

# MILESTONES

*Recovery happens in relationships.*

**SEPTEMBER 2022**

## Finally Free After 15 Years of Addiction

Navigating the way out of addiction and homelessness is hard. No two stories are exactly the same. But Lauren had an additional challenge. One that she had no control over.

Diabetes.

*"The Rescue Mission was the only program that would accept me with my medical condition," she says.*

### No One Can Do It Alone

And Lauren needed help. Badly. Her life had become so chaotic that she couldn't overcome any of the obstacles she was facing – and had been facing since she was two years old when her parents divorced.

*"I struggled with anxiety and low self-esteem," she says. "I was such a fearful kid."*

By the time she was in high school, the weight of it was too much. She began drinking then using drugs to ease her anxiety and fear. Looking back, she thinks it was probably her way of self-medicating and trying to fit in.

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# Finally Free After 15 Years of Addiction

Continued from cover

The grip of addiction set in. For the next 15 years, Lauren stayed trapped. Her life unraveled until she hit rock bottom, ending up in jail, and losing custody of her daughter.

At that point, she knew she needed help, but with her complex situation and medical needs, no one except the Mission would take her in. She applied for our 12-month Residential Treatment Program and got in. Over that year, she learned to look at her life and obstacles differently. And she learned she wasn't alone.

## Knowing God Changes Everything

*"The biggest component for me was finding my relationship with my higher power," Lauren says. "It was the highlight of my experience there. Just getting to know myself again, all the classes that were offered and the help, the counseling, that was all really important and it all helped me."*

With the help and support Lauren received, she was able to not only overcome addiction, but establish a new life.

## A Lifetime Ahead

*"I'll be celebrating my fourth year of sobriety on the 3rd of November of this year," she says. "I have a relationship with my daughter. I love myself. I'm not ashamed of who I am, and I like working. I like that I have money in the bank and I'm self-sufficient. I can take care of myself, and I just really like that a lot."*

At 35, Lauren has a bright future ahead of her.

***"I know that my life is not even close to over," she says. "I have all this opportunity ahead of me. . . I wish I had come to the Rescue Mission sooner." — Lauren***

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***"... In all these things  
we are more than conquerors  
through Him who loved us."***

Romans 8:37







## A NOTE OF FRIENDSHIP FROM ROLF GEYLING

# Make a List

**T**HINK OF THE MOST challenging obstacles you've faced in your life so far. Now, think of what it took to overcome them.

I'm sure it was hard — grueling at times. It probably took different tactics and angles. And I know you didn't do it alone. How do I know that? Because when we're faced with the biggest challenges, none of us can get over them alone. Lauren (our cover story) is a perfect example.

**We need help.**

**We need each other.**

**We need Jesus.**

As you think of the complex situations in your life that you've made it through,

take a moment to remember how you got through them. Who were the people who came alongside you, supported you, encouraged you and helped you?

Make a list. Write down their names. And if you can, reach out to them. Say thanks. Tell them what a difference they made for you. Show them how much they matter. And then remember your support of others matters just as much.

Lauren is proof.

Rolf Geyling  
President



# Have you ever wondered?

## Rolf Answers Your Frequently Asked Questions

**Question:** *What do I do when I encounter a homeless person asking me for money?*

**Answer:** *That's a complex question. I would say first and foremost, the most important thing when we encounter a homeless person is to afford them the dignity of being human, to make eye contact, to speak directly to them. You don't need to say "Yes." A direct "No," and saying, "I'm sorry, I can't help you,"*

*means much more than pretending that they're not there.*

*Secondly, as a general rule, I don't give a lot of money to homeless people. My preference is that when somebody is in need, that we would direct them to a more tangible resource, like the Mission. That's because if they come here where we serve meals every day, that starts to build a relationship so we can start to connect them to services and the care that they need.*



**If you have questions for Rolf, please send them to [newsletter@sbrm.org](mailto:newsletter@sbrm.org)**

# New Navigation Center Location Launches

Neighborhood Navigation Centers provide an opportunity for service providers to offer adult education, healthcare, case management, housing solutions, and more in a dignified, accessible space.

We recently began hosting the Eastside Neighborhood Navigation Center (NNC), a pop-up services fair for people experiencing homelessness. This center, only the third one in our city, is organized by SB ACT and offers a variety of services to homeless guests, including:

- Help with government documents like IDs, Social Security cards, etc. (Thanks to Santa Barbara Public Library)
- Housing assistance (Thanks to City Net)
- Medical care (Thanks to Doctors Without Walls and Public Health)
- Mental health services (Thanks to Behavioral Wellness)

This NNC is held in our courtyard and chapel each Wednesday from 8 AM to 10 AM. It allows homeless individuals to have access to all the services they need in one place, so that they get the help and support they need in one easy location. So far, it's been a great success!

*"At the first one, there were 68 people who received services – needful things that they very likely would not be able to get to or find or figure out on their own,"* Rebecca Weber, Director of Communications at the Mission says.

We're excited to keep partnering with SB ACT and hope that more centers can be opened soon!





# What's Cooking?

Our culinary team, led by David Fletcher, is incredible. You'd have to be special to crank out over 300 nutritious meals each day. And now there's even more reasons to get excited about what happens in our kitchen.

David, along with Leo Rios, who supervises our Learning Center, recently joined forces and began inviting chefs from local restaurants to come to the Mission to share their expertise and skills with men in our recovery program. The personal interaction allows chefs to see the men's culinary talent and could possibly serve as a gateway to job opportunities at local restaurants.

**So far, executive guest chefs Travis Watson from Hotel Californian and Bruno Lopez from El Encanto, a Belmond Hotel, have visited.**



The goal for the new mentorship program is to have 2 – 3 visiting chefs each month.

*"It is an honor to merge a personal passion project of mine with my professional life here at El Encanto," said Executive Chef Bruno Lopez. "Members of the Santa Barbara Rescue Mission are such wonderful individuals and eager to learn, so it's my greatest pleasure to introduce them to the culinary career path and help them realize their talents."*

The interaction not only provides a great learning environment, but can lead to future job opportunities. In fact, Chef Lopez recently hired one of our graduates for his kitchen team.

*"We want to promote a safe environment for the guys to cultivate and develop their abilities into a professional skill set that can lead to gainful employment after graduation," David says.*

By all accounts, it's working.





## Transform a Life!

At the Mission, we don't force everyone into the same box.

We get to know them. We get to know their unique situations and complexities. We talk. We pray. We read the Bible together. We give them the specific tools and support that they need to change their lives.

**In short, we see them and we meet them right where they are.** That's how people like Lauren are able to overcome even the biggest obstacles and years of devastation.

**This type of personalized, Christ-centered support is only possible**

**because of the gifts from friends like you. Each \$93.15 you give again today will provide a full day of food, shelter, counseling, and life-changing support for one person.**

*“This program saves so many lives. Being able to go somewhere and be allowed to care for ourselves without worrying about outside expenses and clothes or where we're going to eat, and things like that is a huge relief.”*  
— Lauren



Less Than One Month Away:

## ROAD TRIP TO THE BAYOU

Saturday, October 1

Two O'Clock  
in the Afternoon

Get Your Kicks on Route 66 when you join us for the 21st Annual Benefit for the Santa Barbara Rescue Mission!

This year, we're honoring Karl Willig for his dedicated service to the Santa Barbara Rescue Mission and the entire Santa Barbara community. There will be food, music, and an incredible silent auction.

To find out more, please visit:

**[sbrm.org/bayou](http://sbrm.org/bayou)**



You can also give  
generously online at [sbrm.org/hope](http://sbrm.org/hope).  
Without your help,  
people like Lauren may not  
ever escape.

## MILESTONES

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535 East Yanonali Street  
Santa Barbara, CA 93103  
805-966-1316  
[sbrm.org](http://sbrm.org)

