A Place To Call Home

Imagine having your life put together and having financially stability because of your hard work. Then imagine that life being taken away because your health started to change drastically and there were no answers as to why. This is the story of Cynthia and how her will power and strengths, even though she felt she had no strength, helped her slowly get her life back.

Cynthia was a hard worker and had a good life that reflected her hard work. Slowly unexplained occurrences with her health started happening causing her to stop working and try to find out what was wrong. IT took longer than anticipated and slowly she lost everything her money, her furniture and most of all her home. She ended up having to sleep in her car with unexplained health problems.

This is when Cynthia reached out for help and through channels; Tanja Wright an Independent Living Specialist from DRAIL offered her assistance. When Cynthia met with Tanja she was overwhelmed with emotions and questions, unsure which route to go. She knew she couldn’t live in her car anymore; she didn’t possess what is normally called as “street smarts.” Cynthia and Tanja agreed that temporary housing such as a shelter program would be best for the time being. Then Tanja took over Cynthia’s social security claim and advocated for Cynthia through the process. About 4 of 5 months after their meeting, Cynthia was granted social security disability.

With an income for the first time in a while, Cynthia was able to find an apartment but had nothing for it. Tanja applied for Transition Funding on Cynthia’s behalf and together they picked out things for Cynthia’s apartment to make it her home. February felt like Christmas (continued on Page 3)
One’s Dedication, Becomes the Community’s Inspiration

Our independent Living Specialist Michael Pierce in our Sonora office has been available for questions, concerns and even peer counseling. It is with great pride that we share this wonderful story of how someone can still find meaning and dedication, regardless of the disabilities they face.

Mike has contended with epilepsy most years of his adulthood. For Mike, a severe seizure might come upon him at any time or place. Living with such uncertainty has created many barriers for him like obtaining and maintaining employment is challenging. In addition, Mike made the personal decision to refrain from driving because of his concern for safety. Although this resulted in loss of some independence, he has found many ways to pursue an active and fulfilling life.

About a year ago, Mike decided to start picking up trash around the neighborhood. He designed a small bucket with an attached handle and purchased a triggered grabber. Each morning, Mike could be observed walking about his regular route and carefully picking up nearly every little piece of trash along the way.

In a short time, Mike expanded his route. Mike could be observed throughout Sonora’s downtown area each morning, diligently grabbing up all the trash he came across and placing it in his handmade trash collector. Mike’s efforts have drawn the attention of residents, business operators, and even the mayor!

People come up to Mike and thank him for his good work and relate that his work inspires them. While Mike’s intentions were never connected to receiving any attention for his efforts, he does feel encouraged to receive these kind words of appreciation.

Mike is a good example of how one can establish a goal, take the initiative, offer their best, and make a change. His consistency of effort demonstrates how a seemingly small act can be truly inspiring to an entire community.
with one delivery after another furnishing her apartment. When Cynthia had her bed, she called Tanja and said, “I slept in my own bed and I haven’t been able to do that in over a year! I feel so safe now. Everything I have is mine and I don’t have to be afraid for it to be stolen. I can leave my clothes here too and don’t have to carry everything with me every where I go.”

While Cynthia still has health problems, she is aiming to help those around her. Trying to help others connect to resources and giving them the hope that life can change for them too. She has some great advice for those struggling now. “A closed door is sometimes a good thing. Sometimes God takes you through huge storms, so you can learn what is important in life. During all of this, I missed my morning coffee, my alone time with God, and during my struggle to heal, I learned how important I am. I learned that I am worth it.” As for her experience at DRAIL, she stated, “I was not treated as a number, my calls were answered and Tanja always told me what she thought was best for me leaving me to make the choice. DRAIL and Tanja were a light in a hurricane. Trust them, do your part and they will come through for you.”

DRAIL would like to thank Cynthia for her trust in Tanja and our staff to ensure that things would get done. While DRAIL may have had a part in helping, it was truly Cynthia that carried the determination that allowed her to push through this trying time in her life. It was Cynthia that followed through with everything, her appointments, gathering information and always keeping in contact. When a consumer works as hard as we do, we become a team.
2018 Wine, Beer and Bites Fundraiser

The (almost) complete DRAIL Team.

Board Treasurer NormaJean Clapper poses in a car with her guest. (Is she trying to take off?)

Independent Living Specialist Tanja Wright (left) and Center Coordinator Heather Santos (right) Photo bombed by Board Vice President Nick Nelson.

Board Member Jason Starn enjoys wine with his wife.

Executive Director Barry Smith poses with his wife Rose.

Resource Developer Mary Iler poses with Volunteer Deirdra.

Above: Center Coordinator Heather Santos with her guest Paul.

Right: ILS Jorge Pimentel with his wife Ivania Rosado Pimentel

Above: Left to Right
ILS/ATA Micelle Rosado, Center Coordinator Heather Santos and ILS
Marissa Montoya

Above ILS Liliana Altamirano poses with her guest.

Left: Our volunteer bartender!
Interested in serving on DRAIL’s Board?

DRAIL is now recruiting board members to serve on our board and assist in determining goals, set policies and budget.

As a group and individually, Board Members have legal and moral responsibility for all activities of DRAIL.

Please contact Barry Smith for more information at (209) 521-7260 or email Mr. Smith at barry@drail.org
VACES

DRAIL In The Community

DRAIL participates in the weekly Boots On The Ground Outreaches, with the Outreach and Engagement Team.

ILS/ATA Jorge Pimentel and ILS Tanja Wright man the DRAIL booth at the Stanislaus County Caregiver Resources Faire.

Center Coordinator Heather Santos and her date Paul Wall attend the Chamber of Commerce Awards Benefit where DRAIL was nominated for a non-profit agency award.

ILS/ATA Jorge Pimentel and ILS Liliana Altamirano pose with Senator Kathleen Galgiani (left) and the Sherriff’s Department (bottom) at Smyrna Park in Ceres.

ILS/ATA Jorge Pimentel and ILS Liliana Altamirano both make connections at the DRAIL booth while other DRAIL employees participate in the Alzheimer’s Walk.

Recognition for DRAIL’s participation in the Third Annual Waterford Unity Day.
is a nonprofit created to benefit people with disabilities. Our services provide tools which assist them to live independently.

Programs
Programs are available from DRAIL and your local community to increase the independence of people with a disability.

Technology
DRAIL provides and assists you to get technology that allows you to remain in the home setting of your choice.

DRAIL’s Six Core Services
1. Information Referral
2. Care Provider Referral
3. Housing Referral
4. Advocacy
5. Peer Advising
6. Independent Living Skills-Training

FACES (Friends, Advocates, And Consumer Empowered Stories) is published quarterly. DRAIL is a nonprofit and accepts donations and bequests gratefully. For address corrections or changes, please contact Tanja Wright by phone at (209) 521-7260 or via email at tanja@DRAIL.org.

A life filled with possibility belongs to you. DRAIL works to ensure that this is a reality for the members of our community living with a disability.

Donations from people, like you, allow us to help enable individuals with disabilities to live independently and reach goals that would otherwise seem impossible.
Support Groups
Support group meet on the 2nd Thursday of each month at our Modesto location from 10am-11:30 am. Additional information on DRAIL’s support groups is online at DRAIL.org or call (209) 521-7260.

Have You Visited The DRAIL Website?
If you have not visited our website, please try it. We’ve work hard to make it a resource for consumers and advocates.

You’ll find the website at www.DRAIL.org.

On Facebook
You can support DRAIL by introducing us to your friends! We’re on Facebook. Please “like” DRAIL at www.facebook.com/#!/mydrail?fref=ts. Then, ask your friends to “like” us too.

DRAIL’s E-mailing List
Join DRAIL’s email list to keep up on DRAIL news, events and receive tips on accessing resources. Go to the website (www.DRAIL.org) and sign up just below the main photo on the home page or in the left hand column on any other page.