

Successful Life Stories

a Compass SLS & ILS publication

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On a personal note, I am going to be fulfilling a dream I didn't even know I had! I am returning to my home in Redding, CA at the end of this month. My Bay team is amazing. Ray and Rhonda are doing an incredible job of leading their offices and teams. They certainly don't need Eric and I in their office to be effective. So, since Compass "doesn't care where I live",

I want to go home. Redding remains in my heart as the place I want to live and raise my family. I have so loved being here in the Bay these last few years. We have wonderful families, clients, staff and Regional Center staff. I will miss seeing you on a daily basis, but I will still be around! Eric and I have already planned our trip for July and August. You can't get rid of us that easily...

Written by Sadie Hess -Director of SLS & ILS

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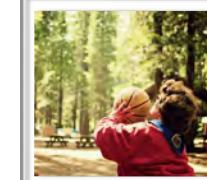
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HERO STORIES

Featuring Shanee Cummings

Shanee was born with complications, and through a series of mistakes and misdiagnosis she ended up with the disability she has today. In addition to that challenge in her life, her experiences in the hospital made her a prime candidate for cancer. At the age of 10 she developed a cancer that attacked her liver and other internal organs. Surgery successfully removed the cancer. That was just the beginning of Shanee's miraculous life.

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DIRECTOR'S NOTE

Dreaming Big and Out Loud!

I just left this year's Dream Retreat. Many of you know my personal philosophy of "you can't give away what you don't have". (This is actually our T-shirt theme for 2012!) We decided we needed to make sure that our field staff have the opportunity to follow their own dreams. They need to have a passionate pursuit with their own dreams if they are ever to be effective in helping clients follow theirs. So, we packed up a select 20 individuals and went to the woods to talk about why it is important to dream for themselves and gave them a paid day to dream.

It was an amazing time! Our team has grown so much over the last few years: it was wild to meet people for the first time who have been working at Compass for over 2 years. Wow, we have a great team! The field staff on this retreat deeply care about our clients and desire to see our clients meet their potential. It was also fun to have field staff from all four offices together in one

place. It was truly inspiring to be near the folks that are the nearest to our clients. It was equally fascinating to hear what is in their heart to do with their life. Many of them want to keep helping people. Some want to start their own agencies and non profits—they want to continue to do good in the world. These are the kind of people I want to hang out with and get to know. I am really excited to see where these dreams go and where these staff take their lives.

I want to give a special shout out to Michele Gilbertson and her team of mentors because they are going to take special time after the retreat is long gone to keep working with these amazing staff. We are committing resources to see these retreat dreams become a reality. We have agreed that an event is nice, but real change comes from walking alongside of people, providing encouragement and support.

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Bay Area Bravo Buck Party!!!



This June the Bay Area celebrated our amazing staff and clients by hosting our annual bravo buck event. The fun began at Straw Hat Pizza where everyone enjoyed pizza, games and the chance to spend the well earned bravo bucks. After two hours of fun at Straw Hat the crew headed to the Alameda County fair where everyone enjoyed the rides, concerts and fun!

"...passionate pursuit of dreams..."

Client Corner



KATHY

This month Compass would like to recognize East Bay SLS Client Katherine Brock. Kathy has worked very hard over the past year to achieve her goal of going back to school and earning a degree in art. Unfortunately, this past quarter, Kathy had to face a very hard decision due to some health complications; she either had to quit school to get herself healthy, or stay in school and risk hospitalization and prolonged illness. It was very hard for Kathy to place her dreams on hold, but she knew that if she continued going to school three days per week, her health would continue to suffer and her dreams might never come true. With assistance and support from her physicians, nurses and Compass, Kathy decided to quit school for the semester in order to focus her attention on healing her body. Hopefully, she can return to school next semester and continue working towards her dream. However, quitting school hasn't stopped Kathy. She started her own art business called Grape Graphics, and she continues to paint, draw and practice her skills daily. Despite her setbacks, Kathy is a very sweet, funny and determined lady. Compass acknowledges her this month for making positive choices for her health, her future and for remaining positive even in the face of frustration.



VAL

Valerie Tracy is proud to announce that she has been a part of Compass since the day it opened! During her time with Compass, Valerie has grown leaps and bounds and is proud of all of her accomplishments. In the past year she began participating in an In Home Day Program which keeps her busy in many fun ways. Since beginning her day program, Valerie has enjoyed attending weekly exercise classes, art classes, playing bingo, and volunteering to help others. Now, she not only enjoys the friends she has made at Compass, but she is also very happy that she is meeting people in the community. In the midst of her fulfilling schedule, Valerie also recently accomplished an important goal; Valerie walked across the entire Sun Dial Bridge!!! Now that she has overcome her fear, she is excited to see others overcome theirs as well. Valerie is a very important part of the Compass community, and she inspires others to overcome obstacles and take pride in their accomplishments.



MIKE

Mike, as he is best known, has been part of the Compass family since March 2011. He is one of our most dynamic friends in the South Bay. He loves to dance, and he goes out dancing at least once a month. He also enjoys spending time with friends and family. His favorite singer is the late Michael Jackson because his music is the best to dance to, and they share the same name. Mike's favorite MJ song is Thriller. Because Mike is a very athletic person, his favorite pastime is sports. He loves to play sports, and he has been involved in Special Olympics for 20 years, playing both soccer and basketball. However, the sport he enjoys to play the most is football. Unfortunately, at this time, Special Olympics does not offer football. He loves to watch football and wrestling. Mike also enjoys cooking because he loves to eat. Mike's best cooking recipe is eggs with hot dogs—he can make it better than anyone, all by himself. For 23 years Mike has been an active Christian and has attended the same church. He likes to go to church and be involved; he is a part of Young Life group in San Jose, CA. When he was little, he wanted to have his own apartment. Now that he has an apartment, Mike's dream is to someday get married and have children. If you would like to get to know Mike a little bit more please check out his website: <http://mikechavez.shutterfly.com>

Conflict in Relationships

by Aaron Zint



No great story is without conflict. We know this and have even come to expect it in the movies we see and books we read. It is not the conflict itself that draws us back each time—it is the growth the conflict produces. When conflict arises, it may scare or upset us at first, but by the end we know it's the

very reason the story was worth telling.

In the beginning of our relationship, it seemed that all my wife and I ever did was work out issues. A hurtful word here, a misinterpreted situation there and a smorgasbord of insecurities made for some pretty good practice in our problem-solving skills. What was interesting, though, was that

instead of all of these driving us apart, we just became closer and closer. At one point, we both caught on to this phenomenon and began to secretly rejoice whenever conflict arose because we knew that by the end of it we'd reach another level of intimacy we hadn't experienced before.

“Conflict is an invitation to intimacy”

None of us can change the fact that conflict either does or will exist in our relationships at times. We can, however, change the way we view it when it does come. If we believe that conflict is a threat, then our energies will be spent avoiding or denying its existence: both of which produce anxiety, not peace. But if we realize that conflict is an invitation to intimacy, though it may scare or upset us at first, we can find out why our own story is worth telling.

Living Independently

by Joshua Flom



The dynamic duo together is mother and daughter. Since they have been with Compass they have been consistently on the path of progress and individuation. When we met them, they had been homeless and moving from hotel to hotel. Now, they live in a two-bedroom apartment, which they pay for with their own money. They follow a budget and are learning the value of self advocacy.

Mary and Christina have a heart of compassion. They seek to see people around them taken care of. Mary holds to a dream of being able to go on an all day shopping spree with money she has set aside in savings and hopes to be the loving and encouraging role-model to her daughter, which she never had growing up as an orphan in foster-care since she was really little.

These two ladies have faced hardship after hardship, but always staying together.

They have been an unbreakable bond that supports and looks after each other.

This year they have been able to express their own desires and needs and as a result they have attended the Annual Emergency Preparedness Fair and been able to reach out for help through our local APS agency.

Christina has communicated her own personal dream that she would like to go to college and take several dancing classes, to better further her experiences in life. The greatest challenge they equally struggle with most is feeling heard and valued, but with role-playing and encouraging training, they both have been able to independently communicate the things they need to face some of their biggest struggles.

Hero Stories

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Shanee came to Compass after some difficult circumstances at other care agencies. She was looking for a community who would care for her as a person and not see her as a paycheck or an object to be abused. She now enjoys her new family at Compass and says they are the best thing that has ever happened to her.

She now lives in her own apartment and says, “I live in my own home, and I have a staff who I love. They help me take care of it and make sure I am able to stay there for as long as I want to. If things break, all I have to do is call Bill Johnson, and he will help me fix it. Or I go to the office or talk to Holly in my driveway, and she will help me get the thing fixed.”

When asked about her experiences with her support staff she says, “I now have a way to get my own groceries and get to do my own banking, along with going to church every week and going to the YMCA.” If you ask Shanee, she will tell you that she is the best client at Compass. Other activities that she is involved in include: working at

Comfort Inn, being an assistant life guard at the Camp McCumber YMCA summer camp, being a bus aide, and helping out at the community Emergency Preparedness Fair (where she teaches how to stop, drop, and roll).

Shanee is proud of herself because of all the good things in her life like basketball, soccer, swimming lessons, and shopping. When she is asked what word best describes her she states, “happy”.

	JULY	AUGUST	OCTOBER
SAVE THE DATE	11 REDDING Bravo Buck Event 3:30p - 5:30p Shasta Lanes	11 REDDING Masquerade Ball 6:00p -9:00p Mercy Oaks 100 Mercy Oaks Dr., Redding \$15 Admission	7-9 ANNUAL COMMUNITY RETREAT Woodleaf Retreat Center Registration forms will be available August 1
	27 DUBLIN Community Luau 5:00p -7:00p Emerald Glen Park 4201 Central Prkway, Dublin \$5 Admission at event	11 SAN JOSE's Got Talent 2:00p - 6:00p Rivertown Apts. 1340 Hope Dr., Santa Clara Call Shery Laczko to sign up	