



THE LOOP

A COLLECTION OF STORIES FROM AROUND NEVADA

SEPTEMBER 2021

ISSUE 6

VOLUME 1



Greetings from WestCare Nevada!

There are some very significant national days of awareness, remembrance, and symbolism associated with the month of September which also coincide with the work that we have dedicated ourselves to do within WestCare Nevada. September is **National Recovery Month**, **National Suicide Prevention Month**, **Pain Awareness Month** and plays host to **Patriot Day**, just to name a few. What has become clear to me is that September signifies a refocusing of energies or a refocusing of an individual's inner power towards regaining possession of or returning to an improved state of mind, body, and soul.

What we must remember is that to do so, there must be some type of action or process that emphasizes and supports a person's potential and capability to embark on such a journey and I believe that this journey begins with hope and with finding meaning. Now, although hope is intrinsic within every individual, there are times when those of us in the helping profession must hold on to hope for others until they can hold on to it for themselves. In fact, that should be the essence of our work, which also consists of empowerment, assisting in the development of healthy coping skills, facilitating the development of a healthy sense of self, and guiding others in developing supportive relationships and social inclusion.

This month, we are highlighting our programming in Northern Nevada, specifically Reno. **WestCare Homefront** provides transitional living and

case management services for the men and women who have so courageously risked their lives in serving our country; yet, for some reason, may have temporarily lost their way. The impact of their testimonies will not only change you, but they will also inspire you to continue to work hard for those who come through our doors seeking healing.

I consider it an honor and privilege to have been given this opportunity to serve others and to work around so many dedicated staff who like myself, may also be in recovery from substance use, mental health, and suicidality. That is why we should never take this opportunity lightly nor should we ever think that we are not making a difference in the lives of others.

In closing, there is one other item that I am compelled to acknowledge in relation to the month of September. That item is **Hispanic Heritage Month**. With that, I will leave you with this... *"Viva la raza."*



Leo Magrdichian
Leo Magrdichian, LCSW, LCADC
Vice President, Operations



westcare.com

RECOVERY IS FOR EVERYONE

Every person. Every family. Every community.



"Twenty-seven years ago, I detoxed at WestCare in Las Vegas, NV at the age of 17. Bibles were on every bedside table and I had no desire to read one. But, I read a good portion of that Bible during my nine-day stay. Recovery leads to redemption and from junky to clergy. I am humbly blessed to be one of the many living examples of WestCare DNA personified."

– **Ryan Creelman**, Spiritual Director, WestCare Foundation



"My recovery means being present in my children's lives. It means no matter how hard life hits me, I never have to pick up again. My recovery means that I can love the woman looking back at me in the mirror."

– **Karen Cavazos**, Case Manager, Community Involvement Center



"My recovery is the first priority in my life. It means that I get to live and work in recovery every day. It means that I am a miracle. It means that I live in my truth every single day. Lastly, it means that I get to be a present mother to my son and a loved member of my family. Thank you, WestCare."

– **Courtney Riemer**, Behavioral Health Tech, WestCare Nevada Women & Children's Campus

Recovery is FREEING

"My recovery means that I am free from the bondage of self that I put myself in. My recovery has taught me that I can enjoy life on life's terms. I believe that each one can teach one."

– **Michelle Murphy**, Behavioral Health Tech, Community Involvement Center



Community Action Council (CAC) Spotlight Kirk Holmes

Kirk Holmes is a true WestCare success story. He graduated WestCare California's Bakersfield Residential program in 2003 and has stayed with the WestCare Family ever since.

Kirk has been called a creative genius who thinks outside the box. He began exploring what he could accomplish with a computer at the age of eight after receiving a book on programming for Christmas.

For the past 15 years, he has focused on planning, implementing, and managing online marketing projects for large and small companies alike. He holds certifications from Google in AdWords and Analytics as well as marketing automation certifications from SharpSpring and Hubspot.

Since 2015, Kirk has become a serial entrepreneur - starting multiple businesses of his own while continuing to help others in the digital marketing and software development space. In 2016, he was awarded U.S. Patent number

9,302,800 for a System And Method For Forming Fluid Mixtures. In 2017, Kirk formed Bolt Goodly, a digital marketing firm, with his wife and a partner. He is still a Senior Partner and serves a variety of clients from not for profits to distributors and professional services firms. He also works in data brokering and software development.

Kirk, having a strong passion for the community, serves on the local Community Action Council (CAC) for WestCare Nevada and is a proud member of the Las Vegas Rotary Club where he has sat on the board in charge of Public Image for the last four years. In 2018, he was awarded the honor of Rotarian of the Year by the Las Vegas Rotary Club.

Kirk and his wife, Becca, are expecting their first child this November. His name is Neil, after Neil Armstrong, showing their strong affection for space and science. Their beloved Wheaten Terrier is named Artemis after the upcoming moon missions.

READY TO BEGIN YOUR RECOVERY JOURNEY?

If you or a loved one needs help with substance abuse, WestCare Nevada is here to help you along every step of the way. Below are numbers to talk with one of our team members.

Las Vegas Area: 702-385-3330
Pahrump Area: 775-751-6990
Tonapah Area: 775-346-1686
Reno Area: 775-996-1989

VETERANS CRISIS LINE

Are you a Veteran in crisis or are concerned about a loved one who served? Connect with the Veterans Crisis Line to reach a responder with the Department of Veteran Affairs.

1-800-273-8255 and Press 1
or Text 838255

NATIONAL SUICIDE PREVENTION LIFELINE

We can all help prevent suicide. The Lifeline provides 24/7, free and confidential support for anyone who is in distress as well as prevention and crisis resources.

1-800-273-8255

Program Spotlight: Reno Homefront Veterans' Transitional Living



WestCare Nevada's Reno Homefront is a transitional living program for homeless Veterans. Homefront partners with the **VA's Health Care for Homeless Veterans (HCHV) Program** and the **VA Sierra Nevada Healthcare System** to provide specific services to help Veterans cope with the underlying factors of homelessness including addiction, mental illness, co-occurring disorders, PTSD, unemployment, poverty and relationship issues such as domestic violence. All services are provided using the housing first model and currently houses 20 Veterans. Transportation is provided for medical, shopping, and social needs. Each Veteran shares a two-bedroom apartment and has his/her own room. Homefront's case manager aids with treatment planning and budget needs and works with their VA liaison to ensure that all medical, mental health, and dental needs are accommodated.

Homefront is about creating a fun and friendly atmosphere while building social networks and lasting changes in all areas of a Veteran's life. After graduation, Veterans are welcome to attend any outings or activities and visit as often as they wish. Staff continue to provide resources and support when needed to guarantee continued success in the community. Homefront also has a Case Management Grant Services Program that provides services to 10 clients in the community that have either graduated from Homefront or other VA grant programs and are in need of assistance with acclimating to their new surroundings. Homefront takes pride in providing an environment where all Veterans feel safe and can obtain their goals.

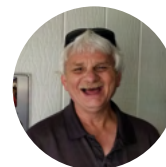
Meet Ted, in Maintenance, at Homefront



"I woke up behind Motel 6. Here we go again. I am dirty, hungry, and need clean clothes. God, can you hear me? I need these things. I refuse to quit and will accept the challenge. I am ready to get down and get busy. I need a sign. My insulin is gone and my blood sugar is too high. So, I'm going to the VA. They ask me if I am homeless. They tell me about the programs here in Reno for homeless Veterans. I am thinking this is the sign that God is sending me. They tell me that someone will call me today. The phone rings. It is Sher from WestCare. She asks me some questions and says that I can move in on Monday.

I considered this moment my welcome home day and since then, Sher and WestCare have gone above and beyond getting me straightened out. I now have all of my medications, my DD214, and a job. I have graduated from the WestCare Grant Per Diem Program (GPD) and am now employed full-time at Homefront."

Meet Steven, Peer Support Specialist, at Homefront



"I am very grateful to WestCare and the grant program by the Veterans Health Administration (VA). They have helped me more than I can put into words. When I took advantage of what they had to offer, I was as low as I could possibly go. I was homeless, jobless, unhealthy and a mess, psychologically. Sher and her staff picked me up by my bootstraps and got me back on my feet. It has been five years now since I came and received the help that I drastically needed. The program works and I am living proof of it.

I am now employed by the VA as a Distribution Tech for a little over four years now. I am also honored to be an onsite Peer Support Specialist for WestCare Homefront, helping other Veterans cope with their struggles in any way that I can. I thoroughly enjoy paying it forward."



Meet
SARA LEE

I served in the U.S. Army as a 25U Signal Support Systems Specialist. I was in from 2007 until 2014. I was also placed in Lewisville, TX in the 345th Psychological Operations Company (POC). I continued to serve as a Reservist as an E-5 in Texas, Oregon, and Washington. In 2011, my medical diagnosis erupted into a full episode. I experienced several intermittent hospitalizations at which time, my options led me to WestCare. By this time, I had lost my driver's license, became homeless, and lost my job as well as my marriage.

Since my arrival at WestCare in May of 2021, I have been provided with a safe place of residency, regained stability with my health, received counseling and more importantly, I now have my driver's license again. I am in the process of locating permanent housing and starting a non-profit to assist other Veterans that have experienced incarceration and require medical attention. I also plan to do some much-needed traveling. I am now a person that has regained self-worth and sociability, which will indeed help others to do the same.

Homefront is a wonderful program geared toward homeless Veterans and I am one of the lucky few, out of the many, who have benefited greatly from this program. I will soon be getting a housing voucher. My time at WestCare is up. However, they will follow me by making sure that I am alright when I am out on my own. My time at WestCare included scheduled visits to doctors, weekly inspections for cleanliness, visits to the local Food Bank, yearly visits to Stand Down at Capitol Hill, and outings for fun and recreational activities.

It is within this transitional housing program for Veterans that I started believing in God. My personal life has gotten so much better. This program makes lives better. WestCare and their staff have been touched by the hand of God. The revolving door of incarceration, mental hospitals, and homelessness has been broken. I have been blessed. My efforts were futile at best. Without the love and care that I received from others through WestCare, none of this would have happened. Hope is a word that comes to mind when at first, there was no hope to speak of.



Meet
ALLEN FARMER



Remembering Zachary Moran

By Andrew Moran, Development Director, WestCare Foundation

Zachary Julius Moran, age 43, of Las Vegas, NV, passed away after a tragic motorcycle accident on Saturday, August 21, 2021, surrounded by his family. Zachary is survived by his father, John T. Moran Jr.; his mother, Marilyn Moran; his daughter, Scarlet James, and her mother, Sara; his brothers, JT and Andrew; his sister, Addie; his nieces and nephews, Max, Hailey, Jeannie, Goldie, Hal, and Rose as well as his loving aunts, uncles, cousins, and his two dogs, Pupper and Lucy, who will be cared for by his longtime friend, Jeannette.

He will always be remembered for his fishing trips all over the world with his family and the time that he spent snowboarding with his nieces and nephews. He loved his family and enjoyed the many adventures that he went on with them all. His hobbies included gardening at his cabin in Utah and collecting antique golf clubs that were handed down by his father and paternal grandfather. He also loved working on hotrods and helping in the family's transportation business.

Zachary believed in giving back. He helped all mankind and never saw a homeless person that he wouldn't give a helping hand to. He had a giving nature and everyone that he met saved a special place for him. He had friends from all walks of life. The family conducted a private service and Zachary was laid to rest next to his beloved grandparents, uncle, and cousin.

In response to the untimely passing of Zachary Moran, a dear friend of WestCare Foundation, his family has asked that all donations in his memory be made to support the continued operation of our Harris Springs Ranch (HSR) program in Las Vegas Nevada. To donate to the program, please click the link below and select, "In Memory of Zachary Moran" from the dropdown list in PayPal.

[Donate to HSR in Memory of Zachary Moran online at westcare.com.](https://www.westcare.com/donate)

Join the family!

Current job openings in Nevada

Community Involvement Center (LV)

- Case Manager - MORE
- Behavioral Health Technician

Women & Children's Campus

- Behavioral Health Technician
- Maintenance Tech
- Cook

Homefront, Reno

- Behavioral Health Technician

Foundation Office, Henderson

- Human Resource Associate
- Payroll Assistant/Bookkeeper
- Application Support Specialist
- Credentialing Specialist
- Grant Development Officer
- Regional Accountant

Harris Springs Ranch

- Behavioral Health Technician
- Counselor - Level I

Community Triage Center (LV)

- Behavioral Health Technician
- Licensed Practical Nurse (LPN)
- Registered Nurse - Per Diem
- Case Manager
- Janitor

[View and apply for open positions online at careers.westcare.com.](https://careers.westcare.com)



Wearing a face mask that covers your mouth and nose helps slow the spread of COVID-19. They must be worn in all WestCare facilities.



Use hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol when soap and water aren't available.



Everyone likes a little space. Provide some distance between you and others to prevent widespread transmission.



Feeling sick? If you feel unwell or have symptoms of fever, cough or shortness of breath, stay home and consult your doctor.



Washing your hands for at least 20 seconds can keep you healthy and prevent spreading germs.



Take care of yourself. Find ways to relax and unwind. Remember to reach out to your support systems to share how you feel.

Find the latest COVID-19 news at [cdc.gov](https://www.cdc.gov)

Connect with us in Nevada

Get in touch with our Marketing Department to learn more about what is happening in WestCare Nevada at marketing@westcare.com