



JULY 2023

Christian Encounter NEWSLETTER



Meet the intern team: Front row (L to R): Finn Sheehan (San Jose, CA), Bethany Trull (Salem, OR), Tyler Alexander (Dayton, NV), Danika Young (Winchester, CA). Back row (L to R): Angel Sanchez (Merced, CA), Elliot Barnhill (Portland, OR), Brandon Parrish (Carmichael, CA), Cassie Peters (Elk River, MN).

AGONY RIDE 2023

July 28-29 | Sierra Valley

Come join us for the 41st Agony Ride! It's not too late to sign up to volunteer. We hope to see you there! Sign up at agonyride.org.

STAFF FAREWELL



Last month, we said a bittersweet goodbye to long-time staff member Sharon Palmer. Sharon arrived at Christian Encounter in 2010 and completed nine months of internship before joining the staff as the Girls' House Leader. Sharon served in this capacity for a year and then transitioned into the business office full-time, where she served faithfully until her departure. Reflecting on the past 13 years, Sharon shares, "There is so much grace experienced at the Ranch. As an intern I made mistakes and I was met with grace. As a staff person, in my weaknesses I was met with grace...I would define my time here by grace."

Sharon first met her husband Chris at the Agony Ride. They got married in 2020 in Angels' Meadow and had their first child, Caroline, in Oct '21. In January '22, they launched a custom cabinetry business, Palmer Works.

Upon her departure, Sharon says, "I've been thankful for the Ranch community through the different seasons. I'm thankful to still be in the area and that that community isn't ending."

Administration office remodel complete



Thanks to our maintenance team and several volunteers for their work on this remodel!

Year-end celebration & graduation 2023



Above: Board member Dr. Dave Heitman addresses the graduates. Right: Former intern Rachel Burdick presents former student Kayla with the Light in the World award. Below: Sophie makes a public proclamation of faith through baptism on Graduation Sunday.



Levi

Coming to the Ranch was one of the hardest things I've ever done. I never cared about finishing high school until I got to the Ranch and Suzanne and Robbin, my teachers, encouraged me that I could do this. I could finish high school. It wasn't easy, and even after all the help, I almost didn't graduate. Something I learned through it all is that I really can do the things I tell myself I cannot do. Not only because I worked harder to get things done, but also because I asked for God's help. "With man this is impossible, but with God all things are possible." (Matthew 19:26) That verse pretty much sums it all up for me. I told myself it was impossible, but when I asked for God's help, it was possible. I may not have made the best grades, but I did it. I graduated high school.



James

It's been a long time coming. I've never really enjoyed school that much, but high school hit different in a harder way. I entered a dark spot in my life and one thing led to another and soon I was up to my neck in trouble, not knowing where to go. Not too long after, I was on a plane to this place called the Ranch.

For a long time I felt like I had something to prove, but the Ranch was something different. Nobody here expected the highest level of performance from me. When I struggled, they walked by me, helped me through it and then we moved on. It was this type of community that helped me take the steps forward in things like vulnerability, leadership, and

becoming comfortable with using my voice. I decided that the environment that the Ranch had was something that I wanted to be a part of.

While I was growing in these areas, I neglected to grow in the area that brought me to the Ranch in the first place, and that was the desire to live in the dark. Once again, it got me in trouble multiple times. But the Ranch helped me back on my feet and gave me more grace than was deserved and we continued life. My love for the Ranch grew and what started off as an original 11-month stay turned into a two-year journey.... Thank you for helping me discover my purpose and encouraging me to seek the Lord in the good times and bad.



Katelyn

Flying 4 ½ hours to be here was the hardest thing I could ever do. I left my entire life behind to be in a foreign place.... But, when asked if I regret coming to the Ranch, my ultimate answer was no, because of how much I have grown... I have fought so hard to get to where I am and if it wasn't for my mom and Elise (my counselor) I probably wouldn't be where I am now....

I enjoyed the memories that I got to make here and I am definitely going to cherish them... I wholeheartedly believe that God was working through me this whole time... God was always there for me and He never gave up on me. The obstacles and the hardships were just a stepping stone that He placed before me just to show me that He's got me through it all. He wanted to see me overcome, and I did, I really did. And with that I will always put my worries on Him because I know that He will always get me through.



Brooke

Graduating class of 2023. Never thought I'd be saying that. So much has happened in these few months that I never thought I'd be experiencing. Throughout the three and a half months I've been here, I have learned so much, whether being educational or emotional. The people here have this inspiring passion that has taught me how to be more loving and caring than before, giving me one heck of a ride in realizing how love is so important. One of my favorite quotes from Ray Bradbury states, "Looking back over a lifetime, love is the answer to everything". The hellos and goodbyes of this place have shown me that the special connection with other people makes life so much more worth it.

In my time here at the Ranch, it took me about a month to realize that this wasn't just a simple program I could get through, but really an aid on helping me grow as a person. I came here to help better myself, but really didn't know exactly how much help I would be getting. From the mentors that have helped me through my rough moments, to the group around me showing me love I can't thank them enough. I can see the growth in not only myself, but in frankly everyone around me. Through the hilarious moments and hardships we've all gone through, I couldn't be more grateful. So I'm up here, saying thank you, to my family, friends, and authority figures who have made it possible for me to be here today.

Christian Encounter Ranch
PO Box 1022
Grass Valley, CA 95945

CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED

NONPROFIT ORG.
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
GRASS VALLEY, CA
PERMIT NO. 60

•

Join us for the 41st Agony Ride!
July 28-29, 2023

Christian Encounter is a non-profit, non-denominational, residential community helping 16- to 24-year-olds by providing love, spiritual guidance, high school education, counseling, and 24-hour supervision. Internships are offered to young adults 21 years and older. We are a member of the Evangelical Council for Financial Accountability, and all gifts are tax deductible.



MEMORIALS

In memory of Jim Parker, given by:
Norma Baker

In memory of Dave Roberts, given by:
Agnes Murphy

In memory of Virginia Tobias, given by:
Suzanne Hartley

HONORARIUMS

In honor of Kalah Richardson, given by:
Robert & Rebecca Richardson

STAFF INTRODUCTION



Sam Walker was hired as our new Business Office Manager and joined the staff team in May. Sam has been involved with Christian Encounter since 2016, when he began volunteering at our high school teaching math.

Sam served in the Navy for five years as a submarine weapons officer. He then began working at Lockheed Martin as a financial and project manager, where he stayed for 35 years.

Upon retiring in 2015, he and his wife Liz moved to Grass Valley. They have two grown children and two granddaughters.

On his decision to come out of retirement to take this position, Sam states, "It all boils down to doing it for the kids."