



# Creating Opportunities for Women

## Reign Free

Chevron is, it's not just oil and gas. It's also giving back to the community.

My name is Reign Free. I am 30 years old, and I live in Oakland, California. I came to California about seven years ago. I was newly-married. And it was a really bad marriage that ended up with me being kicked out of the house and – living in my car. I felt alone. I felt scared. I felt defeated. But I knew if I stayed, it would be better. And I was going to be able to find my place and really stay here and, um, start over. I've always loved to cook. That's just my outlet. That's my thing. My dream was to have a restaurant. I just didn't know how to get there. The turning point in my life was when a friend of mine told me about Women's Initiative. It's a program that helps low-income women start and or grow their business. And that's exactly what I needed.

## Julie Castro Abrams, CEO, Women's Initiative for Self-Employment

What I want you to know is that Women's Initiative has a ton of networking opportunities and will be there for you.

Chevron has been an extremely involved community citizen and has a long partnership with Women's Initiative, and I'm proud to say that we can actually track hundreds of women who've gone through Women's Initiative thanks to investments from Chevron.

## Tiffany Pleasants, Client, Women's Initiative for Self-Employment

I could actually see what was at the end of the road, and that was very important to me because it built up my confidence.

## Julie Castro Abrams

Every woman who graduates from Women's Initiative Simple Steps course ends with a business plan in writing, that is signed off on by our business trainers and, in fact, is bankable.

## Yolanda Butler, Small Business Trainer

So, I hope that from this course, that what you walked away with, is that if anything is gonna happen, I need to make it happen, and I need to take the initiative to do that. OK?

## Reign Free

Just a year after graduation from Women's Initiative, I am the co-owner of a restaurant in downtown Oakland.

## Julie Castro Abrams

Reign Free is a shining example of what is happening for thousands of women around the Bay Area who are starting their businesses thanks to Women's Initiative and Chevron. It is a lovely, relaxing and beautiful environment to have lunch. But then you get to try the food.

### **Randy Arnold, Customer**

It's the jambalaya shrimp. It's incredible.

### **Steve Jacobsen, Customer**

Carrot pie. It's excellent. And I don't even like carrot cake.

### **Reign Free**

Thank you, thank you. Women's Initiative really gave me that kick to say, 'Okay, you're equipped. Go do it.'

### **Loren Powell**

I think Reign is fabulous. She's definitely an inspiration to young women who want to get in the business because she has a lot of things going on.

### **Reign Free**

To go from where I was just a few years ago to opening my own restaurant, it's big, it's huge. Add to that my son, my new family, my new life, my wonderful husband – it's breathtaking for me. Chevron's support has helped me get to a better place in life. I'm in a place now that I can really ensure, a bright future for my son. I'm just really grateful and happy.