Hi Lauren,

As Summer fades to Fall our attention shifts towards back-to-school festivities, upcoming holiday celebrations and much more. For those involved in the life changing work that we do, September also marks a special month of recovery. In collaboration with the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), PathPoint is proud to celebrate National Recovery Month. This month is an opportunity to honor and highlight the many personal stories of substance abuse recovery and mental health journeys of individuals both nation-wide and in the communities we serve.

Behavioral health is essential to overall health. In 2013, 4.2% of U.S. adults (or 10 million individuals) reported having serious mental illness. This is an increase from 3.7% in 2009. We at PathPoint know that people can and do recover from mental and/or substance abuse disorders to go on and lead successful, fulfilling lives. Our Behavioral Health Division works tirelessly to provide services that empower individuals with disabilities to live and work as valued members in our communities. We are proud to highlight both the challenges and victories of our participants, as each story shapes these individuals towards lasting success.

Upcoming Events:

Ventura County

Youth Council Meeting
September 2
3:00 – 4:30 pm
Human Service Agency
855 Partridge Dr.
Ventura, CA

Supported Employment Collaborative Meeting
September 10
10:00 am – 12:00 pm
Tri-Counties Regional Center
2635 Park Center Dr. #A
Simi Valley, CA

Interagency Transition Coordinating Council
September 10
3:00 – 5:00 pm
5100 Adolfo Rd.
Camarillo, CA

Youth Council Meeting
October 7th
3-4:30pm
Human Service Agency
Simi Valley, CA

Transition Fair
October 13th
Thank you for your partnership as we celebrate this significant month of recovery - Our best to you and your family - thank you again for the work that you do.

Cindy Burton

PathPoint CEO/President

**Recovery Month Q & A: Featuring Ellen**

*Ellen Cook is a certified Drug and Alcohol Counselor, and is both the Co-Lead Clinician and Co-Occurring Disorder Specialist in the Behavioral Health Division.*

**What led to your interest in the substance abuse field?**

I wanted to understand the brain chemistry as it related to the propensity for addiction. I received my Drug and Alcohol Certification so I had the scientific background to understand the complexity of the addiction which I personalized in my own journey to understand my brother who passed away from complications of addiction.

**What is the most satisfying part of your job?**

I appreciate the team approach at PathPoint. In many organizations, social workers or case managers work independently with clients and don’t have the team environment to come back to at the office. It was important to me to find an organization where I could get feedback and support from my co-workers and process situations with them.

**Can you share a favorite story about a time you felt you made a difference to a client?**

Yes... I remember when I first started working with one of my clients, he was a heavy drug user. He had a history of breaking the law and was consistently in jeopardy of becoming homeless. He never had someone he could count on. I feel that I bring that much needed stability to his life. He knows that I will see him every week at a specific time and he knows that if he calls me I will call him back. There is a
personal responsibility in our relationship that had been missing for him.

**What message would you have for families? For the public?**

I have found that the biggest missing link is spirituality. It doesn’t matter what kind of spirituality and it can be absent of religion. There needs to be faith that people are on their own journey and that there is a reason for everything no matter how tragic. Everything is a teachable moment. You can’t think that you can control everything. You can’t think you will white-knuckle it and that will get you through. You have to ask for help.

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**PathPoint Special Olympic Medalists**

We are inspired by each individual that competed in the **Special Olympics** - especially our PathPoint participants! We are proud to announce that our very own Joseph from our Santa Maria Integrated Work Program took home the **Bronze Medal** at the Special Olympics. **Congratulations** Joseph! We are inspired by your achievements!
We are thankful for the support you all have rallied. But the work doesn’t stop here. We need your help to create #JobsForAll. We invite employers who want to learn more about partnering with PathPoint to visit [here](#). If you’d like to donate, your donations make it possible for PathPoint to provide job development and placement, job coaching, continued skills training, and other support to our dedicated population.