



If Given A Chance identifies high school students who have been faced with extraordinary social, medical and economic challenges and provides them with mentoring and financial assistance to support their efforts in completing a college degree or vocational training program.



Cinthya Cisneros

September 2020

Celebrating 25 Years Supporting Napa County Students

Our expanded program

If Given A Chance is celebrating its 25th year of identifying and supporting vulnerable youth of Napa County. Youth who have experienced homelessness or extreme poverty, suffered abuse, neglect, faced daunting health problems, or made poor choices.

If Given A Chance has successfully expanded its program to include mentoring the complex procedure of successfully choosing the best suited college and completing the application process along with providing financial reimbursement for college entry expenses through their senior year of high school. The goal is to deepen our support to ensure students and alumni will have long term success.

If Given A Chance continues its financial and mentoring support throughout our students' undergraduate college years or completion of their vocational training.

Please help us help them.

Dear Friend,

What a year this has been for all of us. It continues to be challenging and requires our continued dedication and ingenuity to meet the realities that the pandemic has imposed. If Given a Chance is celebrating its 25th year dedicated to Napa County youth. 2020 has been a year filled with innovation for our program and the need for flexibility to deal with today's rapidly changing environment. We have expanded our services and deepened our commitment to our vulnerable aspiring students in this, our twenty-fifth year thank you to our dedicated supporters who continue with us as we pivoted our Annual Awards Dinner to a six-day online video celebration sharing our students' stories, as we reached out to founding community board members and students from years past to share their personal experiences. We invite you to witness the heartfelt and engaging community videos. They are available to view and enjoy at <https://www.ifgivenachance.org/event2020>.

Each year we highlight and honor one of our amazing alumnae. Cinthya Cisneros, a 2008 IGAC recipient, thanks to you is living her dream. Cinthya, who entered this country as an immigrant, grew up in a low income household.

Her parents worked extremely hard. She experienced unspeakable personal trauma. She did not believe that college was within reach. At that time there was no DACA or Dream Act and due to her immigration status, she was ineligible for most student aid programs. She was heartbroken that, while she was accepted to UC Berkeley, she had to decline because she lacked the necessary funds (\$30,000- \$50,000 a year).

Cinthya didn't give up. She was awarded financial and emotional mentoring from If Given a Chance throughout her years at Sonoma State University. Numerous times she didn't know if she would be able to "make it". Cinthya entered college as a frightened, economically insecure Latina student, not only in terms of her ethnicity, but also in regard to her career choice, science, a field dominated primarily by men

"Having the support of If Given a Chance through those years was essential to help me navigate my future, be able to go to college and ultimately give back. "

Cinthya graduated from Sonoma State University with a Bachelors of Science degree in Chemistry and within days got her U.S. Residency that enabled her to work. She then went on to get her teaching credential and was a role model for high school students who share her passion for the field.

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ilovelacheve.com

Chemistry has continued to be Cinthya's passion. During school breaks Cinthya, with her love of water chemistry, brewed beer in her parents' garage while her mother, a professional baker, complemented her beverage making with sweet and savory treats. They called the garage "La Cheve", and the seed was planted.

This spring in the midst of Covid-19 Cinthya's dream became "La Cheve Bakery and Brews" located in the landmark building, the Old Adobe newly renovated by Justin Altamura, who has become a regular patron.

Cinthya's dream was to own a business where she could share her passion for brewing beer, highlight Latino winemakers and create a family business that would include her mother, father, siblings and uncle. "I have always wanted to help people in any way that I can. I wanted to create a space that is cozy for people of all ages. I love payday where I take care of my employees, knowing it's a tough time for everybody right now", Cinthya explains. "My first payroll I cried. I am so proud that I am able to employ people in our community. I am forever grateful". We encourage you to visit and taste the absolutely delicious menu with subtleties in the flavor profiles that make the food unique and tasty. Arrive early because they do sell out of many items by later in the day. Cinthya is a testament to listening to her inner compass, changing direction to better suit her current circumstances and driving in a home run! For more info, go to: ilovelacheve.com

If Given a Chance has deepened its commitment to support more vulnerable Napa County students beginning in high school. Serving 35 students per year, we have welcomed nine high school juniors to join our If Given A Chance family. We are growing our capacity with a goal each year to sustainably support more than 100 students which will give back to the Napa community as a whole. We are only serving 5% of the need that exists. One of our former students is now a member of our Board of Directors. We are so proud of Gianna Peralta, If Given a Chance 2009 recipient, who now leads the Infection Prevention Management program at Queen of the Valley Medical Center in Napa.

Thank you for your continued trust. We are most grateful for your loyalty and support. Please join us with a generous gift to ensure the growth and impact of IGAC program for students. With more community support we will be able to serve a greater number of students who need our support. Visit us online at www.ifgivenachance.org/donate

With gratitude,

Allison Haley
President

Celebrating **25**
Years

Supporting Napa County Students

If Given a Chance is a 501c3 not-for-profit organization, ID#91-1852336.
Your donation may be tax deductible as allowed by law.

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