



"I play a role in a safe and peaceful community by teaching gang impacted youth that there are alternatives to violence."

- Rebecca E., Youth Outreach Worker for the City of San José

I Play a Role Featured Story

Rebecca E. is a Youth Outreach Worker for the City of San José. She currently volunteers for the Fresh Lifelines for Youth program also known as FLY. Rebecca says that working with organizations such as the FLY program has helped her apply her life experiences in a positive way by giving back to youth who are facing similar challenges.

"Having grown up in a violent community and household, that's all I knew and so throughout my childhood, the only way to solve conflict was using violence. Because of non-profits and community based organizations working with me to change my perspective and give me the tools to solve conflicts without violence, it really opened my mind and made me want to help other youth who were going through my exact situation."

As a mentor to youth, Rebecca finds ways to connect with them through her personal experiences to help them cope with difficult challenges and avoid unsafe and risky situations.

"Currently, I work with youth in building rapport, getting to know them, and then go from there because sometimes violence isn't the real issue with them. But, if there is violence, I try to be their mentor and share my story. That's how I connect with youth because I can relate to them through my personal experience."

Rebecca continues to give back to the FLY program. She volunteers her time to speak to middle and high school students to share her life experiences so they can believe that it's possible to have a similar outcome as hers.

"I'm always trying to volunteer in the community. I still work with the program that helped me. When they need me to come in and work with their youth I'm always there. We do community service, fundraisers, go to events and speak on violence or whatever the topic. We also get to go to middle schools and high schools to tell the youth our stories and how we've been helped through this agency to be a better person in the community, to be a leader."

Rebecca'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.ViolenceFreeSCC.org and submit your story today and learn more about Violence Free Communities.

