



Journey House

"Forever Changed"

NEWS NEWS

1232 N. Los Robles Ave . Pasadena. CA 91104 . (626) 798-9478 . info@jhpasadena.org

Summer 2013

Celebrating 30 Years of Service

2013 marks our 30th year of continuous service to foster youth. Journey House started in 1983 with one bed and \$100 in a small rented house with high hopes. The mission was to provide a substantial education to youth caught up in the child protection system and assist them obtain either a college education or a quality trade employment. Although much has changed over the years – from landline phones to pagers to cell phones and the proliferation of social media and easiness of obtaining on-line

women adjust to self-sufficiency living after they age-out of the foster care system. To celebrate this wonderful journey of helping youth, Journey House had a small party in June with friends and well-wishers.



The winners of our 30th Anniversary drawing were Andrew and Analia Cooper of Arcadia, Marisa Padilla of Los Angeles and Janice and Gary Beggs of Sierra Madre. We are most appreciative to all our friends that participated in and donated to our 30th celebration event.

It is those individuals, corporations and foundations (some have been with us since 1983)

services (all making life easier and faster) to societal and cultural changes – the mission of Journey House remains the same. We continue to assist young men and

that have kept our doors open. It is their participation in our mission that young people emancipating yearly can benefit from our after-care services.



Juan

My name is Juan. I'm 20 years old and currently residing in Pasadena. My older sister was the one to point me in the direction of Journey House because she was also a foster child, and she told me about all the help that Journey House had given her. So eventually I came to Journey House and have been getting counseling and help ever since.

I was born in McAllen TX. I am the middle child and only boy of five siblings. I can't remember much of my early childhood, but even then there was struggling. Having a father from Mexico and a mom from the US was a difficulty within itself because my father wasn't an American citizen. From the beginning my father wasn't around. Of course, I visited him in Mexico with my sister, but eventually it got bad. He had a girlfriend that didn't like me or my sister because we weren't her children, so pretty soon she started abusing us. My father just simply sent us back to our mom, and I can truly say that was the best decision he's ever made for me.

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I went into the foster care system when I was about 8 or 9. My mom was struggling with her addiction and struggling to raise 5 kids on her own, especially with no father figure around. Then one day I returned home from a weekend with my grandmother to yelling and fighting. Apparently my older sisters got into a fight with my mom and my grandma took us out of the house. I don't remember much but I do remember the first social worker. She wasn't a very nice lady and immediately separated all of us. Pretty soon I was going from foster home to foster home. Sometimes I would stay at the same foster home as one of my sisters, but always in 3 to 6 months, they would separate us and I was back to being alone in a house of complete strangers.



Eventually, when I was around 12 years old, my grandmother got custody of me and my little sisters. But even by then I was heading downward. I never really liked school, even when I was younger, and I would always find a way to get out of homework or schoolwork. Then, when high school came around, it just got worse. Even though I had friends I grew up with, I started making new friends in the wrong crowd. Drugs, drinking, ditching and just not caring became my routine. Two years of my high school grades were complete fails and soon I found myself a junior with less than freshman credits, but it still didn't matter. Then I got kicked out and sent to a continuation school to "straighten out" as my principle had put it.

It was the best thing that happened to me because when I got there I finally realized that it was all my own fault and no one else's; that I was there because I had always blamed my problems on my mom and my father and how I grew up and what happened to me. But it wasn't their fault, it was my own. So then I found myself doing things I never even would have thought of doing like becoming a teacher's assistant for a whole year, having grades that I never thought I was even capable of getting, as well as becoming ASB president of my school and speaking at

the city hall of my school's progress. But then I began to go back to my old ways and soon found myself kicked out of another school for drugs. By that time I was 18 and thought I didn't need school anymore; I just needed a job, and that's what I tried, and it didn't work out. So I went back to my continuation school, and for some odd and baffling reason, they took me back and I got my high school diploma.

Then that's when my sister pointed me in the direction of Journey House. At first I was a little skeptical just because I had never gotten help from anyone before, and I didn't really trust people anyway. But I came to Journey House and that has been the best decision I have made. At first I was still a knucklehead and Tim and Jorge could tell, so they gave me time to come around, but it took a while. I had been living with my mom but I was doing badly so I left to live with my girlfriend for six months and that's when I got the taste of real struggling and I came back to Pasadena and right back to Journey House. I then realized that being at my age, I did need help and direction, and Tim and Jorge gave that to me. They told me I could do it when everyone else said I would fail. They told me I was smart when everybody had me convinced I wasn't, and they showed me that even though you come from a rough background you can still come out on top. Soon they helped me get a job as a general worker for a company called FVO Solutions and got me enrolled in college.

If it wasn't for Tim and Jorge and the wonderful things they do, I could honestly say I wouldn't be where I am today. I feel good in knowing that there is a place that is willing to help those who have been through what I have, and what lots of other foster youth have been through. We have been able to show that we can do something with ourselves that we didn't think was possible; that we can come out on top from even the most impossible backgrounds, and that we can do something special with our lives, and for this I thank Tim and Jorge and Journey House.





Phillip

My name is Philip and I'm an alumnus of Journey House. I came to Journey House in 1996, at age 17 with practically no high school credits. I was a lost soul, unsure and hopeless.

I had been in and out of hospitals, jails and foster homes since the age of 13. For some reason Tim saw potential in me and believed I was pretty intelligent. With his help and the principal's bravery, I entered La Salle High School, a private school in Pasadena, as a senior. I understood that I would not receive a diploma because I had so few credits, and I was too old to start high school all over again. I did walk with the other seniors on stage at graduation, and that made me feel so good. I left Journey House at 18 with dreams and hopes of becoming a good man and a productive member of society. I tried college for a while but, because I had little experience in school and a drug habit, I was unable to complete college. I've battled a drug addiction for most of my life. Fortunately, I have been sober for four years now and feel great about that. I get to be a father and husband today without the burden of active addiction. I am married now with 5 children. Life has not been easy for me, but I feel I'm on the right track now. I hold down a steady job and care for my wife and children. Life presents challenges and I am learning how to live life on life's terms.

Although I'm no longer in the system, I still seek help and guidance from Journey House every so often. I like to call and ask for advice or just talk to Tim. He is like a father to me. It's reassuring to know that I can contact Journey House when I need help and they'll be there for me. They've helped me pay bills, get furniture for my new house, and even provided extra finances. Most recently Journey House helped me tremendously, giving me \$500 toward my rent during a recent bout with unemployment. Just knowing that Journey House is there for me when I need help/guidance is comforting. I do not know where I would be without that ongoing support.



Spencer was this year's recipient of a Pasadena Chamber of Commerce Scholarship for transferring to a four year university. He is heading to Eastern Michigan University on a Debate Team scholarship.



Chuck and Lisa Bowman

Lisa's Birthday Gift

I was about to turn 30 (x 2) and I wanted to throw a birthday bash celebrating the milestone. I knew which wonderful friends I wanted to invite and I already had some ideas about the menu, but I was grappling with one dilemma: the issue of birthday presents. Really, at sixty, there was nothing I needed. Chuck and I are trying to downsize and simplify, not collect. But I knew that if I wrote, "No gifts, please," or "Your presence is my present," I'd wind up with bottles of wine and flowers because my friends love me and they are generous people.

Hmmmmm, I thought, my friends are generous people. I decided to turn my party into an opportunity for my friends to give to others instead of to me. But to what organization did I want the contributions to go? For some reason, Journey House kept popping into my head. I'd contributed a little to them years ago and it suddenly felt like the ideal charity. I contacted Tim Mayworm, who was enthused by the idea. He gave me a list of things the young people in his program needed; items of all price ranges for all pocketbooks. He explained that my guests might also choose to sponsor a particular person on a one-time basis or even long-term. I loved the choices and immediately created my Evite, explaining the idea within the body of the invitation. I've never had so many responses come in so quickly.

Bottom line, the party was a huge success. Some guests arrived lugging huge bags of kitchen items; others brought cards with gift certificates enclosed. Still others mailed donations to Journey House in my name. You could tell they had a ball selecting their donations. A blessed spirit of giving permeated the party. It resounded in the chatter and laughter. I believe its source was the joy of giving to others. And me? I was gifted with the knowledge that my friends truly are as wonderful as I always thought they were. And that made it my best birthday ever.

We appreciate the following people, businesses, and granters for helping us from January to June 2013

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 Paula Lovato – Los Angeles
 Mr. and Mrs. Christopher Lotito – Glendale
 Marina Macapagal – Duarte
 Bill May – Pasadena
 Michele McKinley – Arcadia
 Million Dollar Baby – Montebello

Don and Jeanne Mills – Arcadia
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Mission Statement

Journey House is a vital, multi-service non-profit organization established in 1983 whose sole purpose is to assist emancipated foster youth over eighteen years of age to meet their initial independent living needs, to access adequate and appropriate housing, education, and employment, and to build their self-esteem through personalized attention and positive outreach services.

www.JourneyHouseYouth.org

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Contact Information

1232 N. Los Robles Avenue • Pasadena, California 91104
 (626)798-9478 • info@jhpsadena.org • Tax ID# 95-3838636