



## Connecting to Sources That Heal

Women's Life Change participants enjoy fellowship and learn new skills as part of the Hospitality and Culinary Program at the Eugene Mission.

*"Why are you downcast, O my soul? Why so disturbed within me? Put your hope in God, for I will yet praise him, my Savior and my God." Psalm 42:5*

If you've spent time around guests who have just arrived at the Eugene Mission, you know what a downcast soul looks like. The guest's head and eyes are lowered and shoulders appear to carry a heavy weight.

As time goes by, heads lift, shoulders straighten and a spark of life and hope comes into our guests' eyes. The work of surviving on the street, the burdens of past traumas and the pain of disconnection from loving relationships melts away as our guests find dignity in the structure and purpose of their new schedules.

There's something about getting connected to a "home base" again that gives guests the energy and self-respect they need to begin the journey of healing and reaching back out to the healthy community from which they have separated.

For many guests, especially those dealing with addictions, the pain they carry developed long ago, often in childhood. We sometimes think of homelessness as something that occurs as soon as someone loses their home, but you could also see it as the physical representation of a much deeper spiritual condition – a soul that has lost its family, its connection to love and the four walls within which love is expressed and close bonding takes place.

At the Eugene Mission, we strive to show our guests how a safe, caring and responsible home operates. Our programs are centered in relationships so guests learn how to form more secure and healthy bonds. We seek to cultivate structure

and order in our guests' lives through daily classes, life skills assignments and activities.

Guests in our Life Change Relapse Prevention program spend several weeks acclimating to the Eugene Mission and the people who live in it before they begin the intensive instruction in the program. Many of the guests are learning skills such as conflict resolution, sharing resources, boundaries and the power of forgiveness for the first time.

Although this healing work is difficult for our guests, it comes with endless rewards. We celebrate every milestone achieved, big and small, whether a guest learned how to release a grievance, face abuse, or develop a healthier lifestyle. We see a growing joy in our guests' faces, replacing the old burdens and traumas and powering them to a better future.

We know there is no pain or past that is too much for Christ to heal and we find hope in sharing that joy with our guests!

*"The Lord builds up Jerusalem; he gathers the exiles of Israel. He heals the brokenhearted and binds up their wounds." Psalm 147:2-3*

*"Ah, Sovereign Lord, you have made the heavens and the earth by your great power and outstretched arm. Nothing is too hard for you." Jeremiah 32:17*

In Gratitude & Praise,

*Sheryl Balthrop*

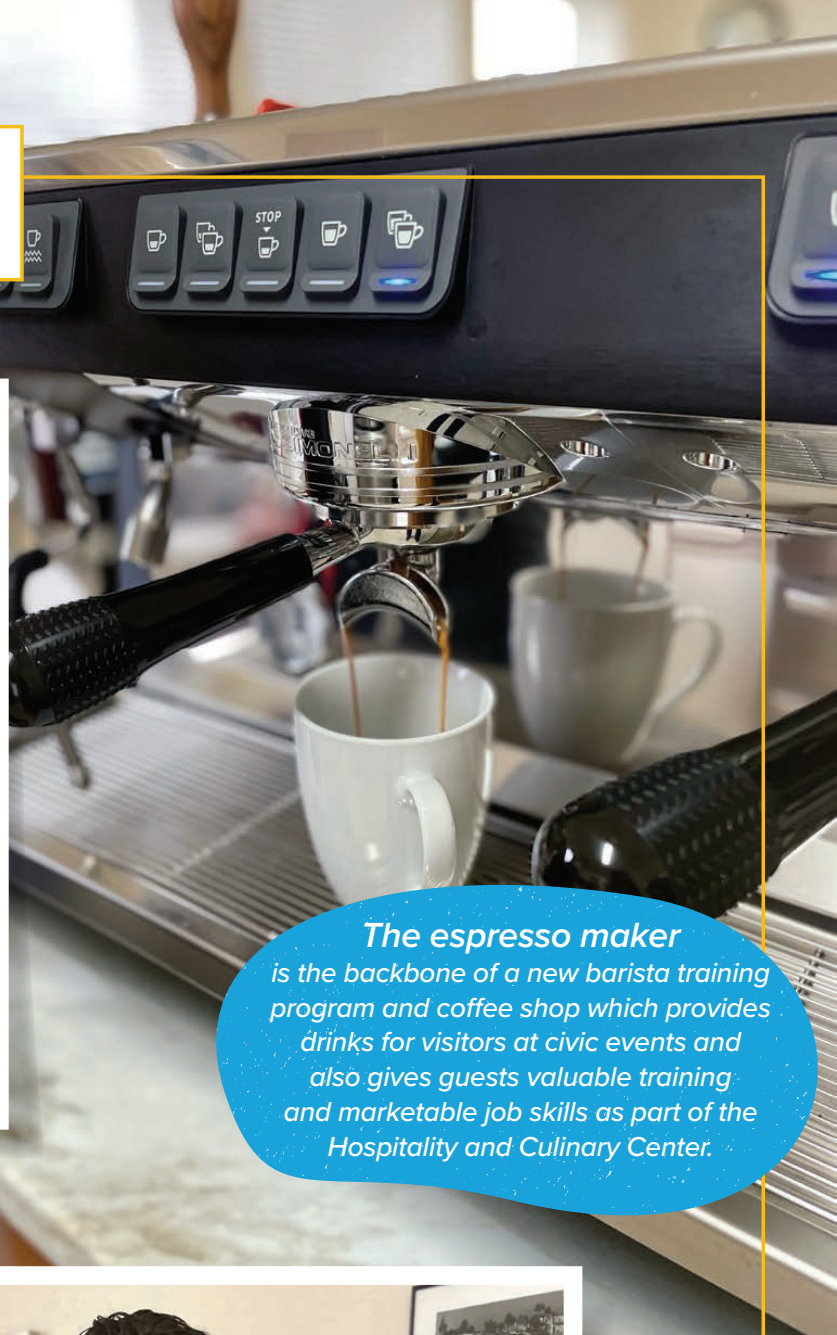
Executive Director



# Barista Program



**Guests at the Eugene Mission** have been training on a new espresso machine we received as part of a grant from the Robert and Toni Bader Charitable Foundation.



**The espresso maker** is the backbone of a new barista training program and coffee shop which provides drinks for visitors at civic events and also gives guests valuable training and marketable job skills as part of the Hospitality and Culinary Center.



**And, the lattes are delicious!**  
We've been gathering and having both deep and joyful conversations, just like you would at your favorite shop.

# FINDING NEW LIFE AND A NEW DREAM

David Jarvis knew from the time he was a child growing up in the 60's in Los Angeles that he wanted to work on the railroad. The tracks went somewhere mysterious and unknown, he recalled, and he just knew he was meant to make a career out of his passion for trains.

"It was the marching of the sound, of steel and clanking motors and guys leaning out the window of the train blowing that whistle – oh, that whistle! They looked like they were having a good time," David said.

After high school, he began applying for jobs, or, as he puts it, kicking down doors and his dream finally came true. He worked as a switchman, brakeman and conductor and then in the early 90s, his company offered buyouts to workers and many of them accepted, leaving the workforce depleted and workers taking on extra shifts and losing sleep in a very dangerous work environment.

After several of David's friends were killed due to accidents and sleep deprivation, his dream lost its appeal and he took a buyout, which he quickly spent. He tried a few other odd jobs, but nothing fulfilled him and he became homeless. "I was embarrassed," David said. "I couldn't tell my friends I had lost my dream job."

He did what he did best, which was hop a freight train, and he spent the next few decades struggling to make a living and find peace with his losses at the railroad. About 7 years ago, David was living in Washington when a friend told him about the Eugene Mission and he came to stay here, but he left and went back to Washington.

When the pandemic hit, shelters went on lockdown and David lived on the street, under bridges and wherever he could lay his head. He eventually received his pension, which he says kept him alive, but he needed so much more. He called the Eugene Mission and asked to come back. When he arrived, he found that many things had changed.

"The Mission was structured differently," he said. "Now we have the R<sup>3</sup> program, which has really helped me. I regained my bearings and was able to focus on what I wanted to do, build a savings and get enrolled in a housing program."

He said consistent encouragement and guidance from his Navigator Tanya Miner helped him keep going and stay hopeful that his life wasn't over just because he lost his old dream. He said he knows God is guiding and directing him.

In Lane County, a process called Coordinated Entry helps people who are experiencing homelessness get placed on a central waitlist for available housing programs. Applicants fill out an assessment, called the Front Door Assessment, which helps identify a person's barriers to housing and severity of need. To David's surprise, he skyrocketed to the top of the list and has found housing.

David is now 66 and says there were times when he feared he might be on the street forever. "There are three things I never lost," he said. "I didn't lose faith in the Father, Jesus, or the Holy Spirit."

Although his dream of working on the railroad is long gone, he says he is filled with hope for his future and is living his "fourth" chance, through the grace of God. "I'm going to make the most of it!" David said.



## Coordinated Entry at a Glance

- Coordinated Entry is a process to help unhoused people in Lane County gain access to housing by being identified, referred, and connected to programs.
- Applicants fill out a Front Door Assessment, which identifies needs and barriers and also acts as a referral to other services throughout Lane County.
- At the Eugene Mission, we currently have **87 guests** who have completed the Front Door Assessment and are eligible for a variety of housing programs and services.

## Last Month's Notable Numbers



**100's** of men, women and children received Hope, a healthy temporary living environment, all necessities, & relational engagement, programming, and navigation services



**44,147** meals served to unhoused individuals



**1,156** volunteer relational engagement hours with guests



**8,680** class, vocational training, and life skill hours

# Turning Ashes Into Beauty

David Miller, a guest in the R<sup>3</sup> program at the Eugene Mission, suffered serious abuse in childhood at the hands of his stepfather, who spent 35 years in prison and who has since died.

Due to his trauma, David was pushed into a life on the streets and spent around 5 years tent camping and dealing with the effects of drugs, which he used to mask his pain, before he found hope and a new path at the Eugene Mission.

David is grateful to be receiving care and support, but noted that he wouldn't have come to a place of desperation if not for the pain of his childhood.

David is not alone in dealing with the effects of child abuse. In Lane County, 24,000 children, or 1 in 3, have experienced abuse or neglect in their lives, while 37.7 percent of women and 31.1 percent of men have experienced child abuse and neglect, around 100,000 adults in Lane County, according to research cited by 90by30, a community-campus partnership housed at the University of Oregon's College of Education.

The good news is that we can prevent the long-term consequences of abuse through positive, healthy connections. David never experienced loving connections to adults when he was a child, but he is receiving care now and he is hopeful for his future.

"I made a pact with my sister that we're going to end this cycle of abuse," he said. "Recovery is a new beginning – I'm laying to rest an old book I've read over and over and picking up a new book. I'm laying to rest everything I was before the Eugene Mission."

*"God has changed my life," David shared. "I've never felt so free; it took settling down and being in a place of kindness for the first time."*

## Ways to Give

Unlike traditional homeless shelters or services, the Eugene Mission helps our guests identify, address and overcome the issues that brought them to our doors. Guests of the Eugene Mission enjoy a safe and sober campus, like skills classes, vocational training, sober recreation and hobby development. All of this is achieved with zero public funding. We appreciate your investment and partnership in the lives of our guests.

- Schedule a tour and consider volunteer opportunities or financial partnerships. **Contact Miket@eugenemission.org**
- Become a monthly sustaining supporter at [eugenemission.org/giving/](http://eugenemission.org/giving/)
- Remember the Eugene Mission in your estate planning: FEIN #93-0563797
- Schedule a visit for breakfast or lunch with your church, small group, friends, etc. We are usually available Monday-Wednesday. **Contact Beths@eugenemission.org**
- Donate using the envelope included with this newsletter

