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## Honoring Women Who Overcome Challenges to Make a Better Life for Their Families

Women's History Month is upon us, and as we honor the accomplishments of trailblazer women from all walks of life whose passion and determination made it possible for present and future generations of women to succeed, we also celebrate the women who make history every day here in Compton. With passion and courage, the women of INMED L.A.'s Women's Support Group band together in support of one another to overcome life's barriers and foster empowerment.

Edith Guerrero came to INMED in January 2004 to participate in the Mommy and Me program, and has since participated in seven INMED training programs ranging from parenting education to computer skills classes. Initially described as "shy and quiet" by support group facilitator Olga Torres, Guerrero has found her voice as a very talented cake decorator.



Mothers in INMED's weekly women's support group work on building piñatas that they can sell to supplement their families' income. Meanwhile, their children take part in child development activities in the adjacent playroom.

**Learn more about  
Women's History Month**  
[www.womenshistorymonth.gov](http://www.womenshistorymonth.gov)

Guerrero says she began attending the women's support group out of curiosity. "I just wanted to see what it was about," she says. After the first meeting, she felt she could relate to the stories of abuse and neglect being shared by the group, since she grew up in a household with an abusive father. Her history of abuse made her very defensive and always on guard, and also contributed to her low self-esteem.

Torres says, "She came to me near tears because she felt like she wasn't good at anything. She lacked confidence in herself."

Guerrero began bringing flan (a rich caramel custard dessert) that her mother taught her to make to the support group and received rave reviews. When women began begging for the recipe, she was invited to teach three classes in the INMED L.A. kitchen. From there, she took a three-month cake decorating class. At the urging of Torres, she began taking pictures of her beautiful creations and INMED senior program manager Laura Moller-Leon helped her create business cards.

In November 2007, with the encouragement of the INMED staff and her friends from the women's support group, Guerrero began selling her flan and cakes. Guerrero says that without the support and enthusiasm of INMED staff, she would never have had the courage to turn her passion into a business. Now, she is determined to motivate other women and show that they can do anything—despite the challenges they may face.



Through the cake baking business she started with encouragement from INMED staff, Edith Guerrero is earning income that allows her to better provide for her children. Here, the family delivers some of her signature treats to a local party.

**National Women's History  
Project [www.nwhp.org](http://www.nwhp.org)**

Every Friday morning, the INMED office is full of women interested in learning marketable crafts. Every month there is something new to learn, from crocheting to creating piñatas. "I've seen an improvement in their confidence," Torres says.

"They see that something they do for fun or just for their families is a teachable skill. They feel empowered."

Torres reports that many women have sold some of the items they have made at the INMED groups. "They feel good about themselves because they are able to contribute to their families," she says. It makes me feel good to see them come alive."

Later this month, the women will start gardening in INMED's back yard and learn how to grow their own fresh food at home to save money and improve their families' nutrition.

Despite the challenges women still face today, the women of the INMED L.A. support group are prevailing against improbable odds and making a way for themselves, inspiring others to learn and grow with them to change their community for the better.



## 9 Year Old is waiting for a Mentor!

Little Lloyd is 9 years old and has been waiting for a mentor for over a year! He has four sisters and no brothers. They all live with their father who is in his 60s. Their mother has had a history of incarceration and has not been in their lives much in the past few years. While all of his sisters have been matched he waits patiently. He lives in South Los Angeles and his interests are that of most boys: basketball, football and video games. Lloyd says that he would like a mentor who is "funny" and one who would "rescue him if anyone beats him up!" He is a typical happy-go-lucky kid with lots of energy. Do you know a special someone who can be his friend?

Spend one hour a week to help a child or teen at risk beat the odds against them and build a brighter future. Visit us at [www.inmed.org/mentoring.htm](http://www.inmed.org/mentoring.htm) or on [Facebook](#), contact program coordinator Sedreana Saldaña at 310-764-0955 ext. 127, e-mail [ssaldana@inmed.org](mailto:ssaldana@inmed.org), or download our [mentoring overview](#) to learn more.

\*\*For confidentiality purposes his name has been changed\*\*



## About INMED Partnerships for Children

INMED Partnerships for Children is an international humanitarian development organization. Since 1986, INMED has built alliances with public- and private-sector partners in more than 100 countries to rescue children from the immediate and irreversible harm of disease, hunger, abuse, neglect or violence, and to prepare them to shape a brighter future for themselves and the next generation.

Together with our partners, INMED is transforming the future for hundreds of thousands of children and their family and community members in the U.S., Latin America and the Caribbean, and southern Africa by:

- Securing children's health, development and safety
- Developing skills, knowledge and opportunities for children and youth
- Building family and community capacity to support and sustain positive change

For more information or to submit questions and comments, please contact Joey Shanahan, Senior Manager for Development at [Joey.Shanahan@inmed.org](mailto:Joey.Shanahan@inmed.org).

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