



VENTURA COUNTY Rescue Mission

An Outreach ministry of



August 2011

Changing Lives for Good

Building New Lives Through Education

Teaching Them to Fish

Have you heard this old saying? "Give a man a fish and you will feed him for a day. Teach a man to fish and you will feed him for life."

One of the most important goals of the Ventura County Rescue Mission and the Lighthouse is to teach job skills so our clients can find gainful employment once they graduate. The following stories, articles, and pictures will give you a glimpse into the many parts of this program at the rescue mission and the Lighthouse.

Thank you again for your continued support, for without your compassionate, generous giving we would not be able to bind-up the broken-hearted or care for those who are truly in need. We appreciate you more than you know.

John E. Saltee



After much anticipation and months of renovation, 2011 marked the grand re-opening of our newly remodeled, multi-use, John E. White Learning Center. This facility is complete with new audio-visual equipment, tutoring spaces, a conference table, and 12 computer terminals with internet capabilities. The Center is always teeming with activity and, of course, learning. It maintains a busy schedule with various opportunities to help clients and graduates of the recovery program prepare for successful re-entry into life. In addition, the mission has been blessed with tremendous community partnerships and volunteers who help our graduates succeed.

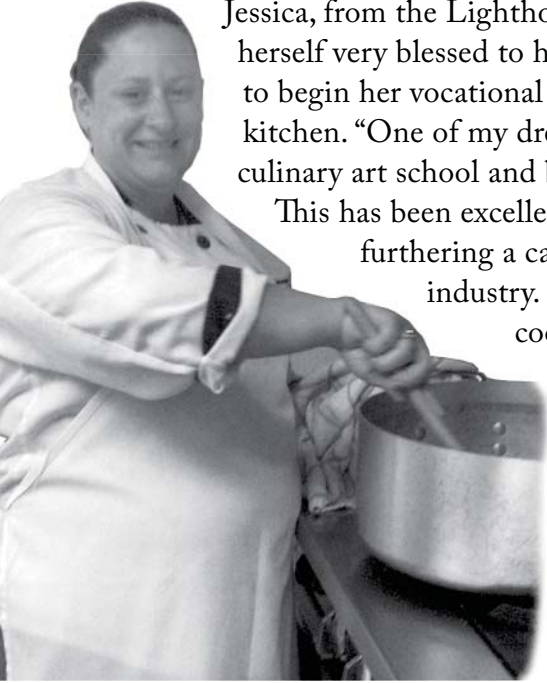
Our volunteer reading specialist Judith McHenry customizes tutoring for men in need of basic skills such as improved reading comprehension. She also helps incorporate life skills such as reading a bus schedule or completing a job application. One man who saw an improvement from second grade reading levels said, "At first, I was really scared to come in

here. But the tutors were here every week to encourage me. They kept coming in and I could feel my mind opening up. Before, I didn't think I could do it. But now, I know I can, and I am ready to do it!"

Our graduates have also benefited greatly through a partnership with the Goodwill Job Shop. This program prepares mission graduates to re-enter the job market by teaching the proper way of preparing resumes, application and interview techniques, and helping with job leads and coaching. Since January 2010 approximately 35 men have found employment through our collaboration with Goodwill.



Fulfilling a Dream



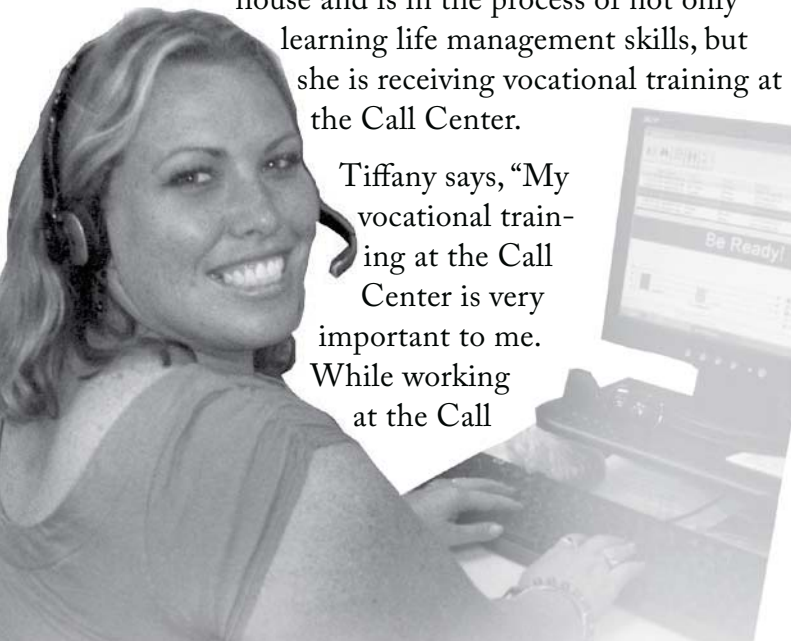
Jessica, from the Lighthouse, considers herself very blessed to have been able to begin her vocational training in the kitchen. "One of my dreams is to go to culinary art school and become a chef.

This has been excellent training for furthering a career in the food industry. For over a year cooking breakfast, lunch, and dinner for ten or more people at a time has been a challenge and sometimes a humbling experience. I am excited every time I serve the

meals I have prepared. This brings such joy and satisfaction, knowing that I am making people happy."

Jessica has learned a great deal from her experiences at the Lighthouse. She is grateful to God and the Lighthouse for choosing her to work in the kitchen. Jessica, can now say that she is well on her way to achieving her dream.

Call Center Training



Tiffany is in the Life Recovery Program at the Lighthouse and is in the process of not only learning life management skills, but she is receiving vocational training at the Call Center.

Tiffany says, "My vocational training at the Call Center is very important to me. While working at the Call

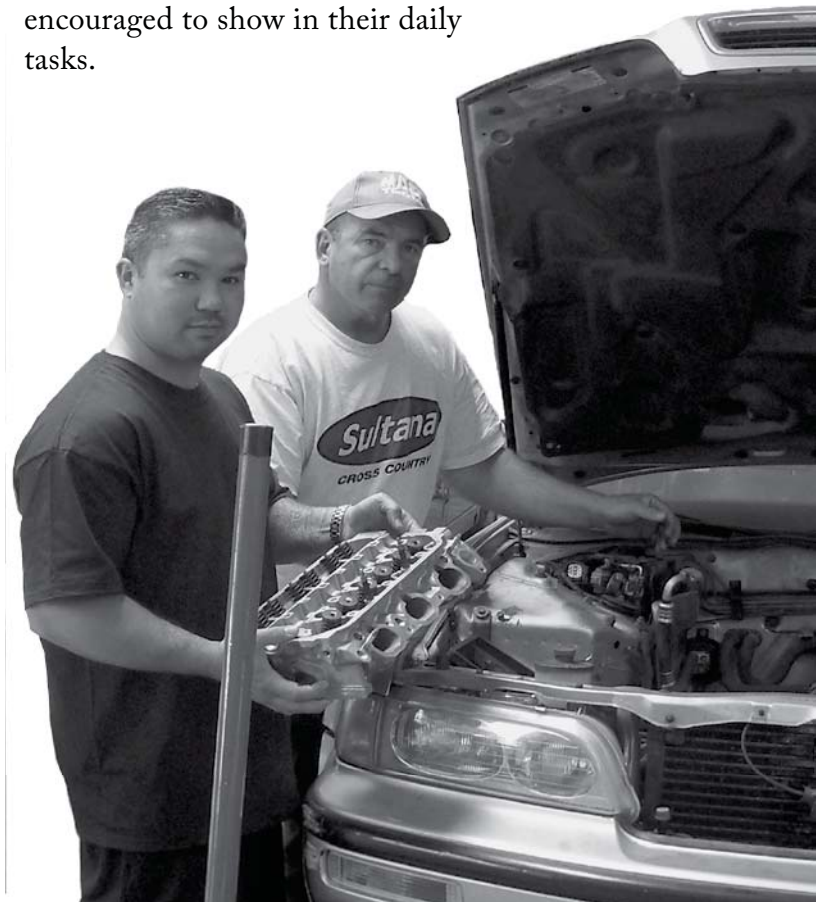
Center, I've learned to be more responsible by going to work every day, being on time, and communicating with my boss; ensuring I perform my job to the best of my ability. I am evaluated every two weeks on my job performance. This helps me learn how to improve and be a better future employee.

I believe the Lighthouse does a wonderful job at placing each woman in just the right position for their job training. It feels so good being able to go to work every day, knowing that I am making a difference and a contribution to the work of the mission."

Automotive Repair and Detailing

At the mission's car repair facility in Santa Paula, vocational training in automotive detail and mechanics is conducted to equip those interested in that field to prepare for future employment. The daily schedule includes both classroom and on-the-job training, and students are taught Biblical principles using object lessons related to the automotive industry.

James Bennett, supervisor of the car repair facility, conducts daily group devotionals. He places emphasis on personal responsibility, integrity, diligence, and excellence as the qualities the students are encouraged to show in their daily tasks.



A Fresh Start in Vocational Training

I entered the Ventura County Rescue Mission in May of 2007 and graduated in February of 2008. After graduation, I went back to my old job working in the oil fields. It was good pay but there was still a lot of the old life there. It wasn't long until the economy tanked and I was laid off.

I needed a job and a place to live; things were not going well. I contacted the Ventura County Rescue Mission to see if they could help and they allowed me to enter the Fresh Start program. Soon after, I was working at the Vocational Training Center in the warehouse and found full time employment.

Today my life is great. I go to church on Sundays and Wednesdays. I have completed all of my probationary requirements and I am out of the court system. Now I am the supervisor of the Vocational Training Center where I lead men in the program in their vocational training. Some of the training areas I oversee include processing of donated items for sale in our thrift stores, forklift operation, and truck driving.



The mission has saved my life!

As an additional bonus, I get to encourage the men as they come through the program. I let them know that success can happen if they are willing to put in the effort. I am truly grateful for what the Ventura County Rescue Mission has done for me. ~ Doug

Life Skills Learned



When I first came to the Lighthouse, I stayed at the Emergency Shelter before entering the Life Recovery Program. I have had a few job training positions during my involvement in the program. I started at the Oxnard Bargain Center where I organized and made sure my area of the store was neat and clean. I have helped customers find things they were looking for. It gave me an opportunity to work with the public and gain more communication skills, which I will be able to use for future employment.

Then my vocational training was moved to the Emergency Shelter where I am helping the staff with dinners and stocking supplies. I feel very privileged to play a role in helping ladies like myself who are in need of assistance.

I have learned that work can actually be something I enjoy doing. I used to call in sick, but now I love going to work! I'm learning to be responsible and dependable, something that I was lacking before coming to the Lighthouse. I've met some wonderful women that need a safe place and a fresh start. I thank God every day for the Lighthouse and their kind staff.

From Homelessness on Heroin to an Internship at the Mission

To look at Nick you would not be able to guess that, just eleven months ago, he was addicted to heroin and living on the streets. Before Nick's addiction, he was a Resort Specialist, a Concierge making a good living and enjoying his prestigious job. Then he was injured and prescribed narcotics to relieve his pain. After abusing his prescriptions, he attempted to purchase these drugs on the street, but found out they were way too expensive. Nick started on a cheaper drug that was much more accessible, heroin. It wasn't cheap for long. His addiction grew to over \$2,000 a day. He soon lost his job and found himself arrested. The courts gave him a choice, three years in prison or go to a good drug and alcohol recovery program. Nick chose the recovery program. He knew that his estranged father, David, was at the Ventura County Rescue Mission, but he didn't know his dad was praying for him to come to the mission to be treated for his addiction.

Nick said, "Being arrested and coming to the mission was the best thing that has ever happened in my life.



Nick caters to the mission's youngest guests.

Because, I have learned that I am forgiven of all my sins. The guilt that used to drag me down was gone. I've also learned how much my dad loves me and that I can be totally free from my addictions."

Nick has done so well in the program that, after his graduation, he is being placed in the very important position of Volunteer Coordinator. Nick's final statement was, "I can now do what I have been trained to do. But, instead of doing it for myself, I am doing it with a grateful heart for the Ventura County Rescue Mission and for God."



Nick (center) loves our volunteers.

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