

MILESTONES

Recovery happens in relationships.

SUMMER 2021

From Elementary School Drinker to PhD Candidate

"I felt the full extent of homelessness, being surrounded by the homeless community in Santa Barbara, and not being able to feed myself and having to rely solely on this program for my basic needs." —Mike

Mike grew up in a family where drinking before the legal age was accepted.

"The thought was drink, but drink safely," he says.

But there is nothing safe about an elementary age child drinking alcohol. Mike learned that the hard way.

A Slave to Addiction

"I just became a slave from there to the hard drugs, and it consumed every bit of my daily living," he says.

"Pretty much my entire 20s consisted of being in and out of institutions, whether it was rehabs, or detoxes, or sober livings. I made several attempts at trying to get sober for family members, even for myself, to some extent, where I kind of wanted it. But I had this weird perspective that maybe I was doomed, or I was born with it, and there was nothing I could do about it."

In one sense, Mike was right. There was nothing he could do about it. But there was something God could do about it.

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From Elementary School Drinker to PhD Candidate

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God can heal anyone. God can transform any heart.

"I met someone that had told me about the Santa Barbara Rescue Mission, and explained to me that they did very well," Mike says. "They had been sober five years and rebuilt their life. I couldn't put together 30 days."

Mike came to the Rescue Mission ready to sign up for our 12-month Residential Recovery Program, but to get in, he had to pass a drug test. He couldn't.

His willpower wasn't enough. It never is.

Mike asked if he could stay in the homeless shelter until he could test clean. It took him 11 days.

A New Outlook

"I had this hope of seeing the fellowship of these other guys, and men and women that have gone through the Rescue Mission program and were not only able to maintain sobriety and recovery, but also have a fulfilled life," Mike says. "I decided to give it 110%."

Mike gave it his all and God met him right where he was. Friends like you made sure that he had the tools he needed to succeed and succeed he did.

He graduated from the recovery program in 2018 and has been sober ever since.

Through the help of the Mission, Mike got an entry level job and quickly moved up. He also went back to school, where he maintained a GPA of 3.95.

Just last month he graduated from CSU Channel Islands with a bachelor's degree in psychology. He's applying for PhD programs in behavioral neuroscience. Last he heard, he was one of the top 3 candidates.

"All the blessings I have today, I just don't see it as being possible without the Rescue Mission," he says.

No One is Ever Doomed

Now, Mike knows he was never doomed. He just needed the right support. Thanks to friends like you, he got that. And today, you can give that same opportunity for a new life to someone else.

Find out more about how the Learning Center gives people like Mike stepping stones for long-term success on page 4.

"Life is so amazing today. I'm so blessed. And it was all because of that decision of going to the Rescue Mission that changed my life." – Mike





Normal Isn't the Goal

Many of us have spent the last year wanting things to go back to normal. This summer feels like we're getting closer, doesn't it? More people are vaccinated, nearly everything is open. You may even be planning to travel again.

I know it feels good to be getting back to these things and I'm so glad we can. But I also believe it's important to recognize that normal isn't a goal for everyone — and it shouldn't be.

"Normal" for our hungry, homeless, and addicted neighbors is a nightmare. Their daily struggles to find food, safe shelter, and face their traumas aren't something that I would wish on anyone.

So I propose that, instead of thinking about trying to get back to normal, we focus on thriving.

Every day let's do things that allow us to feel grateful to be alive and help our most vulnerable neighbors have the chance to move beyond their current normal into something richer, fuller, and more beautiful, just like Mike has.

A stylized blue ink signature of Rolf Geyling.

Rolf Geyling
President

I hope your Easter was as hope-filled as it was here at the Mission. Thanks to generous friends like you, homeless, hungry, and addicted men and women were able to taste God's goodness and get a glimpse of his unrelenting love for them.



Stepping Stones for Lasting Success

The Learning Center

Each week, Leo Rios, the Men's Learning Center Supervisor, helps 10 men work on life- and job- skills as they build a new foundation for their future.

When men and women in our recovery program begin to heal, they start imagining a new life for themselves. That's where our Learning Centers come in.

"We're working on developing the whole person," Leo Rios, the Men's Learning Center Supervisor, says.

In addition to math, reading, and résumé writing classes, the program includes things like art therapy, personality assessments, 5-year goal setting, and job-related training. When they are ready, we help each individual find the right position, setting them up for ongoing success. Mike is a great example.

"They were very helpful and encouraged me to continue my education and helped me look for work," he says. *"I registered back into Santa Barbara City College. And then I also got this entry level position at a restaurant. Within 30 days, I was moved from just the entry level team member to the store manager."*

Mike was then promoted to regional manager, then district manager – a position he still holds today as he looks towards working on his PhD.

"95-100% of clients are working when they leave the program," Leo says, demonstrating how powerful your support of the Learning Centers is.

You're creating stepping stones for lasting success!



Continuing Transformation: Revisiting Ray

We first introduced friends like you to Ray back in Fall of 2019 when he was celebrating his 70th birthday. Last year we shared that he had moved into his own apartment and working on some incredible artwork, one piece of which was auctioned off at last year's Bayou Derby.

Today we wanted to take a moment to tell you that Ray continues to thrive and even as he approaches 72, he's found new ways to support himself. In fact, he's becoming known as a local artist with an incredible eye for natural detail. You can find Ray selling his stunning artwork every Sunday at the Santa Barbara Arts and Crafts Show.

Ray is another example of the continuing transformation and long-term success your support makes possible!



Ray first became homeless in 1982. He was at the Mission in Thanksgiving of 2019, moved into his own apartment in 2020 and is now selling his artwork and continuing to thrive.



Who Will Write Your Life Story?

When you think of all the investments you've made — in family and friends, in work, in hobbies, in ministry and service to others — your life's work deserves a fitting summary.

That's where planned giving and creating a meaningful estate plan comes in.

When people create a plan, they are often surprised by:

1. How easy it is.
2. That it's about life, not death. It can even be exciting and enjoyable!
3. The comfort they have knowing their legacy will reflect their values no matter what the future holds.

We have a free planning guide to give you a great start on creating or revising your plan. If your plan includes a legacy gift to the Mission, we can help ensure that the investments you have made in us will continue in your name forever. To get started, contact Rebecca Weber at 805-966-1316 or go to sbrmgift.org.



Mike tried to change his life before coming to the Mission, but he couldn't. He needed what friends like you made possible through the Mission. Your gift today can help someone else find the change they desperately need – the change they couldn't find anywhere else.

Change a Life Today!

Lasting transformation like Mike's doesn't happen overnight. It takes patience, dedication, the right support, proper tools, and time. Most important of all, it takes God's love. If you take even one of those elements away, the whole thing falls apart.

That's why your support is so important.

Your generosity allows lives to change because your gifts make every aspect of our 12-month Residential Recovery Program possible. It's because of you that lives change.

Today, there are a lot of men and women who are desperate for change. Will you help by sending a gift?

Each \$70 you give will provide a full day of food, shelter, counseling, addiction recovery, hope, and Christ-centered care for someone like Mike.

You can help someone else go from a life of despair and addiction to a future filled with hope and the joy of giving back when you send a gift today.

Your gift will make a difference. You will help to change a life.

CAMP OUT ON THE BAYOU



SAVE THE DATE: Saturday, Oct. 2

Please join us for the Santa Barbara Rescue Mission's 20th annual benefit, Camp Out on the Bayou, at the historic Rancho Dos Pueblos.

The afternoon will include:

- Santa Barbara's most popular Silent Auction with gifts and getaways
- Tunes by the Idiomatiques
- Campsite Dinner by Lorraine Lim Catering

For information, please contact Rebecca at 805-966-1316 or rweber@sbrm.org or visit www.sbrm.org/bayou

Please note: This year we plan to have both online and in-person options.

Change a Life Today!



Each \$70 provides a full day of transformational, Christ-centered care for someone like Mike.

Yes, Rolf! I want to offer new life to someone else. I'm giving:

☐ \$ _____

From:
A Caring Neighbor



If you would like to charge your gift by credit card, please use reverse side or give via our secure website at sbrm.org/hope
Santa Barbara Rescue Mission 535 East Yanonali St. | Santa Barbara, CA 93103-3254 | 805-966-1316 | sbrm.org

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535 East Yanonali Street
Santa Barbara, CA 93103

805-966-1316

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