

SideBar: Optimism in Action Welcomes Chris Devers, CEO of Rancho Cielo

Rancho Cielo offers high school students hands-on vocational training in culinary arts, classic car restoration, ag tech mechatronics, and welding/fabrication.

MONTEREY, CA, UNITED STATES, September 2, 2025 /EINPresswire.com/ -- [SideBar](#): Optimism in Action podcast (www.sidebarmedia.org), sponsored by [Monterey College of Law](#), welcomes [Rancho Cielo](#) CEO Chris Devers to discuss a unique program that offers high school students hands-on vocational training and education in the areas of culinary arts, classic car restoration, ag tech and mechatronics, auto and diesel repair, and welding and fabrication. At Rancho Cielo, students learn in a safe, structured, small learning community with individualized instruction to complete their high school diploma, GED® (General Education Development) test, or HiSet® (High School Equivalency Test), and gain work experience and transferable occupational skills in a vocational program of their choice.



Rancho Cielo Chris Devers

According to Devers, "Rancho Cielo cultivates a goal-oriented atmosphere for students, providing tailored programs and services to meet their unique needs. Each student receives a personalized graduation plan, fostering their path to success. Students also receive opportunities for leadership development and gain knowledge in community awareness, personal wellness, and job readiness."

SideBar cohost Jackie Gardina observed, "We learned from Chris that Rancho Cielo prioritizes creating a safe, affirming environment where students can develop enhanced health and self-esteem, and a real connection to the community. It is far more than merely providing job skills training. It includes engagement with leaders in the community who become mentors and advisors to the students."

Mitch Winick, SideBar cohost, said that, "One of the most compelling aspects of Rancho Cielo's

success is the fact that many of its students faced incredible hardship, from incarceration and homelessness to hunger and poverty, before finding a community at Rancho Cielo. They choose the Rancho Cielo program because it provides them with a fresh start, a new path where they can learn in a safe and affirming environment."

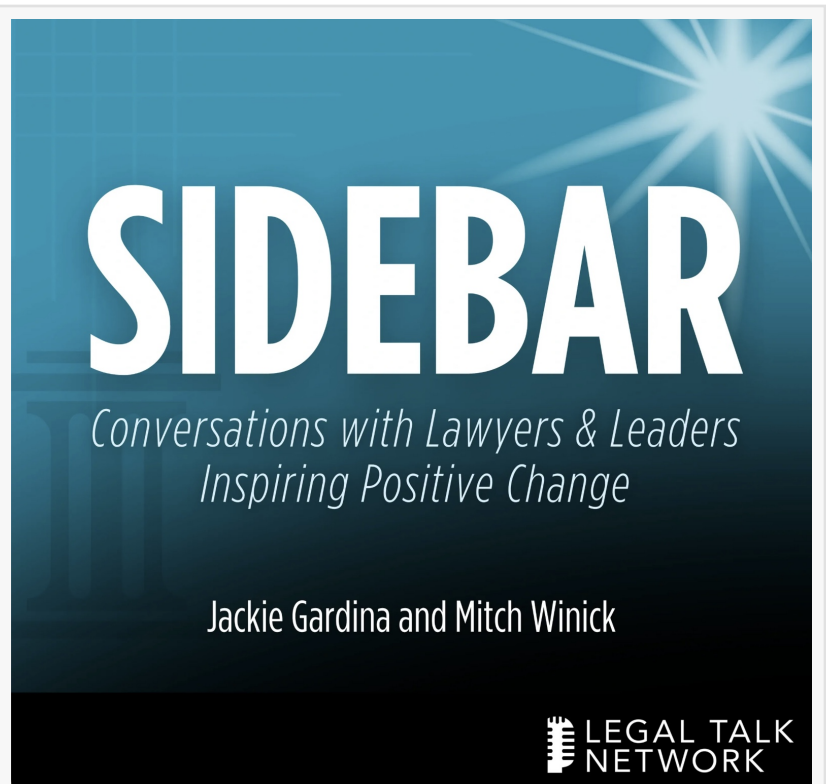
Monterey County Superior Court Judge John Phillips had the original vision for Rancho Cielo, converting a former county juvenile corrections facility into an educational and training program that has resulted in reduced juvenile incarceration and an impressive record of producing skilled young workers throughout the community.

In one featured success, Rancho Cielo students won the overall first-place award for their designed and built modular house at the inaugural Orange County Sustainability Decathlon in 2023. The student-built home earned five first-place awards in categories like Energy Efficiency and Innovation, and was recognized by the Monterey County Business Council for its sustainable and eco-conscious design.

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Student success is at the core of our mission, in which we invest through academic education, vocational training, mental health support, and life-skills development.”

Rancho Cielo CEO Chris Devers



SideBar - New Tile



MCL 50th Logo

To listen to Chris Devers' "SideBar: Optimism in Action" season three episode with law deans Jackie Gardina and Mitch Winick, hear previous episodes, read our blog, learn about future guests, and to contact the co-hosts with ideas, comments, or questions, go to www.sidebarmedia.org. "SideBar: Optimism in Action" can also be heard on Podbean, Spotify, Apple Music, iHeart, Amazon Music, and other podcast platforms.

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