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I Am
SPECIAL EDITION

A nonprofit serving Stanislaus County since 1970
Center Line is published by Center for Human Services’ Development and Communications Department as part of an ongoing effort to inform and educate the public.

Center for Human Services (CHS) is a nonprofit agency serving youth and families since 1970. Our mission is to change lives and build futures through programs that strengthen and support youth and families. We provide proven prevention, education, treatment, counseling and shelter services in Stanislaus County.

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Over a year ago, a dear friend took me through a process called Desire Mapping. The idea behind Desire Mapping, by author Danielle LaPorte, is that to know how you want to feel is the most potent form of clarity you can have. Generating those feelings is the most powerfully creative thing you can do with your life.

After a lot of self reflection, this is how/what I wanted to feel:

Leaderful, Lit Up, Joy, Brave

Words have incredible power. How we talk to ourselves is connected to our behavior and how we see ourselves in the world. To get clear about how I wanted to feel was uplifting. But I was using phrases like, “I wish” “I want” and “I could” which presumed there was something I didn’t currently have.

So, at the urging of that same dear friend, I switched up my language.

I AM... I am now speaking my power into its fullest capacity. Put together, the words I AM are two of the most powerful in our language. Whatever follows them becomes your reality.

For me, the last 12+ months have been about discovering I have all I need. I always have. I needed a little help to find it and to give it a voice. And, in so many ways, that is what CHS is doing for people throughout our community every day.

I have the power. I am leaderful. I feel lit up. I am joy. I am brave.

And... we are human, it’s what connects us all.
Meet Oscar Cabello. Many of you know him as a Vice President at Wells Fargo, but he’s also a committed champion for Center for Human Services (CHS).

Oscar has contributed to CHS as a capital campaign cabinet member, donor, volunteer and advocate. That’s why we invited him to be part of our I AM Project. We asked him a few questions so you can get to know Oscar and his passion for CHS.

Q: How would you finish this sentence? “I AM...”

A: I am valuable. There are roles for everyone to play and whether I’m volunteering, advocating, or financially supporting, I am doing my part. We are all valuable but are we all doing our part?

Q: What motivated you to get involved in CHS?

A: I believe that helping make families stronger during challenging times is the answer to many of the issues we face today, locally and nationally, like homelessness, domestic violence, and children growing up without fathers in their lives to name a few. CHS is making progress to address these and many more pressing issues plaguing our youth. I want to be part of the solution.

Q: What do you love about how CHS works?

A: What I love most about how CHS works is the way they wrap their resources and those in the community around their clients. They take a holistic, relationship-based approach to helping our families and youth. The CHS team never gives up and they view their clients like family.
“I am intentional,” said Nicole Neri, a Student Assistance Specialist here at CHS. She has been involved with CHS in a variety of Youth Services programs between 1998 and 2005 and has been in the Student Assistance Program since 2010.

“Intentional to me means being conscious and aware of the work I do and relationships in my life” Nicole said. “It means offering empathy and asking questions.”

11 years ago, Nicole lost her twin brother to suicide. 6 years ago, she lost her younger brother to an overdose. “Both of my brothers’ deaths were preventable,” said Nicole. “If they had had services like we offer at CHS, maybe they would still be here today.”

Though the loss of her brothers was heartbreaking, it made her more intentional. “When it happened I thought, what good could ever come from this? But today, when students tell me they are having suicidal thoughts or are using drugs and alcohol, I can really be present for them. I ask questions and engage them. I don’t just listen, I hear them.”

Nicole loves working at CHS and is happy she has the opportunity to engage her students everyday. In spite of the terrible losses she has experienced in her life, she has gained intentionality and purpose.

“I am resilient,” said Jorge Fernandez, a member of the CHS Board of Directors. Jorge has been resilient his whole life.

“I came from humble beginnings,” he said. Until he was in 7th grade, he would spend half the year in America and half the year in Mexico. “I feel blessed by the opportunities life has given me,” Jorge said. “I have been able to become acculturated without leaving my culture and my roots behind.”

By viewing his bi-national experience as an opportunity instead of a challenge, Jorge learned to be adaptable and tenacious. He would even ask teachers to teach him during lunch so he could catch up on work he missed.

“Resilience to me is being able to continue to thrive; regardless of your circumstances you keep moving forward.” Jorge said. “It doesn’t matter how many times you fall, you keep getting up.”

Jorge is the Director of Behavioral Health at Golden Valley Health Center and he started his career in behavioral health as a clinician at CHS.

“I’m grateful for CHS because they were a school for me and for my fieldwork. They taught me how to be a good clinician, a good supervisor,” he said. “The people there are family and I’m blessed to still be a part of it.”

Visit centerforhumanservices.org/iamproject and stay tuned for videos in Fall 2017.
"I am optimistic," said Tahjanae, a current client at Pathways, CHS’ transitional housing program. Tahjanae has been living at Pathways for a little over a year.

"I wasn’t living in an environment where I felt safe or comfortable," she said. "So a friend recommended me to Pathways and within a week I moved in."

Tahjanae says her time at Pathways has taught her how to be an adult, to be responsible and to do things for herself.

Since living at Pathways, she started working at the Boys and Girls Club where she enjoys passing on valuable skills she’s gained.

"At Pathways I go to counseling and a class called seeking safety," Tahjanae said. "I can use the skills I learn at Pathways to help teach coping skills and other skills to kids at the Boys and Girls Club."

Optimism is important to Tahjanae in her everyday life. "Whatever circumstances I face I have to be open and willing to have a different perspective," she said. "Being optimistic allows me to grow, be open minded and be understanding of others.”
Center for Human Services acknowledges the support of our funding partners who underwrite, in part, the quality services provided to children and families. Partners include but are not limited to: Stanislaus County Board of Supervisors, Behavioral Health & Recovery Services, Children and Families Commission, Community Services Agency, Probation, United Way, various school districts, foundations, Federal and State agencies. We are grateful to all of our funders for fostering the health and well-being of our communities through their support of Center for Human Services' shelter, prevention, intervention, treatment & counseling services.

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