

Where Are They Now?

Manifesting her Future

You never know with whom you might cross paths. Zach, an LSS case manager, was picking up food donations from a Sacramento Chick-Fil-A restaurant one day when the shift supervisor asked about LSS. As Zach talked about our work, another employee joined the conversation. Tears began streaming down her face.

That employee, **Cynthia (Cyn)**, had been part of the LSS Sacramento youth supportive housing program in 2013-14.

“Oh, I was flooded with emotions when he mentioned LSS. To know the food donation was for LSS gave me such appreciation for all they did for me.”

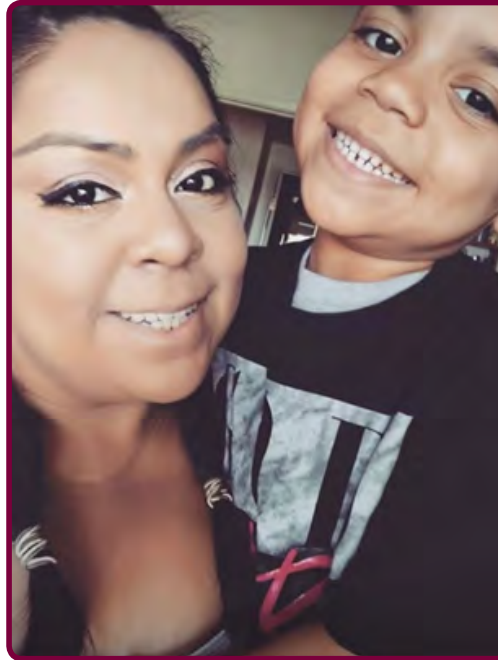
Cyn was a high school drop-out and couch surfing with friends and her grandmother when she learned about the program LSS offered for homeless young adults between 18 and 21. She had been finishing her GED through a special program at the Urban League, which attempted to help its young participants connect with relevant services.

“Oh, I was flooded with emotions.”

With a safe place to call home, Cyn concentrated on getting her life in order. Her case worker guided in her creating goals and a budget and served as a sounding board as Cyn worked through the trauma that led to her leaving school and becoming homeless. She spent 18 months in that program before leaving to get married and start her life as a stay-at-home mother.

Today, Cyn has a good job with opportunities for advancement, her own apartment – in the same complex as her beloved grandmother -- and a car to get her and her son around. She and her husband divorced after eight years, but that was the right decision for her. She has reunited with both parents and created strong relationships with both.

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Two women share how they rebuilt their lives

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BIG DAY OF GIVING (BIG DOG) IS MAY 6!

Watch your email and mail for details. All funds raised will support our growing number of supportive housing programs in seven inland counties.



OUR MISSION: To promote stability and honor the dignity of those we serve by providing supportive housing services that lead to self-sufficiency.

■ Where Are They Now? (continued)

She remembers all that LSS did to give her the foundation she needed to be a responsible adult.

“I’m so happy to serve the community that once served me.”

When she entered an LSS adult supportive housing program in 2015, **Christina** was struggling to rebuild what had once been fulfilling and productive life. At LSS, she received the stable housing and compassionate, non-judgmental guidance she needed to regain her dignity and confidence.

Fast forward to 2021. Christina lives independently and is upbeat about her life and the loving relationship she has with her children, grandchildren and her mother. She works for a nonprofit at which she was once a client and was quickly promoted and given raises.

How did she find herself homeless more than 10 years ago? As is the case with everyone we serve, the reasons are varied and often complex.

Christina struggled for years with self-doubt and suppressed a lot of anger around the break-up of her parents’ marriage. The youngest of nine children, she and her siblings knew from an early age that their parents’ marriage was strained. The kids all acted out in different, often unhealthy ways. Christina liked to party a bit too much. She was just 18 when the divorce occurred, and it tore the family apart.

After high school, Christina earned two associates degrees and held jobs with responsibility. She had two children with a man who remained her partner for 13 years. She also cared for her ailing father, who lived with her and the children when he got older. He died weeks before she graduated with her second degree.

Her life came crashing down when a freak accident at work resulted in multiple ruptured vertebrae and required numerous surgeries. Depression and pain got the best of her, and Christina became addicted to pain medication.

She lost everything -- her children, her family’s support, her job, her confidence and her dignity. Alone and homeless, Christina attempted suicide. A friend admitted her into a psychiatric hospital, which began the long journey to rebuild her life.

Recognizing how much she has achieved in the past decade makes Christina happy and emotional. “It can happen!”



■ Welcome & Farewell

The LSS Board of Directors recently welcomed four new board members

Regina Banks, Esq., Director, Lutheran Office of Public Policy, California

Laura Benson, Human Resources Consultant and Leadership Coach

Scott Etzel, Associate Environmental Health & Safety Manager, Corteva Agriscience

Mary Lynn Perry, Retired, former Volunteer Engagement Specialist, City of Sacramento

In December, **Chris Nicolette** completed six years of service. He provided invaluable insights on our finance and audit committees.

■ LSS Support for Seniors

“When he learned that he was going to receive assistance, he started to cry. He was overwhelmed that he no longer had to struggle just to get food, pay his bills AND his rent.” ~*Case worker from Centro Latino de San Francisco sharing how a senior program participant benefitted from LSS Support for Seniors.*

Sometimes just a small donation can make a huge difference in a person's life. That's what the LSS Support for Seniors program offers for eligible low-income adults aged 67 or older. Seniors can receive monthly rental assistance (up to \$300) so they can remain in their apartments or one-time emergency assistance may be granted for move-in costs, security deposits, or help with utility bills. Currently the program is available to seniors living in San Francisco, Alameda, San Mateo, Contra Costa or Marin counties. Funding is made possible through the Lutheran Care for the Aging Endowment. For more information, contact Tina Haner at 415.441.7777 or chaner@lssnorcal.org



■ Your Generosity Made the Holidays Brighter

“The adults and families we serve rarely have funds to celebrate Christmas in the way most of us are accustomed: gifts for family members, toys for children, special meals and new clothing.”

These generous donors and congregations made the holidays brighter for 400 youth, children and single adults living in our supportive housing programs in Contra Costa, Solano, Sacramento, San Joaquin and Shasta counties.

Big Lots!

Bill Abbott and Tina Thomas

Leonard and Sheilah Adams

Brad and Jenny Askeland

Ridwana Bentley

Julie Crabill

Anne and John Clark

Barbara Edwards

Tricia and Jon Ferguson

Susan Granzella

Pat and Steve Martinez

Patsy Natvig

Diana and Ross Peacock

Barbara Peterson

Melarie Seidel

Robbyn and Fred Shye

Connie Strohmayer

Marjeanne and Bill Stone

Marge Swartz

Cathy Tillman



Adult residents in our inland programs received a warm robe at Christmas this year thanks to generous donors

Church of the Resurrection, Granite Bay
Holy Cross, Concord
St. James Lutheran, Redding
St. Peter's Lutheran, Elk Grove
Trinity Lutheran, Pleasanton
Trinity Lutheran, Sacramento

■ CEO Corner: What Does the Future Hold?



I am enthusiastic about 2021 but tempering that enthusiasm.

Last year LSS added new programs and this year will expand several others thanks to special funding opportunities, generous grants and support from individuals and congregations.

We are scaling our social enterprises, a key component

of the Youth Education and Employment Initiative that we began piloting in 2020. By the end of this year, the COVID-19 vaccines will eventually make it possible us to

resume more normal operations again.

I am concerned about 2021 because homelessness in our corner of the world is painfully evident and growing due to the disastrous economic effects of the coronavirus pandemic. How can we keep up with the need given how long it takes to build or find affordable housing? Will there be adequate funding to support the need? The U.S. and State of California economies are on fragile ground. How will this affect our future funding and private support?

Yes, the New Year offers considerable promise while also giving us reason to take nothing for granted. Please join us in pursuing this promise and realizing our vision of alleviating and preventing homelessness in Northern California.



Ending Homelessness. For Good.

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Become a Partner for Good

Monthly donations are an easy way to help us end homelessness for good. A gift of \$15 per month helps to purchase everyday essentials like hygiene products, food, cleaning supplies, etc.

Become a **Partner for Good** today and we'll send you an insulated mug or all-purpose bag as a thank you!



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STAY CONNECTED



■ A Penny for Your Thoughts?

Well, how about an LSS of Northern California baseball cap (instead of a penny)? You can help us by answering just four questions about your engagement with or support of LSS.

Go to this link: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/LFZCY83>

■ Come Chat With Us!

On March **12 and 19** we invite you to join our CEO, Carol Roberts, and our regional Deputy Directors, John Paul Soto and Kate Hutchinson, to learn about new programs and get your questions answered about how you are helping us prevent and alleviate homelessness in Northern California.

RSVP to Erica at 925.825.1060 x10 or development@lssnorcal.org within two days of either date to receive your Zoom link.

visit us on line at www.lssnorcal.org