

Foot Notes

"Food on Foot turns tax burdens into tax payers."

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A SMILE IS THE UNIVERSAL WELCOME!

By Rachel Roberts, WFF Program Director



Max J. — WFF Graduate

"Too often we underestimate the power of a touch, a smile, a kind word, a listening ear, an honest compliment, or the smallest act of caring, all of which have the potential to turn a life around." - Leo Buscaglia

Like so many before him, Max J. set out to follow his dreams and moved to Los Angeles to pursue a career in an appearance run industry as an actor. Max's most difficult challenge in this endeavor has been his smile. Max had never been to the dentist on a regular basis because he couldn't afford it. His last visit was in 2009 just for pain management because he didn't have insurance to help pay for the major repairs he faced.

It took him three months to finally find the welcoming arms of FOF. When Max first came to Food on Foot (FOF) in 2011, he often hid behind his large stance and quiet demeanor. It took FOF 28 weeks to help him find employment because every potential employer reported that his appearance is what prevented them from hiring him. He persevered through the rejections and finally, with FOF's help, landed a job cleaning the St. Felix Restaurant in Hollywood. He has now been working there for two years and he still dedicates his Sundays helping at FOF.

Max says, "The most difficult part of getting through [Work for Food] is the anticipation of wondering if you're going to

make it or not." Max has not only been one of FOF's most dedicated workers but he has also been the most inspiring. Many of FOF's volunteers have been moved by his story and his apparent physical struggles which not only affect his self-esteem but also his speech. Max had no self-confidence when he started at FOF but says, "Now, I have more confidence to stick with it, to work hard, and I know big things will happen." Big things have been happening for Max through his hard work and dedication. One of FOF's \$98 Club member's, Karen Wycarver, heard Max's story and decided to reach out to him. "Max obviously had an issue with his smile. As he spoke, I started to think about how hard this guy has worked to get this far, and how he might have trouble getting a job purely based on his appearance. I had recently been to the dentist, something I think I was taking for granted, and got the idea to help get Max a new smile," said Karen.

Karen's generosity has changed Max's perspective on life forever. In just four weeks, Max will receive a new set of teeth and feels it will drive him to excel with this new found confidence. In thanking Karen, her business partner, Mr. Golden, and Dr. Levitt who agreed to give him this incredible opportunity, Max says, "It's a thank you from the bottom of my heart. For anyone to help someone else without wanting something in return shows how great of people they are. I just hope their investment in me is worth it. This gift will help me to one day be in a position where I can also help others," Max said. FOF agrees with Karen who believes, "Just think if everyone tried to make a difference or an improvement in one person's life, how much better off the world would be."

To learn more about our Work for Food program, please volunteer and witness the program in action!

**Welcome Aboard
to Our Newest
\$98 Club Members!**

FEBRUARY

Jennifer Blair
Bowman Family Membership
Drew Fenton
Hechmer Family Membership
David McIntosh

www.foodonfoot.org

**Chad H.
is Graduating!**

\$98 Club members are invited to come out and help celebrate Chad's graduation from the Work for Food program as he receives his PHD Certificate on Sunday, March 9th. No need to sign up, just show up at 3:15pm and bring a friend!

**Feinstein Foundation
\$1 Million Giveaway
to Fight Hunger**

March 1- April 30, 2014

For the 12th consecutive year, Food on Foot will be participating in the Annual \$1 Million Giveaway to Fight Hunger ~ www.feinsteinfoundation.org ~ The more donations Food on Foot receives between now and April 30 in response to this challenge, the more Feinstein money Food on Foot will be funded!

Please support Food on Foot in this challenge and donate online at:

www.foodonfoot.org