



## community impact

By Josh Skalniak | Photos by Scott Streble Photography and Kim Tarnopolski | Sponsored By Parker & Sons

Her path is even more clear today because – through a unique vocational development program at the center – she has been given the opportunity to lay down a foundation for a career in culinary management. The 13-week program gives the women a chance to become certified as food managers and learn in-depth knowledge about the inner workings of the restaurant business. It also teaches them skills that will serve them long after they leave the center.

The Food Services program, which costs \$2 million annually to support, is funded almost completely by donations from private organizations, such as 100+ Women Who Care Valley of the Sun, a philanthropic group of women who recently donated \$10,500 to the charity. 100+ Women Who Care is the most recent organization to help the Mission, thanks to two members – Mary Jordan and Ahwatukee resident, Carina Burtell – who nominated the nonprofit at their Ahwatukee meeting in May.

Visit [www.100wwevalleyofthesun.org](http://www.100wwevalleyofthesun.org) or [www.PhoenixRescueMission.org](http://www.PhoenixRescueMission.org) to learn more about these organizations. The next meeting of 100+ Women Who Care Valley of the Sun is August 22 at the Foothills Golf Club. Guests are welcome.

# FROM homeless TO hopeful

TO

hopeful

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Michelle Rader's world began to unravel after she and her boyfriend were evicted from their home due to their addiction to drugs. With nowhere to go, they found themselves living out of a truck on the streets of Phoenix.

News of the eviction reached her seven-year-old son's teachers, and she lost custody of her only child. Though she was devastated, she continued to use. That is, until one day she had an epiphany.

"If I didn't do something different, I knew I was going to lose my son permanently," said Rader. "I was either going to die or end up in jail." That's when she lost her taste for the life she was living.

The Department of Child Services referred her to Phoenix Rescue Mission's Changing Lives Center, the only faith-based recovery program in the region offering long-term, comprehensive services to women and children. It was exactly what she needed.

A week-and-a-half later, the police informed her that her boyfriend had been found beaten to death on the streets. "That could have been me," said Rader.

After 12 months at the Changing Lives Center, Michelle graduated from the program. She also earned back full custody of her son. "Thanks to this place, I have a way to move forward and support my family," she said.

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