



FRIENDS OF ALALAY (SANTA CRUZ)

Registered charity no. 1123425

SPRING 2026 NEWSLETTER

Over the years the Alalay Foundation has supported hundreds of older children through vocational training and financing these courses has become one of our key annual projects. In this newsletter we are sharing examples of six students who we have recently supported, proudly receiving their completion certificates at the culmination of much hard work (including practical and written exams). As always we have used pseudonyms to protect children's identity.



Having finished her training last year, **Abril** is reorganising her school timetable so she can begin work experience at a salon. She wants to gain experience and work on her social anxiety so that she can serve clients with more confidence. Her dream is to become a professional hairstylist.

Nicol completed her technical training in comprehensive beauty at the end of 2025. She was a responsible, reliable and dedicated student. Currently, she is finishing her schooling, while working as a pedicure and manicure specialist at the weekend. Her aim is to specialize in nails, as well as create hairstyles for special events, like the "Quinceañero" parties (a traditional Latin American 15th birthday celebration, marking the young person's transition from childhood to young adulthood).

Emili has also finished her training, and is about to begin an internship at a local beauty salon, in order to gain the necessary experience to work professionally. She is working hard to save money so that she can continue her studies and specialise in the beauty industry.

Paula (previously mentioned in our Summer 2025 newsletter) completed her culinary technical training course last year, developing a passion for baking along the way! She remains responsible for making all the pastries for any special events at Alalay, such as birthdays and other celebrations, alongside work in a local bakery. She dreams of owning her own bakery in the future and selling treats at affordable prices, so that all children are able to celebrate their birthdays.

Juan (Paula's brother) graduated in National and International Gastronomy last year. He has been mentioned in previous newsletters as he featured on the front cover of a national cookery magazine and received a scholarship for a more advanced course. He really enjoys preparing different dishes, and showed commitment and punctuality throughout his training. He is now a kitchen assistant in a local restaurant and is very happy to continue learning on the job. He wants to continue to work as a chef, hoping to specialise in national cuisine.

Ana trained in party decoration and events management. She returned to live with her birth family in October 2025 (having completed Alalay's "family reintegration programme" – a long process only considered where the family's circumstances have changed and it is safe to return). However, she continues to decorate all the Alalay children's birthdays and other events; while also working at an events management business. Her goal is to open her own one day.

As you can imagine, financing these students is an absolute joy - we love hearing how they use their skills in future jobs and continue on their journey to become independent young adults!

Annie Syrett-Jones, Bristol – April 2026

www.alalay.co.uk