News from Spanish Coalition for Housing

A client success story: Thriving after Domestic Violence

Spanish Coalition for Housing assists over 10,000 clients every year and each person has his/her own story to share. Isabelle Sanchez, like many women before her, came to SCH with a story - a story of pain, of fear, of domestic violence.

Isabelle is a loving young mother of several children. Before coming to SCH, Isabelle had lived through her deepest fears. She experienced domestic violence in a marriage she thought was built upon a solid foundation. She had tried to leave many times, but it was no easy task, and it often isn't in cases such as hers.

With the support of her friends and neighbors, she was able to get out of the situation with her husband, but it wasn't long after that the rest of her world started to fray at the seams. She got reduced hours at work and had to switch shifts because of that reduction, and on top of that, there was also a cut in her pay. To make matters even worse, she had gotten into a car accident and it cost her over $1000 to get the car fixed. When Isabelle left, she dedicated herself to working and taking care of her

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household and children. Unfortunately, that was proving to be harder than she ever imagined.

Among Isabelle's group of supporters was her friend, Amelia Reyna. Amelia had been to SCH for a similar situation and knew we could help Isabelle.

The shame and emotional turmoil that Isabelle was experiencing nearly prevented her from seeking help from SCH, but Amelia insisted. Isabelle explained the financial hardships she was enduring, but it didn't take long for SCH staff to realize there was more to Isabelle's crisis. They promptly took her into a private room and called in counselors, Ruthie Maldonado and Carmen Landecho.

Isabelle explained the gravity of her situation in detail; she said her husband would come home ready to argue. This behavior had built to the point where he had beaten her so badly that her young daughter had to call the police because Isabelle was unconscious on the floor. She said she has been in the hospital as a result of her husband's abuse on more than one occasion. The severity of the situation is what finally caused her to leave on her own with her children.

Ruthie and Carmen are passionate about helping victims of domestic violence seek ways to not only help survivors make it, but to thrive on their own. They worked closely with Isabelle to help her feel safe and get her life back together.

"[Ruthie and Carmen] treated me with a lot of attention and love," Isabelle said. "Just coming here, just talking for that moment, helped me get a weight off. I felt like I was just able to let go of a burden."

SCH was able to get Isabelle rental assistance, which helped her pay for her utilities, necessities for her home, and all the things her children needed.
"As long as I was taken care of, I was able to pay off the bills," Isabelle said. "I came out on top and now I feel like I can do it on my own."

Isabelle's story is not uncommon. It happens to so many, but so few are willing to talk about it out of fear or anxiety. SCH has the passion and drive to build a program specifically catered towards domestic violence victims that will allow us to get them the resources they need quickly and successfully. Often times, the victim will return to his/her abuser because they face financial hardship. Not one person should have to that as an option and SCH refuses to.

The development of this program could save countless adults and children and we hope you will consider helping us achieve that goal. We are able to grow and help people to flourish through the dedication of supporters like you.

Please note - names have been changed to protect the identity of the clients.

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**SCH UPDATE**

Spanish Coalition for Housing (SCH) is proud to announce we will be a part of Univision’s Familia Y Hogar event for the first time ever on Saturday March 21st and Sunday the 22nd at the Donald E. Stephens Convention Center (formerly known as the Rosemont Convention Center). This event is free with the exception of paid parking, and runs from 12 – 6 pm on both Saturday and Sunday.

Thanks to our sponsor, National Council of La Raza (NCLR), we will be stationed at a booth with any information you need and participating in a panel to answer more questions on March 22nd. And the best part? This event is family friendly!

As you learn about the many different organizations through seminars and panels, you will also have the opportunity to play games, take part in different activities, see and hear live music performances and much more.

SCH is excited for the chance to participate in an event at such a large scale because it gives us the unique opportunity to reach many more families, and one of them could be yours.