

# Christina Morales

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Shortly after Christina Morales, 72, moved to the Santa Clarita Valley she started experiencing anxiety attacks while driving. She decided to give up her car and find other ways to get around. She visited the Santa Clarita Valley Senior Center three years ago to find out about Dial-a-Ride and other options.

“While I was waiting for a ride an older lady invited me to her birthday celebration and I thought, ‘why not go?’ She saved a place for me in the dining room,” Morales said. “It was a Wednesday. I had just sat down when the music started and then someone tapped me on the shoulder and asked me to dance.”

Morales said she was surprised.

“I felt like I was in high school,” she said. “I had a great time and couldn’t wait to come back to the Center.”

Morales has been visiting the Senior Center regularly for the past three years.

She participates in aerobic classes, the new Mindful Coloring class, health awareness and education classes and the mediation class.

Morales previously taught the mediation class and has volunteered in the kitchen and with registration because of her bi-lingual skills. Born and raised in East Los Angeles, Morales moved to the Santa Clarita Valley after her retirement from her job as a hospital mental health counselor to downsize her life. She has seven children and four grandchildren, but wanted to continue to live an independent life.

Morales praises the positive effect the SCV Senior Center has had on her life.

“We laugh, we have fun and it is place where you build new friendships,” she said. “I was surprised at what a change the Senior Center has made in my life. I never realized how much I would benefit from the music and the people.”

Morales said she has learned much from the people she has met at the Center.

“There are so many different, complex people here but we have so much fun, so much laughter, so much healing,” she said. “At the end of the day you go home and go about your life, but you want to come back to the Senior Center to get all the benefits of what it has to offer.”

Morales said it is also important for seniors to feel safe.

“The Senior Center is a safe place to be and you feel that people are taking care of you,” she said. “The volunteers are great and the staff is number one. They go above and beyond.”

Morales said she is looking forward to the construction of a new SCV Senior Center.

“The senior population is growing and I don’t know how they manage to do everything in this Center that they do,” she said. “This new building shows how much the community cares about its seniors.”