



"I play a role in a safe and peaceful community by giving hope to people who want a clean slate - offering services such as the Tattoo Removal Program."

- Esther M., Community Services Supervisor for the City of San José

I Play a Role Featured Story

Esther M. works as the Community Services Supervisor for the City of San José. She is responsible for the City's Anti-Graffiti and Litter Program, as well as the Clean Slate program (which is the program for tattoo removal). She is also involved in several initiatives through the Mayor's Gang Prevention Task Force. She says her role in creating a safe and peaceful community comes in the form of offering people hope and opportunity for change.

"I find that my role in preventing violence is really about offering the community, youth and families hope and peace. In one particular program, I'm dealing with human services through the Clean Slate Program. It really is about offering young people an opportunity to a clean slate, hope, change and transformation."

Esther is passionate about advancing efforts that will give children and families a sense of pride and belonging to their community.

"If you have a community that is full of graffiti and litter, it only creates more and can add to the violence versus if you have a graffiti-free community – that offers pride. It also gives people peace of mind, and in turn, you have more children and families out in the streets and in their neighborhoods."

Esther feels that making the time to connect with her daughters is important in helping them feel loved and supported. This is her role in creating a safe and peaceful environment at home.

"It so important to me to eat, have lunch and dinner, to have opportunities for us just to get together to sit down and check in. I have one child in college and the other in high school so for me it's so important to do that. I try to go to all of my daughter's games for sports. It's so important for me that she feels confident about herself and that she knows again that she has caring parents. My husband and I are very much involved and so I just have to tell them and remind them that I love them."

Esther's story is an example of how we all play a role in a safe and peaceful community. If you have an inspirational story you would like to share, please tell us about it. We want to hear from you. Visit www.ViolencFreeSCC.org and submit your story today and learn more about Violence Free Communities.