



GATEWAY CENTER

of Monterey County, Inc.

Care & Compassion In Action



At Gateway Center of Monterey County, we serve adults with Developmental Disabilities. We fully support their individual rights and choices, and empower them to live full and productive lives with dignity and independence within the community.

A Message from the Executive Director

As we Spring into a new year with lots of sunshine, I wanted to reflect on a banner year in 2021 at Gateway Center and a look ahead. In spite of a lingering pandemic, we made a lot of great memories and had a tremendous outpouring of support from our community. During the holiday season, Gateway Center participated in MCGives! and secured the most donors and raised the most donations ever! MCGives!, coupled with other holiday giving, secured us with nearly 200 donors and raised over \$60,000! Funds were used for staff recognition, facility upgrades and our health and wellness programs. What really impresses me during the holiday season and continues to impress me is the generosity of community members, family members and local businesses! Recent grants from the Fremont Bank Foundation and the Community Foundation for Monterey County have been a tremendous help to upgrading our technology in our Without Walls Program and very soon a Website Renovation.

Speaking of Without Walls, I was able to spend quite a bit of time with some of our W.O.W. students at the Good Ol' Days Festival in Pacific Grove. Unfortunately, I do not get out to our programs as much as I would like, so spending time with the students at the Good Ol' Days was priceless. Students brought with them their Artwork and sold several pieces. I believe over 40 pieces of art were sold. They were so proud of the Artwork they produced and were so enthusiastic in explaining their art to festival goers. It was a great experience for them to talk to the general public, take money and make change and hand out receipts. I really enjoyed talking to and working with these talented individuals! Our W.O.W. program did a great job preparing our young artists for this event, and what really resonated with me is seeing firsthand the Care & Compassion that we strive to achieve in all our programs and services!

A couple of opportunities for Family and Friends Fellowship are coming up:

On Saturday, June 4, 2022 at 7pm we will be going to a Monterey FC Soccer Game. We are excited to get back into the Community and support our new local soccer team! If you would like to attend the link is: <https://tinyurl.com/54pdcnff> Promo Code: GCMC

Also, Gateway Center will be honored on Wednesday, July 27th at 1pm at a San Jose Giants Game. We will be taking approximately 20 residents and staff to the game and get our name on the Big Screen! If you would like to join us, please let me know, I have few tickets in the Gateway Center reserved area available for \$40 each, I can also put you in contact with the San Jose Giants if you would like to sit up in the stands. Another great day to get our residents

and clients out in the community and a great way to get some recognition!

Finally, please join us for Monterey Rock & Rod Festival 15 on June 17th & 18th. Terry & Angela Wecker and the Rock & Rod Committee have worked hard in planning a great event! The proceeds benefit Gateway Center and this is our biggest fundraising and friend raising event of the year. The Sock Hop is a great opportunity to listen to live music and get on the dance floor and take part in the costume contest and silent and live auctions. The Car Show will have some great custom cars to look at and once again live music headlined by Big Brother and the Holding Company. Come to either event and I will introduce you to Elvis!!

As I mention above, Gateway Center could not do the tremendous work we do without the Care and Compassion of our Community!

See you around,

Robert Freiri
Executive Director



A Word from the Board Chair

The Board of Gateway Center of Monterey continues to develop nicely. In the past month we brought on new member, Helene Lubben. She is the sister of ICFI resident and Day Program participant, Tina Pappas. Helene's background is in physical therapy which led her to spend a lot of time working with individuals with disabilities. In discussion of how a seat on the Board would work for her, she said that "Growing up with Tina meant that I was always around people with special needs" and that "Gateway Center has done so much for my sister that, I am totally committed to doing whatever I can to ensure that it has the brightest future possible".

The Gateway Center Board is stronger than ever and has a good mix of people from a diverse range of work backgrounds. However, we are still in need of a few more, members. The ideal candidate would be a younger professional from a minority background with prior board experience. If you know of anyone in the greater Monterey-Salinas-Santa Cruz area who might be interested, please contact E.D., Robert Freiri.

A long-time dream for Gateway Center was that it would one day have its very own endowment fund. Happily, this recently came to pass as a result of an extraordinary bequest from the estate of our late, board member and parent, Marylou Courtright. There are now 2 funds that are being administered and managed by the Community Foundation of Monterey County. These will help to ensure that Gateway Center has

what it takes to maintain its excellent standards far into the future. If you would care to make a donation to either fund, please contact Christine Dawson, Senior Vice President, Philanthropic Services, with the Community Foundation for Monterey County at christine@cfmco.org.

Sincerely,
Jim Landman
Board Chair



A Message from the Director of Operations



Eagle Scouts to the rescue!

Happy Spring and almost Summer from all of us at Gateway Center!

As we continue our theme of gratitude and compassion, I'd like to once again acknowledge our dedicated staff for providing high quality care every single day; our supportive families for trusting us to care for your loved ones; and our ever-growing network of community supporters and volunteers who work selflessly and enthusiastically to improve the quality of services we are offer our participants and residents throughout the County.

A special shout out to the Eagle Scouts for all your hard work building us a new fence, benches and landscaping the front of our Congress site! They did a fantastic job and the residents of our ICF's had so much rolling up their sleeves and pitching in!

Another big shout out to our amazing interns from CSUMB and MPC: Talya, Joy and Connor! Talya is working the WOW Program and specializing in Person Centered Practices and grant writing; Joy is working in our Day Program and focused on Advocacy and Client's rights; and Connor is working with our Administrative Team while he learns about non-profit finance and administration. Thank you for choosing Gateway, we are so lucky to have you on our team!

I am happy to report that all of our programs are in-person, at full capacity and thriving! We are actively accepting new referrals for all programs, particularly our Supported Living and Independent Living Services Programs (SLS and ILS),



A Day in the Life of a Gateway Center Resident

This is our friend Evelyn Silva. Evelyn has lived at Gateway Center since 2014. She participates in Gateway Day Program (CADC #1 Class) Evelyn enjoys exercising, Bingo, puzzles and swimming at Sally Griffin with Cat.

She travels to Azores frequently; it is her ancestral home where she participates in family weddings and birthdays. Evelyn speaks Portuguese!

Evelyn enjoys living at Gateway where she enjoys celebrating holidays and parties. She enjoys her I-Pad and computer. Evelyn loves to watch *I Love Lucy* and *General Hospital* and generally enjoys relaxing. She likes to watch game shows including *Deal or No Deal* and *Family Feud*.

She enjoyed going to Good Old Days. Evelyn enjoys going to St. Angela Church, Walking the trails and going to Monterey Gardens. Evelyn's favorite day program staff is Cat and Petra.

— Written by Joy Hodson

which provides individualized I:1 support for participants age 18 and older to live independently in the community. For more information about our various programs, check out our website, or contact me directly at awright@gatewaycenter.org or 831.372.8002 x236.

Once again, thank you for helping us to support and enhance the lives of individuals with developmental disabilities in Monterey County!

In Gratitude,
Amy Wright,
Director of Operations



Poems by Jonathan Schwanz



The Promise of the Soul

*There is light within us, and if we are not careful, it will go out
We need to surrender to our feelings
We need to help each other see the light within us
For if we follow the light within us, there would be no conflict
For that is the beauty of pain
Pain reminds us we are alive
And sometimes it can help us overcome something, remember this-
You will overcome whatever you are going through*

The Fire Dances

*The fire dances above me
Even though I feel like I'm at my lowest point
I know I am not because I see the light coming towards me and
I see her coming towards me
I keep asking, who are you?
I keep asking and she says I am your grace, I am your guardian Angel
I am the light within you, my name is Gabrielle.
Am I alive?
Of course, my dear, as long as you feel pain, you are alive
You will overcome this, and you will teach others what they are
overcoming
The fire that is gathering in you will gather in them, and they will
be happy with you
They will be jealous of you, but remember, grace will be with
you always
Love will be with you always as long as your light does not go out
Their light will not go out
You are their Hope now
You have encouraged people to Hope
That is why they love you
That's why people that meet you will love you as well
And that is why the fire within dances*

15th Annual Monterey Rock and Rod Festival



The Fifteenth Annual Monterey Rock & Rod Festival held June 17 and 18, 2022, is a celebration of rock and roll and custom and classic cars and trucks benefitting Gateway Center.

The festival kicks off Friday evening, June 17, at 5pm with a good old-fashioned SOCK HOP held at the General Stilwell Community Center in Seaside, CA. Back "in the house" this year is Jeremy "Elvis" Pearce & The Memphis Sons, as well as our incomparable house band, the Yard Dogs. Also performing will be The Lost & Found Band. A Show-N-Shine, no-host BBQ and full bar, silent and live auctions, along with best-dressed and best-dance contests.

The Rock and Rod show will be held Saturday, June 18, at the Custom House Plaza in downtown Monterey near Fisherman's Wharf. This year's Show-N-Shine will feature 1975 and older vintage, customs, classics, hot rods, street rods, muscle cars, and trucks.

The all day festival will feature music headliner Big Brother & The Holding Company.

Enjoy good fun for a great cause while helping to make a positive difference in the lives of the men and women with Developmental Disabilities that Gateway Center of Monterey County serves.

— Terry Wecker, Chairman
www.montereyrockrod.com

Hello Online Shoppers!

If you would like a FREE way to support Gateway Center please sign up with AmazonSmile.com and choose Gateway Center of Monterey County as the nonprofit you want to support: smile.amazon.com/ch/94-2660677.



Students Selling their Art at Good Ol' Days



Talented Artists working with Ritika



Students & Staff Making a Flower Box

Without Walls Program “Coolest Class Ever”

Spring is here, and so much has happened at the WOW program since our last newsletter! The New Year brought with it some changes as we said farewell to one of our cherished person-centered specialists, Jeddy Hubler, and our former WOW coordinator, the remarkable Kristin Guertin. Kristen's contributions, love, and passion for the Without Walls program and its students will never be forgotten and we are so grateful to her for all she did. With that, we are so excited for our community to get to know our new, fabulous, and devoted WOW program coordinator, Michelle Velasco. Michelle has been working joyfully, with grace, and with much success since January, to acclimate our awesome students and staff to the change in leadership.

Michelle is passionate about working collaboratively with staff and students alike, to provide educational and social opportunities in a safe, comfortable, and supportive environment, keeping in mind the interests and relevance to our class community. Particular areas of focus are personal safety, social connection, technological skills, vocational interests, art and culture, and general life skills. We could not be happier to have Michelle and her vision fulfilling this role!

Springtime is the season of new beginnings and we are beyond excited to be seeing more of our students stepping out of the virtual classroom and returning to class in person!! However, whether in person or on zoom with the amazing Moji Itehad, there is no shortage of activities, lessons, and workshops to keep everyone engaged and inspired.

Over the last few months we have worked on tech skills like typing, and being more “savvy” with zoom by learning how to create virtual backgrounds and how to build a personal meeting. We also had the opportunity to partner with the nonprofit organization, “Kidpower” to bring a two-session, interactive, and engaging workshop to our classroom about the important topic of personal safety. Ritika Kumar, our magnificent art teacher, has continued her magic, spearheading the art program. Ritika's personalized approach to our students nurtures their creative expression and intrinsic artistic abilities and the results are stunning! Other highlights in the class

include an intro to resume building, Friday dance parties led by Hallie Gregory, and mouth-watering culinary sessions with Farzana Khan and our classroom lead and person-centered specialist, Dan Lomeli. The students have been mastering such creations as apple crumble, pasta salad, and chili (YUM)! So, if you have been walking through the Pacific Grove neighborhood and smell something delicious, it is probably us! We also want to give a “shout-out” to students, staff, friends, and family who joined us for our first ever “Friends and Family Day” in collaboration with the Adult Transition Center at PG Adult Education. It was wonderful to share the outdoor space in celebration of togetherness!!

As we look toward the future we have exciting things headed our way! First, we are actively discussing and looking into volunteer opportunities for some of our eager students, so stay tuned! Also, Executive Director Robert Freiri, secured a grant that provided the WOW program with a Macbook Pro and two Macbook Airs! In addition, Barbara Martinez, Principal of the PG Adult Education, has provided us with 10 iPads! The addition of this technology to our classroom will be a gamechanger in our ability to hone technological skills, expand artistic expression through digital art programs, and increase media literacy and internet safety awareness. We are so grateful to our Gateway Center and PG Adult Education support system, our dedicated staff (Michelle, Dan, Farzana, Hallie, Ritika, and Moji), and most importantly, our students, “The Coolest Class Ever!”

—Written by Talya Mainzer



Students planting vegetables

Staff Highlights



Jacqueline Allaire, Supported Living Services (SLS)

Jackie Allaire came to Gateway Center over 10 years ago at the request of her sister, who was also a valued employee of Gateway Center for more than 7 years!

Jackie works in our Supported Living Services Program (SLS), which supports individuals to live independently and safely in their community of choice. Jackie works with multiple individuals, most of them for the entire decade she has been with us.

Jackie loves her job as an SLS staff because of the companionship and support she is able to provide the individuals she serves, and the stress-free work environment.

Her fondest memory over the last 10 years is walking to the Farmer's Market every week with Dee, the individual her sister helped care for as well.

Aside from loving her job at Gateway Center, Jackie is the mother of three grown children and is a practicing vegan. She recently began her own business online, renovating old furniture and making them new again with chalk paint.

You can check out her work, or commission a piece, on Facebook under the name of "onemansjunk".

We are so grateful to Jackie (and her sister before her) for providing quality care and support for close to 20 years!



Annie Flores, DSP Lead

Annie has been with Gateway Center before ICF-1 was created. Annie recalls the day she applied at Gateway and how excited she was to start working at such a unique place.

When Annie reflects on why Gateway, she states that what comes to mind is how happy she feels when she is here. "Coming to the door

of ICF-1 and everyone saying your name really makes you feel a part of something". Annie goes on to say "it doesn't matter how hard your day was, it doesn't matter the residents show you so much love and appreciation".

The women that Annie looks up to are her mother. Annie appreciates her mother and the work ethic she has learned from her. Annie says that her mother is someone that she can always count on, no matter what.

Annie shares; during a difficult time in her life was when she actually applied at Gateway and with this one act it was something that gave her purpose and changed her life.

Annie is a great representation of a role model for staff and future staff of Gateway Center of Monterey.



Ceci Carreno w/ MaryAnn

Ceci Cruz Carreno, Direct Support Professional

Ceci works as a Direct Support Professional in our ICF-2 department. Ceci has been with Gateway before it even opened ICF-2.

When Ceci thinks of Gateway what comes to mind is motivation. Ceci explains that when she is at home the motivation is not the same as it is when she is at Gateway. Ceci says "it makes me feel good when I come into Gateway and the residents say hello". They always say hello, and they always motivate me.

Ceci looks up to her boss Elizabeth. Ceci explains that she respects her because she does so much. When it comes to appreciating women, Ceci has an appreciation for her mother which has passed. But Ceci also appreciates her sister and her co-workers. "My co-workers always support me". Ceci states that her mother gave her a good education and taught her respect. She was also a good cook. "My mother was my confidant, and a mother always knows".

Ceci shared a story about a time that was difficult for her and it was her co-workers that empowered her and supported her through it. When asked what Ceci would tell a new employee she states: "It's a good job, and keep working".

Ceci is a valued employee at Gateway and is always willing to help where needed. Ceci communicates effectively with management and most importantly always looks out for what is best for the resident.



Sandy Smith, Salinas Senior Day Lead

Sandy was told by a friend of the opening at Gateway Center in the Senior Program. So she applied and has been with us for 15 years.

Sandy didn't think that she could ever do the work she is doing because she thought she was not cut out for this type of work. Sandy says that it was her belief in God, her fellow co-workers and the clients that showed her she was cut out for this work.

Sandy says it perfectly: "Truly it's not just a job; it's a wonderful learning adventure, as well a blessing in my life".

Sandy's fondest memories of Gateway are the entire past managers, co-workers and clients that have taught her so much. "They will always be special to me".

So we ask "Why Gateway"?

Sandy says, "why not", this is a blessed and rewarding job working with this population. "They are all so sincere".

Sandy's hopes/dream, and goals are to keep learning how to care for the awesome clients we have. The women in Sandy's life that have shaped her are her mother which was god loving and a caring woman, "the traits she gave me that have carried me and always will throughout my life".

All of us at Gateway want to celebrate Sandy Smith and the contribution that she has given and continues to give.

Thank you to our wonderful donors and sponsors!

This list reflects donations made from November 12, 2021 to March 31, 2022.

If there are any errors or omissions please contact us at info@gatewaycenter.org.

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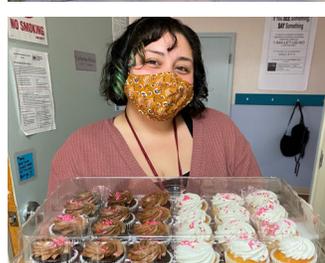
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