

# Challenges come before victories for Crossroads food director

By **CAROLYN DRYER**  
EDITOR

"Most of us know someone impacted by substance abuse - our family, our friends, our neighbors...

We must do more."

- Gov. Doug Ducey  
State of Emergency Address,  
June 5, 2017

Jorge Lomas has been the director of food services at Crossroads for 24 years. Crossroads is the largest residential substance abuse treatment provider in the Southwest, with six campuses around the Valley.

To say Lomas is dedicated and committed to his job is putting it mildly. He is a force to be reckoned with; his devotion to his calling bubbles to the surface, especially when he smiles about the successes he has witnessed at Crossroads.

Lomas joined Crossroads after working in kitchens of some of the top resorts and restaurants in Phoenix and Las Vegas (Rio, Christopher's, Gainey Ranch, Houstons,

etc.).

At Crossroads, he cooks once a week in each facility, six days a week.

"I'm running out of days in the week," he grinned. "I've fallen in love with this program. It's about helping others."

One of the reasons he decided to stay at Crossroads: "They need help, especially now with the epidemic of opiate addiction. I can say I'm part of the solution, not the problem."

His last job before Crossroads was in Las Vegas; he left that city looking for something to be of service. He found that place when he looked in the newspaper and found an ad for Crossroads.

"I figured six months to a year, then I'd go back to the hotels," Lomas said. "I fell in love with Crossroads. I stayed; His plan for me was to be of service."

The money working for the hotels was much better, Lomas said, but then, he gave the most important reason for staying: "The rewards at Crossroads



Photo by Carolyn Dryer

**Jorge Lomas, director of food services at Crossroads, stands by his favorite place, in the kitchen at one of the six residential substance abuse treatment centers.**

are bigger, better than the money."

Lomas has a passion and commitment to helping Crossroads residents on their journey to recovery. He believes strongly in the life-changing work being done there. In fact, Lomas has been directly involved in the transfor-

mation of hundreds of residents' lives, providing much-needed nourishment to Crossroads residents and serving as a mentor as they work in his kitchens at the various Crossroads campuses.

Lomas admits there are times when the work is challenging, especially in

the field, when a person relapses.

"But the reward is when you see people succeeding, knowing you had a part in that success," he said. "We teach people life can be different. I lead by example. I ask them to do what I do and they don't say no. They see me do-

ing it."

He's been featured on TV and speaks at various gatherings whenever asked.

"Every time I have the opportunity to go talk to people, everybody turns their backs and walks away," he said. "We need everybody to be a part of this. Society needs to stick together. It could happen to family members.

"The beautiful thing about Crossroads is nobody is judged. We make them feel part of something. You talk about your weaknesses, your problems, but there's no judging."

Lomas said Crossroads came across a recent study that concluded the U.S. makes up 5 percent of the world population, but it consumes 80 percent of the opioids.

Lomas said, "We fight this war of disease, of addiction. I believe every day, it's a battle, but every night, it's a victory."

The Crossroads center nearest to Glendale and the West Valley is Crossroads West, 7523 N. 35th Ave.