

MAKE YOUR 2025 CONTRIBUTION BY  
**DECEMBER 31**Support Hope Builders before year-end  
with a gift of stock, check, credit card or  
through your donor-advised fund.TO LEARN HOW, VISIT  
[tsjhopebuilders.org/donate](http://tsjhopebuilders.org/donate)**PATHWAYS TO PROSPERITY.**[tsjhopebuilders.org](http://tsjhopebuilders.org)**A NOTE FROM  
SHAWNA  
SMITH, CEO**

I often find myself referring to the "Operating Instructions" written by Hope Builders' founder, Sister Eileen Mcnerney, upon her retirement. In these instructions, she offers nine pieces of advice learned over her years of walking young people out of poverty.

Number one instructs, "Love others with no expectation of love or kindness in return" while number four is an important reminder, "Don't work harder at rescuing than the person you are trying to rescue."

Hope Builders is not about doing the work for someone.

Instead, it creates an environment by which each young adult can invest in their own abilities and develop the resilience needed to succeed. This approach, and the talents of the team supporting them, ensures trainees leave with confidence and accountability to build and sustain their own pathway to prosperity.

You are a critical member of the Hope Builders' team. Whether you are part of our community as a donor, volunteer, employer or friend, your involvement reminds a young person that they are not alone on the journey.

Thank you for giving hope and life to others.

Merry Christmas and Happy Holidays,

*Shawna Smith*

Shawna Smith



Scan the QR code  
to learn more about  
our founder's vision.

# THE HOPE BUILDERS PLEDGE: COMMITTING TO A BRIGHTER FUTURE

At Hope Builders, every trainee begins their journey by committing to a powerful pledge. This contract is more than words on paper; it's the foundation of a life-changing transformation.

Each trainee declares: "I am ready to invest in myself." They commit to showing up, staying accountable, taking initiative, and pushing through challenges. They pledge to work hard, stay focused, be team players, and overcome obstacles with determination. For many, it's the first time they've been asked to make, and keep, such a promise to their own success.

The pledge reflects the core of Hope Builders' model: empowerment through accountability. While staff and mentors provide training, coaching, and wraparound support, true success begins when trainees take ownership of their growth. Every commitment builds the discipline and resilience that employers seek and that lasting success requires.

The result over 30 years: 7,500 lives transformed. 77% of trainees are placed in a job, and more than 80% retain their employment.

The trainee pledge reminds us that change starts with commitment. As Hope Builders concludes



a milestone year celebrating 30 years of impact, we are inspired to look ahead. Our goal is to ensure all 30,000 disconnected young adults in the county have access to meaningful career opportunities. With your continued support, Hope Builders is dedicated to empowering the next generation of Hope Builders as they build lasting pathways to prosperity.

**Scan the QR code**

to read the full trainee pledge.

**BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

Carlos Gonzalez—Board Chair  
Shawna Smith—Exec. Director

Tim Blett  
Alex Calabrese  
Michael Cawlina  
Tara Cowell  
Olivia Lindsay  
Elizabeth Mirza  
Annette Morgan

Maria Elena Perales  
Jeff Randolph  
Ed Rodriguez  
Mike Smith  
Jon Storbeck  
Lisa Weaver  
Bruce Young

To volunteer, hire a graduate or learn more, visit our website

[tsjhopebuilders.org](http://tsjhopebuilders.org)

or contact us at

[info@tsjhopebuilders.org](mailto:info@tsjhopebuilders.org) | 714-543-5105

Find us on social media



# FROM PROMISE TO SUCCESS

At our recent **Heroes of Hope** celebration as part of our **10 Days for Launching Careers** campaign, attendees heard trainees recite their pledge to succeed at Hope Builders. Today, we're excited to share how three of these young adults have turned their commitment to growth into lasting success.

**SINCE JULY,  
YOU'VE HELPED  
48 YOUNG PEOPLE  
START CAREERS**

To see stories of your impact, visit [tsjhopebuilders.org/blog](https://tsjhopebuilders.org/blog)



## CRYSTAL: COMMITTED TO STAYING FOCUSED

When Crystal first joined Hope Builders, she was unsure of what the future held. She had been unemployed for more than a year, and felt like she was drifting through life surrounded by negative influences. Limited work experience and past failures in school made the future feel overwhelming. But Crystal committed to Hope Builders, showing up every day with a willingness to work hard and complete her best work.

Through hands-on training in child development and guidance from a case manager, Crystal developed both technical skills and the confidence to envision a better future. Today, she is thriving as a Behavior Technician, earning \$21/hour. "Hope Builders has helped me see a more meaningful and brighter future," Crystal says. "I am excited to move on to the next step in my life knowing I have the support, guidance, and hands-on experience to help me become successful."



## DANIEL: DEDICATED TO PUSHING THROUGH CHALLENGES

Daniel applied to Hope Builders three times before he felt able to commit to succeeding in the program. He spent the first few years after high school feeling hopeless and without a purpose. At age 20, he was ready to change but realized there were barriers, including limited access to transportation and a lack of professionalism, that threatened to derail his progress.

At Hope Builders, Daniel embraced the Construction Training Program's structure. He fell in love with carpentry and, for the first time, he saw a career path for himself. He committed to taking whatever steps necessary to succeed. He worked with his case manager to learn to take leadership, ask questions, and manage his emotions in the workplace. Together, they came up with a plan to overcome his transportation barriers, which involved securing his driver's license.

In September, he started his first carpentry job. He reflects, "My time at Hope Builders will be a part of my life I will always be grateful for. I was given a second chance and an opportunity to build a stable and peaceful life so my future family won't struggle like I did."



## ELI: PLEDGING TO BUILD A BETTER FUTURE

For Eli, success is a new experience. At age 25, he looked at his employment history and doubted he would ever have an opportunity to move beyond minimum-wage jobs.

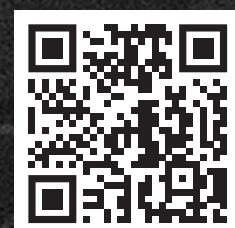
Once he was accepted to Hope Builders' Child Development Careers program, Eli resolved to prove to himself and to others that he was capable of change. He built the habits of professionalism that lead to lasting success. His drive and initiative impressed our employer partners, and he was offered a job as a Behavior Technician earning \$21/hour.

Now, instead of being caught in the cycle of poverty, he is focusing on the future: "My goal is to continue advancing my skills as a behavioral technician. One day, I want to go back to college to become a child and family social worker."

Graduate	Employer	Hourly Wage
Andiliz P.	United Behavior Consultants	\$22.00
Ashley Q.	ABA Enhancements	\$20.00
Crystal S.	Strategic Kids	\$21.00
Elva D.	Reviv Functional Psychiatry & TMS Wellness Center	\$20.00
Emily R.	United Behavior Consultants	\$22.00
Israel G.	Sydea Medical Practice	\$19.00
Jeremiah W.	The Tailored Closet of Orange County	\$20.00
Joanna R.	Magin Behavioral Therapies	\$18.00
Jonathan H.	RSI Cabinets	\$19.00
Karina I.	Lemon Tree Pediatrics	\$20.00
Kobe F.	Sundance Plumbing	\$21.00
Lizette M.	SilvaCare Direct Primary Care	\$18.00
Monique R.	UCI Medical Center	\$24.17
Rosalie M.	PAL's	\$22.00
Wendy R.	Western Orthopedic Surgical Associates (WOSA)	\$22.00

**YOUR SUPPORT TRANSFORMS POTENTIAL INTO LASTING CAREERS**

The journey of every trainee begins with the generosity of our community.



Scan here to donate

Your donations fund training and mentorship for hundreds of young adults like Crystal, Daniel and Eli each year. On the first day of orientation, every trainee pledges, "Hope Builders is my stepping stone. I'm all in. This is where my future begins."

Join us as we turn their commitment into meaningful careers. Donate today by visiting [tsjhopebuilders.org/donate](https://tsjhopebuilders.org/donate)

