring our mentors and clients together, creating meaningful moments, lasting memories, and an even stronger Pathways community.

Find Your Place in the Pathways Community

Pathways to Independence relies on the generosity of more than 120 volunteers each year to help forever change the lives of deserving women in need. There are many ways to make a difference at Pathways. Whether you want to donate, volunteer, create community connections, attend events, or share your talents, our support network offers meaningful ways to get involved. Explore our community and find the opportunity that's right for you on our website.



PAT'S PADRES

Supporting Pathways. Empowering Young Women.



Fiesta in the Park 2019

For more than a decade, Pat McGee was a dedicated volunteer with Friends of Pathways. Whether he was planning, lending a hand, or staying until the very last thing was packed away, he was committed to making

each event a success because he believed deeply in Pathways' mission.

As a devoted husband, father to three girls, and proud papa, Pat's kindness, outgoing personality and willingness to help anyone in need left a lasting impression on all who knew him.

Pat passed away unexpectedly on November 12, 2025, leaving behind a legacy that continues to inspire those whose lives he touched. If Pat's legacy inspires you to carry his spirit of service forward, we invite you to visit our website, share your information and become part of Pat's Padres.



"Barre with Purpose."

EPP (Emerging Philanthropist of Pathways) hosted "Barre with Purpose" at the Bar Method in Long Beach. **While raising over \$1000 for Pathways**, we got to stretch, balance, and get stronger together! Thank you to Bar Method Long Beach for having us. **EPP had the best time!**

EMERGING PHILANTHROPISTS OF PATHWAYS
PRESENTS THE 2ND ANNUAL

Pickleball with PURPOSE

SUNDAY SEPT 27TH
11AM-2PM
BILLIE JEAN KING COURTS
1040 PARK AVENUE, LONG BEACH



\$50 A TEAM



ALL PROCEEDS GO TO PATHWAYS TO INDEPENDENCE
PATHWAYSTOINDEPENDENCE.ORG





Education, Healthcare, Therapy and
Mentoring for Young Women in Need

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.....
Diana Hill – *Executive Director*



In celebration of Pathways to Independence's 35th anniversary, we're inviting our community to become part of something lasting by joining the 35 In 35 Campaign.

Choose the monthly giving level that is right for you. Recurring monthly gifts are one of the most reliable sources of support for our mission, providing the consistent funding needed to empower women through housing, education, therapy, mentoring, and life-changing opportunities.

Scan the code below to begin your **35 In 35** journey and become a monthly partner in transforming lives.

