

KEEPING THE FAMILY TOGETHER

The day they took her children away, is the day when she woke up with a renewed goal in life.

After years of drug addiction and a life filled with chaos, Morgan Porras Burgos entered a point in her life where she knew things had to change. And change was the only way to get her children back.

At the young age of seven, Morgan began smoking marijuana - by fourteen she was not only smoking but was selling, doing meth and taking prescription drugs. Struggling with a learning disability and lack of self-discipline, Morgan eventually dropped out of school. In her evolving world, drugs became her stability. They kept her going; but in a direction that would prove to be detrimental to Morgan and her family.

By age 17 Morgan became pregnant and continued her drug use. Her baby was born partially blind, and two years later was again pregnant. This time she was clean and sober throughout the pregnancy but left the father of these children. Morgan's life was on a continuing collision course as she realized the difficulty of single motherhood and trying to make ends meet.

Eventually, she met someone new and special to her. Even though they both were in and out of addiction, he was a good provider for her boys. Morgan said her boyfriend made her a better mother by getting the kids to school and 'keeping her together', and eventually they had three children of their own. They continued moving from house to house, sobering up, and sliding

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The Parable of the Talents

Gifts Big & Small are the life blood of the Mission

Recently I received a comment to the effect that “My small gift to the Gospel Center does not make much impact - only big gifts matter.” Combine this comment with the fact that since 2017 we are in a \$21M 100% campus renovation and program expansion from 228 to 500 beds by 2024, and one might think that a \$1 gift doesn’t make a difference. Here is my response.

Every gift, big or small, is critical to the continued work of any non-profit. In our case, the \$21M referenced above is primarily coming from a few entities. They include: HUD funding, Federal Home Loan Bank of San Francisco (a private housing funding source made up of a group of banks across the USA), New Market Tax Credits (another private housing funding source), RB Environmental who is funding all of our demolition and hazardous material removal for our campus projects, a few private donors and foundations, and volunteer efforts. We are calling the \$21M fundraising effort a “Silent – Leadership Campaign” because we ideally would want only a few entities funding each campus renovation project. We need you, our faithful supporters, to continue to fund our annual operations, along with our program “ramp-up” by 2024. **The reality: Together, numerous gifts both big and small form the “life blood” of the Mission!**

I am reminded of the biblical *Parable of the Talents* found in Matthew Chapter 25 and Luke Chapter 19. One of many lessons in this parable is that each of us have different “talents” - our skills and/or ability to give. What’s in common is that each gift can be given to the degree of each person’s ability and given in faith to expand the Lord’s Kingdom. Another common aspect of all gifts, big or small, is they must be stewarded well by the recipient. No matter the size of your gift please know that when you give to the Gospel Center:

- We are working to make sure that the maximum amount of your gift goes to projects and programs with minimal to fundraising costs. The national non-profit average is 20 cents on the dollar going to fundraising. We

are at 14 cents and are working to lower this each year.

- Campus/Program tours are always available for a first-hand stewardship look at your “Kingdom” investment – big or small. Call 209-320-2310 to schedule your tour.
- New Life Program Graduations are every two months. They are the best example of your return on investment when you see lives changed culminating in this celebration. Please join us for our next Graduation, November 15th at 1:30pm in our Chapel. The Keynote Speaker is Dana Bockstahler, CEO of BAC Community Bank.

To all our supporters, thank you! You are funding homeless solutions for San Joaquin County!

Wayne G. Richardson

GCRM WEDDING



Congratulations

to New Life Program Graduates Angela and DeAndre Kelly. They were married at the Mission on September 17. Wayne Richardson officiated the beautiful wedding.

Payee Service Ribbon Cutting



Left to Right: Dana Bockstahler, CEO, BAC Community Bank; Bill Trezza, BAC Community Bank; Paul Kozlow, GCRM Board President; Ron Van De Pol, President/CEO, Van De Pol Enterprises; San Joaquin County Supervisor Miguel Villapudua; Tom Van De Pol, Van De Pol Enterprises; Jeff Patchen and John Patchen from First Baptist Church Men's Group; Carrie Sass, CEO, SASS! Public Relations; and Wayne Richardson, CEO, Gospel Center Rescue Mission. Photo by Tim Ulmer.

The Gospel Center Rescue Mission celebrated the 'Re-opening' of the lobby and the SSI (Social Security Income) Payee Service Center on Thursday, August 29th. More than one hundred guests were in attendance at the celebration in the chapel, followed by the ribbon cutting in the SSI lobby. This newly designed, safe and secure area is essential to keep employees out of harm's way in what can often times be a volatile area of the Mission. We are blessed to have Van De Pol Enterprises financially sponsor the renovation, along with many people who assisted with construction services. We are truly blessed.

The SSI Payee Service Center, led by Elva Garcia, Director of Payee Services is the largest homeless focused non-profit representative payee service in

San Joaquin County. We are one of two non-profits managing SSI benefits, and we serve up to 600 clients and annually process approximately six million in SSI benefits. This service is designed to assist clients who receive SSI for disability and/or have mental health problems, to manage and budget their monthly checks. These recipients need and deserve competent and sympathetic assistance.

Thank You



BAC Community Bank for your ongoing support of the Mission and especially your assistance with our SSI Payee Services Center.

IN THE COMMUNITY



New Life students Damon and Pamela Bolanos, Crystal, Xenia and CEO Wayne

Richardson prayed for the community at the United Way of San Joaquin Power of One Employee Kick-Off Luncheon on Wednesday, September 18th at University of the Pacific. Pamela Bolanos recited 'I Used to Wander,' a beautiful poem she composed and received a standing ovation.



The Gospel Center participated as a vendor at the Community Medical Centers' Healthcare for the Homeless Block Party & Gleason House Open House on August 5th. Gleason House is located within the Gospel Center Rescue Mission campus, and we are thankful for the services they provide, not only to our students, but to the community at large.

GOSPEL CENTER RESCUE MISSION

restoring lives since 1940

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gcrms.org

Pray how you can be involved.

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back into addiction when Morgan became pregnant with her sixth child. She hid the pregnancy so she could continue using her drug of choice and her world came crashing down when she gave birth to her addicted baby. Morgan was not allowed to bring her baby home and the only way to get him back was to go into the New Directions Program for six months. Morgan, and her boyfriend were determined to get clean and sober. Two weeks into the program tragedy struck again as her boyfriend was shot and killed. All six of her children were now in foster care. Life had struck Morgan another cruel blow.

She completed the program and CPS referred Morgan to Gospel Center Rescue Mission to continue her rehabilitation. There, Morgan was taught new self-disciplines, set boundaries for herself, and used the many tools that were given to her in counseling sessions. She worked diligently to regain custody of her children. Morgan found the Bible studies at the Mission enlightening, she listened and learned from her counselors and regularly attended church. For the first time in a very long while, Morgan sensed a change of course in her life as the Mission provided a renewed purpose for her life. As she developed new, trusting relationships with the ladies at the Mission her faith in Jesus Christ also grew.

As she became healthier, she was diligent in making changes to get her children back. The Mission worked closely with Child Protective Services to prepare a room in the Women and Family Shelter that would have enough beds for Morgan and each of her children. After a year and a half, Morgan's children are all back with her at the Mission. Praise God.

Morgan gives thanks to her CPS worker, Mike Blalock, saying "thank you so much for pushing me and working



Adriannah (4), Counselor Lindsey, Morgan, Morgan's Mom, Sylvia (6), Elena (3), Azael (10), David (13), and Adrian (2).

with the Mission to bring my family back together." This collaboration, along with Morgan responding to the solid foundation taught at the Mission and the grace of Jesus Christ, set a new path and direction for Morgan.

Morgan will soon be graduating from the 2nd phase of the New Life Program and is ready to continue into phase three. "Sober is so much better" states Morgan, "and Jesus Christ gave me closure on my past, which I am so very grateful." And so are her six, beautiful children.

Donations Needed

New or gently used sheets, bedding and pillows.
Washcloths, face towels and bath towels.
Soap, shampoo and conditioner.

We thank you for any donations.
For donation drop-off or pick-up, call (209) 320-2310.