



Poverello News

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THE MEN'S REHABILITATION PROGRAM: OVERCOMING ADDICTION ONE PERSON AT A TIME

Ralph Waldo Emerson once said, "the only person you are destined to become is the person you decide to be." Addiction is an ugly disease; it destroys families, causes homelessness, and destroys a person's sense of worth. The disease of addiction undermines a person's ability to live up to their full potential. Addiction takes men away from their wives and children. Despite the destructive nature of substance abuse in a man's life, there is hope. We believe that hope can be found at the Men's Rehabilitation Program for substance abuse at Poverello House.

The Men's Rehabilitation Program is a comprehensive six-month to one-year program that provides substance abuse treatment for men. The program's goal is to treat the addiction and give the men the tools to be successful in their sobriety. The program is designed to provide a person with the means to be leaders in their families and communities. Every person enrolled in the program is assigned a case manager, peer support specialist, and job developer. The resident also has access to group and individual therapy through Poverello House's Enrichment Center. Cecilia Cruz, the case manager, ensures that the men have medical care and coverage, gathers their primary documents, and provides them access to tattoo removal. The case manager assures that every resident has the resources they need to succeed once they leave the program. Christopher Hansen, the peer support specialist, provides group classes and individual support for the men. Gavin Larson, the job developer, works on resume building, soft skill job training, and employment opportunities. Gavin

also works with community partners such as Bank of America to provide financial literacy classes. Both of these men are themselves graduates of the program at Poverello House. "The program is about providing the guys every opportunity for success as they go through their sobriety journey," said David Knoy, Director of Rehabilitation.

Overcoming addiction is challenging but not impossible. The men in the program learn that they possess the power to recover and live their lives on their terms; to be the father they aspire to be and be the inspiration for their families. Cecilia tells every resident, "you have what it takes...the confidence to complete the program." The Men's Rehabilitation Program allows men to move away from the shame of addiction to the bright light of hope for the future.



Financial Literacy Class



David Knoy, Christopher Hansen, and Cecilia Cruz. Gavin Larson is not pictured.



Residents Class

FATHERHOOD AND RECOVERY



Robert Huerta and Shane Guthrey.
Not pictured Shon Walker and
Elias Arechiga.

About one-third of Poverello House staff are former residents who graduated from the rehabilitation program. We are excited to share their thoughts on recovery and fatherhood. Shane Guthrey, Director of Facilities, has been in recovery for the past ten years, is a father to two girls, and a grandfather to a girl and boy. With both daughters, Shane took parenting classes, anger management classes, and domestic violence classes to be granted full custody of his children. Occasionally, he will feel guilty for not always being the father he strived to be, but he does not allow himself to be shamed by his journey towards sobriety. Shane positively impacts his daughters' lives by being a healthy and reliable person. With the support of his wife, Shane is the parent and grandparent he always hoped to be. Shon Walker, a cook in food services, was granted full custody of his son when he was six months old. He has been raising his son, with the help of his

mother, for seven years. During his recovery process, Shon took parenting classes, began socializing with those who would make a positive impact on his life, and dedicated his time to his son. Shon said his son is "a wild child." Their favorite thing to do together is play video games and plan for a zombie apocalypse. Robert Huerta, Director of Client Service and Data Management, gained sole custody of his daughter when she was born, and he raised her as a single dad. Robert shared that it is scary to realize that this tiny human is more important than him and anyone else, and he had to lose all selfishness to care for her. That is why his recovery was so important to him. Robert hopes he is remembered as a good provider and effective father. Eli Arechiga, an Outreach Specialist, shared that having a child made him realize there are more important things in life than him and his own wants. He enjoys being able to watch his daughter grow and mature. Watching her overcome problems and gain understanding and strength through hardships gives him a sense of fulfillment. Through raising his daughter, he realized he knew true love and addiction could not take that away from him. We are proud to have these incredible fathers serving the community daily at Poverello House!

FATHERHOOD PROGRAM

Poverello House strives to add meaningful opportunities for growth while removing barriers that prevent recovery and transformation. Last year, the Men's Residential Rehabilitation Program expanded exponentially. One of those changes was beginning a partnership with Workforce Connection's Fatherhood Program. The program provides 26 hours of classes and support, healthy parent-child/partner relationships, employment and professional development, job placement assistance, mentorship, and paid incentives. To date, three cohorts of Residents have successfully completed classes. A typical cohort comprises of ten to twelve residents ranging from 20 to 60 years old. Here at Poverello House, we strive to provide an excellent service to our Residents and form a lasting community. The Fatherhood Program has become an integral part of instilling camaraderie and a sense of brotherhood among our program participants. Poverello House would like to thank them for their dedication and enthusiasm in the service of our program participants.



A MESSAGE FROM OUR CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER



Zack Darrah,
Chief Executive Officer

You may have heard the famous story told by Jesus, known as “The Prodigal Son.” The naming of this story can sometimes take the focus away from the father, who makes everything that happens in the story possible. The father in the story gives his youngest son an early inheritance after he asks for

it. The son was forced to return home because he squandered his inheritance. Instead of rejecting him, the father shows compassion and accepts the son back into the family. He demonstrates his forgiveness by running to him, embracing him, and throwing a lavish party to celebrate his return. The father in this story is an example of what our love for everyone on earth should be like.

I often think of the father of this story as I am myself the father of three children. The father in Jesus’ story loved his son without conditions. He had many reasons to reject his child; asking for an early inheritance, squandering that

inheritance, and returning to him are justifiable reasons to turn him away. However, he showed great mercy and unconditional love. Throughout their lives, I know that my children are going to mess up and not make perfect choices. My love for them is not built upon their performance in life. Genuine love for my children is love that cannot be earned, bought, or acquired.

Here at Poverello House, our philosophy and work were built on the foundation of a man whose love was so father-like that he was given the title of “Papa” by those on the streets of Fresno. He loved with such an unconditional compassionate way that it was reminiscent of a loving father. “Papa Mike” loved countless people who often felt like the prodigal son. They found no other option than living on the streets for various reasons. Those experiencing homelessness knew that they could find unconditional love from “Papa Mike.” May we be people who are always looking for any opportunity to show unconditional love to all prodigals who pass our way.

Humbly,

Zack

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June *Wish List*

- Bottled Water • Men's Shoes
- Leashes + Collars • Dog + Cat Food
- Coloring Books • Reading Glasses
- Toothbrushes
- Travel Size Toiletries



Donations are accepted Monday – Friday 8 am–5 pm and Saturday – Sunday 8 am – 1 pm at 412 F St Fresno. Donation lane is located on G Street between Ventura and San Benito.

