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TRANSFORMING LIVES
& INNOVATING SINCE 1889

www.felton.org

Message from Al Gilbert



Because of those we serve, our Felton family knows firsthand why our nation must do better in all aspects of protecting and preserving humanity.

Providing services to the most vulnerable in our communities is our work toward transforming the lives of our impoverished neighbors, seniors, children, families of color, those grappling with mental illness, and those experiencing injustice due to who they are or who they love. It is why we join the clarion call, Black Lives Matter.

Our mission motivates our work, embracing those who have become entangled in our criminal justice system and who now are seeking support as they find their way back to community and family. Through our work, we divert individuals from incarceration and support families and incarcerated men and women transitioning from jails and prisons. Our justice programs honor Felton's mission to respond to human need with a deep respect for the consumer, and a commitment to social justice. 📌

Al Gilbert
President and CEO
[Felton Institute](https://www.felton.org)

SPOTLIGHT

Randy Carter

Case Manager for Felton's LEAD Team



Randy Carter, a case manager for [Felton's Law Enforcement Assistance Diversion \(LEAD\)](#) program, grew up in Oakland, arriving in the Bay Area at the tender age of three. His family roots are in Louisiana; Randy is the fifth of six children, with three sisters and two brothers completing the family of eight.

"An important value that I was taught growing up is that family and friendships are important and that we were to look out for one another and stick together. Unfortunately, I also learned some very hard lessons growing up, both within my family and, also, at school. Lessons such as how to keep secrets, because it was safer to keep silent, not to talk about feelings, bullying by my siblings

and peer pressure to do things that I knew weren't right and could get me into trouble. I survived by suffering in silence and participating in activities that I really didn't want to do, but couldn't dismiss myself from, without ridicule by my peers.

"I learned as a black boy in a predominately white school system, that I wasn't encouraged or supported academically or socially. In fact, at 14 years of age, I had a teacher call the police on me because I pulled my arm out of her grip, and she accused me of assault. A much harsher punishment than if a non-black student would have done the same. This single incident is what began my career in the criminal justice system."



Randy is featured in “The 50”, a feature-length documentary by Brenton Gieser that follows the lived experiences of 50 incarcerated men serving life or long term sentences in California, and their journeys to become certified drug and alcohol counselors in a first-of-its-kind program at Solano State Prison.

Randy’s life changed dramatically after his parents divorced when he was nine years old.

He shares “My mother, younger brother and I relocated to San Diego where my mother remarried. Because of the verbal and physical abuse that I suffered at the hands of my stepfather, I moved back to Oakland to live with my father at the age of 13.

“The family support and guidance that I so needed during my formative teenage years weren’t available to me because my mother lived in San Diego and my dad worked a lot and wasn’t around much. I was, therefore, pretty much alone and left to my own devices with no parental guidance as a teenager in Oakland in the late ’70s and early ’80s.

“When I was in 9th grade, I was arrested because of the assault accusation made by my teacher and got sent to Juvenile Camp for six months. After 30 days, I ran away, was rearrested and ordered to complete a 90-day sentence in Juvenile Hall in San Leandro. I failed to complete the 90-day sentence without incident, and I was sentenced to 14 months in the California Youth Authority. After 13 months, I was released at the age of 17, I never returned to public school but I earned my GED and continued education while in prison.

“For the next year, I worked until I committed my crime at the age of 18, was found guilty and sentenced to 27 years to life. I served 34 years in the California prison system and was released from prison in 2016 at the age of 52.” Before his incarceration, Randy had dreamed of going into the Air Force as a career because he saw it as a way to escape and become independent. He shares, “(I wanted to) get away from a life that was destined for disaster at the rate I was going.”

After his release from prison, Randy worked as a supervisor at the Civic Center providing direct community services, educating the public and maintaining order in the Civic Center Commons. He began working at Felton almost two and a half years ago first as an outreach worker for the [Felton Engagement Specialists Team \(FEST\)](#), then he was promoted to case manager as a member of the LEAD Team.

Felton’s [LEAD](#) services are provided as part of [Law Enforcement Assisted Diversion \(SF-LEAD\)](#), a multi-agency collaborative partnership program designed to divert repeat, low-level adult offenders at their earliest contact with law enforcement. [LEAD](#) services are an alternative to jail and prosecution for those experiencing mental health, substance use and co-occurring disorders.



I see the work that Felton does in the criminal justice arena helping the formerly incarcerated re-enter society as exceptional and very important work.

The most rewarding part of my job at Felton is being able to assist clients with overcoming their challenges, whatever they may be. I love being of service to others who are in need.



Felton's [LEAD](#) team works with residents referred in the 16th Street/ Mission neighborhood.

"What attracted me to the job at Felton Institute is that the job seemed to be a perfect fit that required little transition on my part and fit right into my skill set and my credential as a Certified Drug and Alcohol Counselor. Additionally, I had already been working in the same neighborhoods and serving the same population of people that I'd be serving at Felton in my new position, so it spoke to me. And just like I thought, it turned out to be the right job for me. I'm passionate about helping the marginalized people in our communities live better lives, if at all possible."

In his spare time, Randy enjoys working out at his favorite childhood hang out, Oakland's Lake Merritt, which he considers an important aspect of his self-care. He relishes being in nature and near the ocean, collecting cars, traveling, watching sports (he is a 49ers fan) and spending quality time with family and friends.

Randy shares, "The personal motto that I live by is to live my life to the fullest every day and, also, to remain mindful that I am not a prisoner of my past. It was a lesson and not a life sentence. I believe in redemption." 📺

For more information about [FEST](#) and [LEAD](#) programs, please contact cpenn@felton.org or call 415-474-7310.

Felton's FEST Program

FEST is comprised of Felton Engagement Specialist Team (FEST) members who are skilled case managers working in collaboration with the San Francisco Departments of Public Health, Public Works, Homelessness and Supportive Housing, and SFPD.



Learning with Leaders brings together board members, guests, and staff in an intimate setting to learn more about Felton's programs. Dr. Robin Ortiz, Director of Business Development and Justice Services and Curtis Penn, Program Director for FEST and Law Enforcement Assisted Diversion (LEAD) explains how FEST is providing critical services for those who are insecurely housed or homeless.

The FEST program collaboration provides rapid response, community engagement, service linkage and relationship-building assistance to San Franciscans in the Justin Herman Plaza, Castro, Showplace Square, Mission, and Civic Center neighborhoods. The group focuses on those who are insecurely housed or not housed at all.

The collaboration provides rapid response, community engagement, service linkage and relationship-building assistance to San Franciscans in the Justin Herman Plaza, Castro, Showplace Square, Mission, and Civic Center neighborhoods. The group focuses on those who are insecurely housed or who are homeless.

Engagement Specialists provide outreach and service linkage to support clients by addressing any combination of substance use, mental health, and physical health needs. The team also attempts to secure temporary or permanent housing and promotes wellness, recovery, and safety for eligible clients. ■

For more information, contact cpenn@felton.org or call 415-474-7310 ext. 777

The Evolution of Felton's Justice Services

Felton's Justice Services were developed with the intention of expanding Felton's mission of transforming the lives of many of our most vulnerable community members.

The scope of the programs continues to expand and evolve, having grown from one program in San Francisco County to multiple programs throughout Northern California.



*Image: Felton's Young Adult Court Program Graduation,
YAC Program Manager Celina Hennessey*

FELTON'S EARLY CRISIS INTERVENTION AND EVICTION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (EAP)

Felton's Early Crisis Intervention and Eviction Assistance Program (EAP) was created in 1998 and has helped thousands avoid homelessness and stabilize their living situations. Working in collaborative cooperation with the sheriff's department, EAP provides early crisis intervention and homelessness prevention.

Victoria Gray is the program case manager who pours her heart into her job, working tirelessly to help people in need keep a roof overhead. In the wake of COVID-19, San Francisco Mayor London Breed issued an executive order declaring a moratorium on evictions and imposed new rules to protect those impacted by COVID-19 that is in effect until June 30, 2020. During times of crisis, the demand on Felton's EAP services increases greatly. The program rescues those who have been pushed to the brink of homelessness by unforeseen hardships and limited resources, due to loss of employment, medical emergencies and other personal misfortune. After receiving counseling and/or one-time financial assistance from EAP, many go on to remedy their situation and find themselves in a more stable situation. Clients have shared that, in many cases, it was just the need to overcome that one mountain that provided enough hope and determination to continue forward movement.

As a result, hope becomes a byproduct of the service that helps empower those in need to push past such an unexpected life scenario.



In 2017, The Chronicle's Season of Sharing Fund honored Victoria Gray and Felton Institute for many years of service and dedication.

FELTON'S YOUNG ADULT COURT (YAC) PROGRAM

In 2005, the Back on Track program was launched by Kamala Harris during her tenure as District Attorney of San Francisco with a goal of helping youth avoid the penal system by providing case management. It was a prosecutor-led diversion model focused on preventing recidivism among non-violent first-time offenders. The program required a minimum 12-month commitment that provided therapy and goal training in the areas of career, parenting, health and community. (keep in same paragraph)Back on Track evolved into Young Adult Court (YAC) in 2017, with a new focus on serving young adults ages 18-25 with a variety of misdemeanor and felony offenses who can benefit from an alternative to the typical court process.

As with Back on Track, YAC is a collaborative venture of the San Francisco District Attorney's office, SF Office of the Public Defender, SF Superior Court, Goodwill and Felton Institute. All partners work together to support participants towards the best possible legal and life outcomes. Over 110 young adults have successfully graduated from Young Adult Court (YAC), many of them leaving the system with an expunged record, clear of charges. This opportunity can change the trajectory of a young person's life. Since COVID-19, YAC has conducted conferences and meetings online to continue providing critical services.

LAW ENFORCEMENT ASSISTED DIVERSION (LEAD)

The LEAD program is an important addition to our justice programming, allowing Felton to be part of a pre-booking diversion intervention, designed to prevent individuals from receiving a new charge on their record. Through LEAD, we have expanded beyond Transitional Age Youth to supporting adults of all ages who are justice impacted, but who are also likely to be experiencing several other challenges, including behavioral health, substance use and broad social service needs. [Here's more information about how LEAD works.](#)



ALAMEDA COUNTY PROBATION DEPARTMENT

FELTON'S NEW CENTER OF REENTRY EXCELLENCE (CORE)

Felton's newest justice service program is in Alameda County and is known as CORE, Center of Reentry Excellence. It provides a one-stop hub of reentry services working with the Alameda County Probation Department to serve all justice-impacted individuals in Alameda County. It puts Felton front and center with residents returning to their community from jail or state prison. These individuals are among the highly vulnerable in our community. The traumatic impacts of incarceration are undeniable, and many returning residents come home not only with the challenges they experienced prior to incarceration, but with an additional layer of trauma from incarceration itself.

Within the first six weeks of the program, Felton received over 100 referrals and in accordance with COVID-19 practices served 98% via telehealth. Felton's Director of Business Development and Justice Services, Dr. Robin Ortiz notes that this provides "an opportunity to support the vision of Chief Wendy Still. Felton will implement the team case management approach we have used so successfully in LEAD to ensure that each client who comes to CORE has at least three team members who can support them. In this way, we support great connectedness, higher levels of engagement, and a dynamic service process."

CORE, formerly the TDRC provides services
for reentering residence in Alameda County.

How CORE Can Help

- Linkage to delivery of groceries and hygiene items
- Assessment for shelter/housing options
- Linkage to resources available now

**Please contact CORE staff to discuss how we can
be of immediate help: mblake@felton.org**



Felton's Justice Services

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We believe that Felton has a unique role to play in this area of service provision. From hiring staff who have been formerly incarcerated because they bring a unique perspective to the work, to creating specialized behavioral health and substance use programming designed for the needs of reentering residents, the Felton justice services team supports residents in transforming their lives.

Today we provide services to consumers across the age spectrum, including transitional age youth [TAY] (ages 18-24) and adults/older adults (ages 25-50+). Our justice programs provide case management/referral brokerage, crisis intervention, life skills development, substance use interventions, and workforce development supports to justice-impacted residents with a variety of social service and behavioral health needs.

- Dr. Robin Ortiz, Felton's Director of Business Development and Justice Services

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COMPLETE LIST OF FELTON INSTITUTE'S JUSTICE SERVICES PROGRAMS:

SAN FRANCISCO

- **Early Crisis Intervention and Eviction Assistance Program (EAP)**
- **Law Enforcement Assisted Diversion (LEAD)** – designed to divert individuals experiencing behavioral health and substance use challenges into appropriate care and out of incarceration. Watch “Learning with Leaders” regarding LEAD on Felton’s YouTube Chanel.
- **Felton Engagement Specialist Team (FEST)** – street outreach and engagement/service brokerage and linkage – supports all residents in need, including those who are not justice impacted. Watch “Learning with Leaders” regarding FEST on Felton’s YouTube Chanel.
- **Young Adult Court Case Management (YAC)** – a program in collaboration with the SF Collaborative Courts justice programs that address addiction, mental health, and other social service needs as an alternative to the (typical) justice options.
- **Supporting Treatment and Reducing Recidivism (STARR)** – low threshold case management for individuals who are charged, arrested or incarcerated for an offense.
- **Promoting Recovery and Services to Prevent Recidivism (PRSPR)** – part of the TAY System of Care Linkage Team, providing low threshold case management for young adults ages 18-25 who are justice impacted and dealing with substance abuse and other challenges.

ALAMEDA COUNTY

- **Center of Reentry Excellence (CORE)** – a one-stop hub of reentry services for all justice-impacted individuals in Alameda County.
- **Reentry Case Management** – Serving returning residents of South, East and Central Alameda County who are experiencing mild to moderate behavioral health challenges.
- **Reentry Case Management** – Serving returning residents across all of Alameda County who are experiencing severe and persistent behavioral health challenges.



Supreme Court's Landmark Ruling During Pride Month

On June 15, 2020, the Supreme Court ruled that a landmark civil rights law protects gay and transgender workers from workplace discrimination.

“An employer who fires an individual for being homosexual or transgender fires that person for traits or actions it would not have questioned in members of a different sex. Sex plays a necessary and undisguisable role in the decision, exactly what Title VII forbids,” wrote Justice Neil M. Gorsuch for the majority in the 6-to-3 ruling. Chief Justice John G. Roberts Jr. and Justices Ruth Bader Ginsburg, Stephen G. Breyer, Sonia Sotomayor and Elena Kagan were the other justices who voted in favor of the ruling.

Title VII of the 1964 Civil Rights Act prohibits discrimination in the workplace on the basis of race, religion, national origin and sex. Until the ruling, it was legal in more than half of the states to fire workers for being gay, bisexual, or transgender. This decision extended workplace protections to millions of people across the nation.

Felton President and CEO Al Gilbert noted:

“Felton Institute has a long history of upholding the tenets of Title VII of the 1964 Civil Rights Act for all of its employees. This historic Supreme Court ruling affirms the values that Felton has always held and will continue to implement for gay and transgender employees.”



Felton's Dr. Philip Tsui, an internationally acclaimed Clinical Training Specialist with a focus on services for LGBTQ seniors, commented, “Isn't it amazing that until today, before this decision, LGBTQ job discrimination was still technically legal in much of the nation and under federal law. Less than half the states have laws explicitly prohibiting workplace discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation or gender identity!!!”

The ruling came in the middle of LGBTQ+ (Lesbian Gay Bisexual Transgender Questioning) Pride Month. The first Pride march in New York City was held on June 28, 1970, on the one-year anniversary of the Stonewall Uprising. This year marks the 50th Anniversary of annual LGBTQ+ traditions. The 1969 Stonewall Uprising between police officers and Stonewall bar patrons is considered the tipping point for the Gay Liberation Movement in the United States.

This year many Pride Celebrations, including San Francisco's, were held as virtual celebrations due to COVID-19. 🏳️‍🌈

Teen Parents Graduate Amidst the Pandemic

Hilltop class of 2020 celebrates with a virtual graduation.



On June 5, 2020, sixteen Hilltop High School seniors celebrated the milestone of graduation in the way that has become very familiar in these times of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The graduates, in their purple caps and gowns, shared memories and shed tears in a virtual graduation ceremony.

The celebration included speeches from their principal Elisa Villafuerte, San Francisco Superintendent Dr. Vincent Matthews, and a keynote speech from Hilltop alumna and former Felton Board member Veronica Garcia. Not only were the students given advice on their responsibility and role as future women leaders, but they were also reminded of the need to brave the uncertainty ahead.

“Part of the beauty of life is the unknown. It’s important to be patient and live in the moment,” Garcia said. “Now, it is your responsibility to lift up, reach back and to the side, to bring up others with you, give back to your community by mentoring other young women in volunteering. Last but not least, be happy with and appreciate what you have or working towards your goals and dreams. This may not be the graduation ceremony you wanted, but it’s yours.”

Student poetry and creative writing were also featured in the program, which was conducted in English, Arabic, and Spanish. The performances included poetry: “Amor en Pandemia” by Allison Pantojoa, “Hilltop” by Ashley Linares, “Desde Abajo” by Norma Aguiano and “Escuela con Final” by Foridalma De Leon Jochola.

“On behalf of the graduates, I want to thank you for being here on this joyful day. I never expected my graduation to be in my house or to be online, but I am very happy. You might have heard of that only 50% of teen mothers graduate high school. Well, today we beat that statistic.”

- Student speaker Lucero Preciado

Hilltop High School students are supported by Felton Institute’s [Teenage Pregnancy and Parenting Program \(TAPP\)](#) that provides education and direct case management support to all pregnant and parenting students. The school gives students opportunities to complete their secondary education, have healthy pregnancies, and become responsible parents and contributing members of their communities. Felton’s COO of the Children, Youth and Family and Transitional Age Youth Division Yohana Quiroz is a graduate of [TAPP](#) and the Hilltop High School Class of 1997.

Many of this year’s Hilltop graduating class were honored in a slideshow and given special shout outs for winning scholarships for college.

The graduation program featured a quote from labor leader and civil rights activist Dolores Huerta. “We, as women, should shine a light on our accomplishments and not feel egotistical when we do. It’s a way to let the world know that we, as women, can accomplish great things!”



Celebrating Hilltop Class of 2020

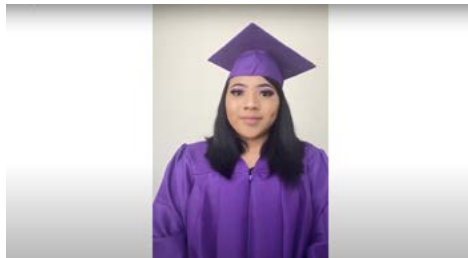
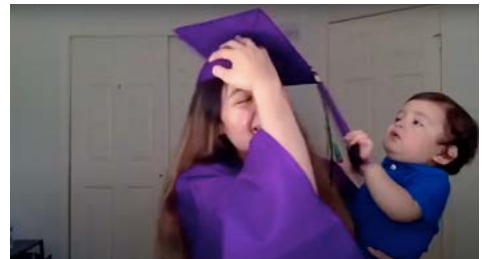
Hilltop Commencement Exercises

Hilltop School has a proud history of graduating some of the most determined, resilient young women in San Francisco. This year we celebrate the Class of 2020: a graduating class full of future educators, entrepreneurs, humanitarians, and visionary leaders. We mark this occasion with joy, knowing we will see each other again one day and celebrate in community. Please tune in on Friday, June 5, 2020, 5:00 pm as we celebrate all that Hilltop's Class of 2020 has accomplished.

To all our graduates, we remind you:

"We as women should shine light on our accomplishments and not feel egotistical when we do. It's a way to let the world know that we as women can accomplish great things!"

— Dolores Huerta



Celebrating Hilltop's 2020 Graduates



Many of this year's Hilltop graduating class were honored in a slideshow and given special shout outs for winning scholarships for college.

Felton's [TAPP program](#) is available for both teen mothers and teen fathers. Here one teen father shares his thoughts on his graduation from Hilltop in 2017.



Veronica Garcia was also the keynote speaker at Hilltop's 2016 Graduation. You can watch her speech, from that year, below:



For more information about Felton's [TAPP program](#), please visit their page, [HERE](#).

This month we invite you to consider a contribution to Felton Institute for its programs. If you are moved by the work of Felton's Teenage Pregnancy and Parenting Program, Felton's Justice Programs or any of Felton's programs, we invite you to invest in services that continue making our communities stronger during unprecedented times. 📺

Feeling Stressed?

These last few months, you've been handling a lot.
If you need ANY emotional support,
you know you can call us, ANYTIME!

You don't have to be considering suicide to call.

TRUE OR FALSE

You must be actively suicidal
to call our hotline.

FALSE

Anyone can call our hotline to talk
through emotional challenges.

IF **YOU** OR SOMEONE YOU KNOW
IS IN CRISIS, CALL OUR **24HR HOTLINE**



(415) 781-0500



sfsuicide.org





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