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# From Starting Over to Standing Strong: A WorkNet Success Story

by Matthew Flint, Economic Development Analyst

**G**isela, a Stockton native, came to the Stockton WorkNet during one of the most difficult transitions of her life. After relocating back to California from Texas to leave a toxic relationship, she found herself starting over as a single parent; emotionally drained, financially strained, and unsure of what her future could look like. With limited resources and only a few belongings to her name, she sought a path forward towards stability and a career that aligned with her passion for mental health support.

Determined to rebuild her life for herself and her child, Gisela entered the program with the goal of strengthening her skills, restoring her confidence, and securing meaningful employment that could provide long-term stability.

Through WorkNet, Gisela was enrolled in the EWORKS program, where she received one-on-one support tailored to her needs. With the guidance of her EWORKS case manager, she refined her interview techniques, updated and reformatted her resume, and built a complete professional portfolio, including a customized cover letter and professional references. Having uncertainty about returning to school, she was also provided with career counseling, which helped her regain clarity about her long-term goal of pursuing a degree in the mental health field.

As she progressed through her job search, Gisela attended a WorkNet job fair that became a pivotal moment in her journey. Her preparation and newly strengthened skills helped her secure a position as a Mental Health Services Assistant Counselor. The role, which pays \$25 per hour, is perfectly aligned with her passion and offers a flexible schedule that supports her continued education.

This opportunity has been transformational for her. Gisela has since achieved financial independence, moved into her own home, and, most importantly, rediscovered her confidence and sense of purpose for her and her child.

Reflecting on her journey, Gisela shared:

*"My overall experience was great. I came in with nothing but myself, my child, and a few clothing items. Because I refused to give up on us, I pushed forward to get the job I have now—and today, I'm a true believer in my own success."*

Gisela's story is a powerful reminder that with the right support, guidance, and inner strength, rebuilding your life is not only possible, it's achievable. WorkNet is proud to have walked alongside her on this path toward a brighter future.