

Shirley's healthy change



Photo by Hannah Davey

Shirley Palomino discovered she was college material while volunteering at the Westminster Free Clinic in Thousand Oaks, a recipient of a grant from the Women's Legacy Fund at VCCF.

Shirley Palomino grew up so poor she watched as her mother picked through trash bins to feed the family. Although an excellent student at Thousand Oaks High School, Shirley could barely imagine herself going to college. No one in her immigrant family ever had.

The turning point came when Shirley volunteered at the Westminster Free Clinic's Teen Healthcare Training, supported by a grant from the Women's Legacy Fund at VCCF.

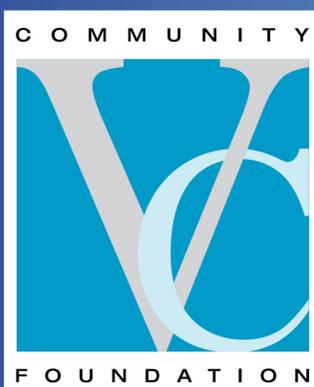
Still in high school, Shirley designed a wellness program called the Teen Promotores Health Outreach. She went door to door in low-income neighborhoods spreading the word about proper diet and exercise.

"I felt a sense of empowerment I had never felt up until that time," Shirley said.

Her proven organizational skills made her a highly recruited high school senior, and she was named to the Toyota Community Scholars Top 100 Seniors in the Nation in 2007.

Shirley went on to graduate from Wellesley College — an education aided by scholarships she won from VCCF.

You could say the bug to go to college was contagious for Shirley. She caught it at the Westminster Free Clinic.



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THE WOMEN'S LEGACY FUND AT VCCF

The Women's Legacy Fund is a network of donors dedicated to advancing the status of women and girls in Ventura County. It focuses on helping women and girls find ways to secure self-sustaining, independent and meaningful lives. Established in 1995 by 177 founders, the fund raised over \$1.5 million in its first 15 years and has awarded grants to Ventura County nonprofits that directly impact the lives of local women and girls.

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