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## **Los Angeles Rams' Michael Hoecht Tackles Mental Health Stigma with Gateways Hospital in The NFL's *My Cause My Cleats* Initiative**

*Gateways Hospital and Mental Health Center provides mental and behavioral health care to the most vulnerable communities across Los Angeles*

LOS ANGELES – Dec. 6, 2024 – Los Angeles Rams defensive lineman Michael Hoecht is taking a stand against the stigma surrounding mental health, particularly in sports, by partnering with [Gateways Hospital & Mental Health Center](#) for the [NFL's My Cause My Cleats](#) campaign. [According to UCLA](#), Nearly 1 in 3 adolescents in California reports serious psychological distress. By highlighting Gateways' mission to provide care to the most vulnerable populations across Los Angeles, Hoecht aims to spark conversations and bring awareness to the importance of accessible, compassionate mental health services.

The NFL's My Cause My Cleats campaign allows NFL players to wear custom-designed cleats during Weeks 13 and 14 to highlight nonprofits that are important to them. During the Rams' 44-42 victory over the Buffalo Bills on December 8, Hoecht wore custom cleats showcasing Gateways.

Hoecht began working with Gateways earlier this year when he visited the hospital to engage with adolescent clients. During the event on August 27, Hoecht shared insights about mental health and wellness, emphasizing the importance of building support systems and healthy routines.

"Mental health is just as important as physical health, yet so many people don't have access to the care they need. By supporting Gateways Hospital through My Cause My Cleats, we can help provide critical services to those who need it most," Hoecht said. "I chose Gateways Hospital because of their critical work supporting mental health in our community, particularly for vulnerable youth. During my visit, I saw how their programs change lives, and I want to help ensure they can expand to serve more clients."

Fans can also support Gateways' mission through the NFL's partnership with Rayze, by donating directly to [Gateways' profile](#). These donations will support vital community care services that Gateways provides to Southern California's most vulnerable communities.

"This partnership with Michael Hoecht builds on the incredible momentum from his visit earlier this year," said Dr. Phil Wong, CEO of Gateways Hospital. "His dedication to supporting mental health goes beyond a single event—it's a sustained commitment that inspires our team and our clients. Mental health is often overlooked, but it's essential to overall well-being. Michael's efforts will help bring this critical issue to the forefront."

Contributions through Rayze will support Gateways' comprehensive mental health services and ongoing initiatives, including a 20,000-square-foot facility expansion for adolescent care that will add 40 new beds by 2027.

"We are so grateful to have Michael Hoecht's support and to partner with him through My Cause My Cleats," said Alex Guerrero, Chairman of the Gateways Foundation. "Michael's commitment to raising awareness about mental health is inspiring, and his efforts are helping to spotlight the vital work we do every day to serve Los Angeles' most vulnerable populations. With his partnership, we're able to bring greater attention to the need for accessible, compassionate mental health care and ensure that more individuals receive the support they need to thrive."

#### **About Gateways Hospital & Mental Health Centers**

Founded in 1953, Gateways Hospital & Mental Health Centers is a leading nonprofit organization providing high-quality mental and behavioral health care in the Greater Los Angeles area. Serving over 1,700 individuals annually, Gateways offers comprehensive inpatient and outpatient services to children, adolescents, and adults, with a focus on supporting the most vulnerable populations, including those experiencing severe mental illness, homelessness, and systemic inequities. To learn more, visit [www.gatewayshospital.org](http://www.gatewayshospital.org)