

# Wellness Matters

Your Wellness • Your Way • Your Community

An E-Journal of San Mateo County Behavioral Health and Recovery Services

September 2015



## Support Recovery Month!

Talk about preventing, treating and recovering from behavioral health conditions and attend an event listed on page 2.

More info at:  
[www.smchealth.org/recoverymonth](http://www.smchealth.org/recoverymonth).

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David Lewis was a remarkable man who transformed the recovery community, and East Palo Alto in particular, through his inspiring work with addiction and criminal justice. This year, the David Lewis Award was presented to Reverend Mary Frazier.

Rev. Frazier's work to address the needs of the recovery community has made an extraordinary difference in the lives of people with substance use disorders, through her tireless, selfless and unwavering service to both East Palo Alto and San Mateo County at large.

As a longstanding member of the East Palo Alto Behavioral Health Advisory Group and Chairperson of the East Palo Alto Substance Abuse Prevention Coalition, Rev. Frazier has advocated for East Palo Alto (EPA) residents dealing with mental health and/or substance abuse issues.

Over the years, Rev. Frazier

has played a key role in engaging the faith community in ongoing efforts to address problems faced by individuals in recovery and has encouraged collaboration between the public and nonprofit sectors.

In addition to having served on the Board of Directors of Voices of Recovery, she works one-on-one with people in treatment and recovery, counseling and connecting them with resources and services, as well as facilitating weekly spirituality groups with women in the residential program at Free At Last.

In 2012, Rev. Frazier participated in the development of the New Beginnings Supportive Reentry Housing Program and since then, has persisted in establishing clean and sober living homes for EPA residents.

Rev. Frazier demonstrates her compassion by providing spiritual advising for Free At

Last clients who represent a large portion of Bread of Life Evangelistic Outreach's congregation, an EPA-based church which she founded and currently serves as Senior Pastor.

Over the years, Rev. Frazier has done so much to raise awareness of the needs of the recovery community and bring people together to collaborate on addressing those needs. Her commitment to this work is both effective and inspiring.

When asked how she manages to do so much for this cause, she simply smiles and says with humility, "*David Lewis always said that when my son Eric [also an advocate for the recovery community] went home to be with the Lord, his work in recovery fell on me. Those in the recovery community and the incarcerated are my spiritual children.*" ☾

## Recovery Happens: Personal Stories of Hope and Recovery

In honor of recovery month and the many individuals and families who have found their path to recovery, we share their personal stories to bring awareness to the challenges they face and the critical role

of community/family supports and services in their recovery journey, and above all, to offer hope and inspiration to those who may be in need of help.

Beginning on page 4, you'll find numerous personal sto-

ries of brave individuals in San Mateo County who have so graciously agreed to share their journey. We applaud their courage and compassion to help others. ☾



National  
Recovery Month  
Prevention Works - Treatment is Effective - People Recover  
SEPTEMBER 2015

JOIN THE VOICES  
FOR RECOVERY

visible, vocal, valuable!

## From the Director's Desk - Stephen Kaplan, Director, BHRS

### Recovery Happens.... From THAT to THIS!

I want to thank Agnes, Aireen, Bevin, Carmen, Eduardo, Jan, Jennifer, Marc, Mario, Matthew, Melissa, and Patty for sharing parts of their personal stories of recovery in this month's Wellness Matters. Their courage and openness is inspirational to us all.

As I was reading their recovery journeys it became so clear on how each has transformed their lives from "THAT" to "THIS." What am I referring to? Below are two lists of the adjectives that are embedded in their stories that best capture their transformations.

From "THAT" To "THIS"

Despair	Hope
Loneliness	Optimism
Desperation	Reconnection

Separation	Respected
Misery	Self-worth
Depression	Joyful
Anxious	Dignity
Pain	Grateful
Suicidal	Emotionally-well
Impulsive	Active
Fearful	Contributor
Stigmatized	Accepted
Bitter	Free
Self-destructive	Appreciative
Unmanageable	Thoughtful



Stephen Kaplan

When you read the two lists don't you have a visceral reaction to both? I do!

Not only is it important to appreciate the courage and fortitude of each of these individuals but also the many others they mentioned that were/are instrumental in their recovery: family, friends, doctors, counselors, sponsors, mentors, spiritual advisors and others.

September focuses our attention on the power and importance of Recovery. Let us make sure that each and every month we work in whatever ways we can-individually and collectively to widen the "door" to recovery in San Mateo County for all who come knocking. ~

### National Recovery Month Prevention Works - Treatment is Effective - People Recover SEPTEMBER 2015

Please join us in this years celebrations as "Recovery: Visible, Vocal, and Valuable."

- **September 1-27 Recovery Art Show**

Caldwell Memorial Art Gallery (1<sup>st</sup> Floor)  
400 County Center  
Redwood City

- **September 15 Annual Picnic & Resource Fair**

11:00 am - 2:00 pm  
Flood Park  
215 Bay Road  
Menlo Park

- **September 26 Film Screening and Recovery Dance**

5:00 pm-Film Screening  
8:00 pm-Dance  
Friendship Hall  
416 Second Avenue  
San Mateo

More info, visit  
[www.smchealth.org/recoverymonth](http://www.smchealth.org/recoverymonth).

## New California Clubhouse Helps Rebuild Lives in San Mateo County

There is a new clubhouse in San Mateo County! California Clubhouse, located at 2205 Palm Ave., in San Mateo, offers a place for adults who have suffered from an acute psychiatric emergency, to go during business hours to receive support, training, education, healthy social interaction and positive reinforcement through collegial relationships and meaningful employment/volunteer opportunities.

The Clubhouse approach is recognized as a proven model for rehabilitation, recovery, and reintegration into the community. Since the first Clubhouse opened in 1948 in New York, they have been successfully implemented in more than 300 communities across 33 counties, serving close to 100,000 people a year. The Clubhouse approach complements available psychiatric treatment options

and is a SAMHSA evidence-based practice.

Following an extensive stakeholder process the updated Mental Health Services Act (MHSA) three year plan included as a priority funding for supporting individuals living with a serious mental illness to connect them with employment, volunteer opportunities, psycho/social services and other services. BHRS identified the Clubhouse as an evidence-based program that would best meet that priority.

On November 10, 2014, Measure A funding was approved by the Board of Supervisors to support start-up activities of the Clubhouse. BHRS will provide funding through MHSA for two years of implementation.

The following start-up activities have been completed to-date:

1. Welcomed an Executive Director with 16 years of Clubhouse experience, and who serves on the faculty for Clubhouse International.
2. Hired two program staff who work side by side with members in all operations of the clubhouse.
3. Launched the Clubhouse Work-Ordered Day program Monday - Friday, 8:30 am-5 pm where members gain self-esteem, confidence and resiliency while working on clubhouse tasks such as clerical, administration, meal preparation, reception, data tracking, janitorial and newsletter generation.
4. Worked with BHRS staff to set-up a referral process that includes an application and program orienta-

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## Mental Health Services Act Update – Doris Estremera, Manager of Strategic Operations

### Innovation Projects

We received 13 letters of interest to address the MHSA Innovations priorities for 2015. The MHSA Innovation component allows counties to apply for funds for innovative projects, defined as novel, creative, ingenious approaches that lead to learning for the mental health system. For the next phase, we have begun conversations with the Mental Health Services Oversight & Accountability Commission (MHSOAC) to help guide the proposed project ideas.

### Prevention and Early Intervention (PEI)

MHSA PEI funds Community Interventions for School Age and TAY programs. Congratulations to Prevention and Early Intervention (PEI) Funding Recipients! We look forward to working with the following five agencies:

- StarVista - Early Childhood Community Team, supporting social emotional devel-

opment in child care settings by providing consultation to child care providers;

- Puente de la Costa Sur, El Centro de Libertad, Pyramid Alternatives - Seeking Safety, helping people attain safety from trauma/ Post Traumatic Stress Disorder and substance abuse;
- Puente de la Costa Sur - Project SUCCESS, preventing and reducing substance use and abuse and associated behavioral issues among high risk, multi-problem adolescents;
- Asian American Recovery Services, Inc., Health Right 360 - School-based Services, aligning mental health clinicians to middle schools in San Mateo County.

### Full Service Partnerships (FSP) Significantly Reduce Hospitalizations and PES Visits.

Clients of San Mateo County's FSP Program had statistically significant decreases in

psychiatric hospitalizations and emergency services according to a recent study by the American Institutes for Research (AIR) in collaboration with BHRS. AIR has conducted a number of analyses of the FSP Program outcomes. A full report can be found on our blog: [www.smcbhrsblog.org](http://www.smcbhrsblog.org) (8/13/15). Also, check out the FSP hospitalization and psychiatric emergency outcome report on the MHSA website.

Please visit our MHSA page [www.smchealth.org/bhrs/mhsa](http://www.smchealth.org/bhrs/mhsa) and subscribe to receive up-to-date information on any of these topics.

### Steering Committee Meeting

The next meeting will be held in October to present the next phase of the Innovations project process, the MHSA annual update and FSP outcomes. If interested in joining the Steering Committee, contact Doris Estremera, MHSA Manager at [mhsa@smcgov.org](mailto:mhsa@smcgov.org) or 650-573-2889. ☺

## Mental Health Consumers Have a Greater Voice on Boards & Commissions

Opportunities for consumers and family members to serve on the Mental Health and Substance Abuse Recovery Commission (MHSARC) have been expanded with the enactment of AB1424. The Welfare & Institutions Code prohibited mental health consumers from serving on mental health boards and commissions throughout the state if they, or an immediate family member, were employed by a County mental health department or a contractor of that department. Because we have an integrated commission, these same restrictions extended to substance use client members.

This restriction meant that many well qualified individu-

als could not serve or had to resign their seat when they attained employment that furthered their recovery and contributed to the recovery of others. Over the past few years, our Commission lost eight valuable members; three this year alone as they obtained employment with BHRS and its contractors.

We decided to approach the Board of Supervisors for support of legislation to change the law and sent a letter to the County legislative analyst with suggested language. She secured Assemblyman Kevin Mullin to carry the bill in the legislature and after several months of hearings and minor amendments, AB1424 was passed on consent.

There was no opposition and it had the support of the California Behavioral Health Director's Association.

Consumers now have a stronger and more lasting voice on boards and commissions throughout the state. They also have an opportunity to provide greater insight into the workings of BHRS as both a user and provider of services.

The Commission has several vacancies. If you or someone you know are interested in applying for membership, please contact Chantae Rochester at 650-573-6544 for an application. ☺

- Judy Schutzman,  
MHSARC Board Member

## Recovery Happens: Personal Stories of Hope and Recovery

### **Agnes**

I am diagnosed with Bi-polar disorder. I became severely depressed in August of 2014. I couldn't talk and lost communications with all my friends. My sister, who is a teacher, found out about the California Clubhouse from a counselor, I started going to the Clubhouse on April 27, 2015. I became a founding member, coming every day to help the Clubhouse open their doors on May 27. Slowly I started to talk again and started to get in contact with my friends. I now have an active and healthy life.

### **Aireen**

I am so hard on myself at times, but I must say, "Today, I try to treat myself more with loving kindness, compassion, and gentleness." Recovery is not an easy thing especially, if you're trying to improve your overall recovery from drugs, alcohol, overeating, smoking, or being in unhealthy relationships - all of which I had issues with. Nowadays, I am healing from the past every second, minute, hour, of every day and it is a process, but I get better and better each time.

I have many accomplishments that I am very proud of: I have been clean, serene and sober for a year and a half; I haven't smoked cigarettes in two years; I gave up eating meat since March of this year; and most of my relationships with others are more healthy. I also became a Certified Wellness Recovery Action Plan (WRAP) facilitator this year and I now, co-facilitate WRAP groups at Voices Of Recovery. I am so thankful and grateful for both of my jobs at Heart & Soul and Voices Of Recovery; my bosses and colleagues are all very supportive, kind, and

helpful. Because of my recovery I am a good auntie to my nieces & nephews, I am responsible at work, I am a sister to my siblings, I have a cozy apartment, I am an honest friend to all my friends, I am loved and respected by my family, I am stronger, I am trustworthy, I am humble, and I am more comfortable in my own skin. With God's grace and mercy, I am definitely growing in my recovery and I continue to have more wisdom, knowledge, and a purpose in life. Thanks! Amen!

### **Bevin**

I suffer from depression, high anxiety and anorexia nervosa. I struggled with sharing my thoughts about how I was feeling with others for years and had a fear of doctors and therapists.

I lacked motivation and stamina to perform adequately in a job, and to maintain personal relationships with family and friends. I had a difficult time reaching out for help and was afraid of being hospitalized, labeled, and finding out I may not like myself. How would the world accept me if I was a sick person?

I spent 25 years in and out of doctor's offices looking for a cure -trying a plethora of medication. I became impatient and lost in my disease. At the age of 32, I realized I could no longer exist with my depression as it was and unable to raise my son the way I wanted to.

I had to face the stigma of mental health and the adverse tone society had put on those living with mental illness in regards to: employment, housing, forming relationships with others and trying to survive in the fast pace of our society today. I began to seek professional help.

How would I explain my situation to family and friends? How would I face the stigma others would feel about me? How would I be accepted and loved?

I had to accept what my doctors taught me about my disease and learn how to build my self-esteem. I also had to make changes in my life in terms of self-care. I started to socialize with others, and found a job as a Program Coordinator with "Seeing Through Stigma" with Heart and Soul and I love my job!

I began to raise my son the way I wanted to, with housing for us, proper schooling and engaging him in activities.

I wish to share that there is hope and acceptance for those suffering with mental health issues. Today, I live a happy, fun filled life with family and friends, have a job I love, and can be there for my son just the way I wanted to.

### **Carmen**

Always, but always, there was this deep sense inside of indescribable gloom, turmoil and utter distress. Suicidal ideation was always present. I really didn't want to die, but I needed to end the suffering and the complete inability to move along in a positive direction.

This mental illness has consumed much of my life. But you know something - I am better, much better! I see joy and feel pleasure now where there was none. I am in unison with myself, with my life, with my God, and I play a heck of a good game of tennis! I've acquired a sense of balance, so necessary for any kind of growth. I've attained a "wellness" that I thought was not possible. But most im-



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**Recovery Happens**

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portant, I am grateful that I did not become a bitter person. Through all adversity, I have found that people get bitter or better. No one ever remains the same.

I'm a survivor and I had to first learn to survive before I could learn to live. With the help of my doctors, I began tracking the patterns in my thinking, my feelings and my actions. By doing this, I could see what got me into trouble. I then learned to interrupt those patterns before they became self-destructive, by doing something different and by getting help before I spiraled downward.

A person with a mental health condition must take responsibility for their treatment, for "handling" their illness. It is that taking of responsibility that opens the way toward one's own recovery.

In my many hospitalizations, I wrote poetry and the first poem I wrote was titled: *Desolation* (see right). This poem was written many years ago. Sitting here now writing, with a warm breeze sifting through the window screen and wild flowers blooming magnificently outside, I am grateful I failed at suicide. I am happy to be alive and thankful that I've found my "tender patch of precious blue."

**Eduardo**

They say when you look at a field of dandelions you can either see 100 weeds or 100 wishes. For a long time I saw 100 weeds and no wishes. I started using drugs and alcohol at the age of 13. As a young child I looked in the wrong places for guidance. I started looking up to people who were doing bad things

such as selling drugs, fighting and coming in and out of jails and prisons. People told me I would not live past 21 and that I had no future. I started to get deeper and deeper into my drug addiction and realized my life was unmanageable. I had no hope. People showed me how to steal, drink and smoke but no one showed me how to stop using drugs. My mom loved me so much that she decided it was time for me to stop destroying myself and my family. She enrolled me in a treatment program called Our Common Ground in East Palo Alto and it changed my life. I traded a bag full of dope for a hand full of hope. After a few months being clean and sober, I volunteered at Voices Of Recovery San Mateo County and got hired shortly after. Today I work at Our Common Ground as well and became a Certified Advanced Level (WRAP) Wellness Recovery Action Plan facilitator. I am the son that my mom and dad always wanted. I help others instead of causing harm and most importantly I am finding out who I truly am. Everything happens for a reason, I lived it, loved it and learned from it. I want to make my smile change the world and I refuse to let the world change my smile.

**Jan**

I am a man in long-term recovery. For me this means that I haven't had to take a drink of alcohol or use an illegal drug since April 19, 2013. I am a son, a father, a committed boyfriend, a dedicated employee with Voices of Recovery San Mateo County (VOR), an active member of Staying Connected Men's Support Group, and a productive, law abiding, tax paying citizen. For 35 years I struggled with processing my feelings appropri-

ately. I felt that I didn't belong, that I wasn't enough, and no one wanted me or wanted me around. I began to act out; in school I was the class clown, then as I got older, I began to commit crimes and abuse drugs and alcohol. My life spiraled out of control, the feelings never changed and I never learned how to properly process them. In May of 2013, while in the Free At Last residential treatment program, I was introduced to WRAP (Wellness Recovery Action Plan). VOR came every Friday to do a WRAP workshop, I learned how to work through uncomfortable and distressing feelings and behaviors. I found hope and began to take personal responsibility of my wellness. I developed wellness tools to help me get through one situation at a time. While still in the treatment program I obtained employment with VOR as a Recovery Coach. My employer has been very supportive of my recovery and my advancement in life. VOR made it possible for me to become a Certified WRAP facilitator last year and an advanced level WRAP facilitator this year. I will be going back to school to further my education in the fall at College of San Mateo. I am thankful for my wellness today.

**Jennifer**

I started experiencing symptoms in 1996. I lost a lot of weight and I weighed only 109 pounds at 5' 4". I was only able to drink coffee because eating food made me sick. I was in a real manic state and they wanted to hospitalize me. I had to force myself to start eating again. All my close friends and boss told me that I should go see a doctor. I went

**Desolation:**

*The trees are black,  
the forest gray,  
with ashy casts and  
foggy rays.*

*Can't the sunlight come  
through the air  
and give some hope to the  
spirit there?*

*Then may we see the beauty  
that exists, can  
sigh a moment and enjoy  
this long awaited bliss.  
Oh death what do you have  
me do, when*

*Everyday you force myself to  
talk to you?*

*I'm tired oh life and death  
combined.*

*Tell me what is really mine.*

*Do I have the sunlight  
coming through the fog?*

*Or will darkness always  
prevail, casting  
shadows on my grave and  
longing for my fall?*

*Let me yield to the  
sweetness and the joy  
of a forest shiny green  
and gold with  
amber sounds coming  
through the leaves  
yearning for my touch.*

*Hear me life,  
extend your hand  
and guide me through  
until we find that tender  
patch of precious blue.*

- Carmen

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**Recovery Happens**

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and he referred me to a psychiatrist. Since then, I have been put on many different medications.

Now after 19 years, I'm doing well with the help of an IOP group, my psychiatrist and a therapist. I haven't had an episode in a long time. I have recently become a member of a private non-profit called California Clubhouse which is for people with pervasive mental illness. I am learning new skills to prepare myself for the work place and I am totally enjoying myself. I am also meeting really nice people. I lost a lot of my creativity from all the medication I am taking but being in the media and marketing department of California Clubhouse, I am slowly gaining it all back.

**Marc**

I suffered from alcohol and drug addiction plus mental illness, as well as brain injury from a car accident.

I was living at Hawthorne House transitional housing, after coming out of the Redwood House crisis residence. I would go to Sequoia Station in Redwood City, where I would drink beer and smoke lots of weed, four out of seven days. As a result I would end up at Psychiatric Emergency Services a couple of times a week. I met a psychiatrist at San Mateo Medical Center where I received a referral to Bruce Badilla 12-step Recovery Board & Care. They introduced me to North County Mental Health Services, where I was introduced to True Hope Peer Support Center of Heart & Soul. I met many peer counselors, like Aireen, Chris, and Jacki Leeper, and we would go out every Monday, Wednesday, and Friday.

I no longer smoke weed or drink alcohol or take mind-altering drugs. They would run Life Skills groups, fun groups activities, arts & crafts, exercise class, and on Fridays we had movie night.

Through the support services of Heart & Soul, I became a lot more sociable and outgoing in participating in many areas of my life. By keeping my commitment and staying close to the services of Heart & soul, it has been a real benefit to my recovery.

**Mario**

My Mom and I came to the United States to have a better life, to get away from an unhealthy situation.

I was always an honor roll student from elementary through high school, but I knew I was different, I was in the closet. Only my best friend knew about my sexuality. I was also overweight, so I was uncomfortable in my own skin. I was introduced to alcohol and weed and felt like I finally fit in.

In 1999 after high school, my ex-boyfriend introduced me to crystal meth. It helped me lose weight, the sex on it was euphoric, and at the time it was just fun. As years went by, that fun became not so fun, and eventually became just pure trouble. I started selling dope, got in trouble with the law and the revolving door of going in and out of jail and prison began in 2005.

In 2012, my parole officer advised me to go to a program which I completed it, and quickly relapsed. I found out that I was HIV positive during my stay at the program. I attempted recovery again the next year in the same program. By this time I was sick and tired of being sick and tired.

Presently I've been clean for 27 months and my HIV status

is very stable. I stayed at Project 90 four days short of two years. I was able to get off parole and probation. That better life is coming into fruition. My relationship with my Mom is one I wouldn't change for the world. One of the gifts I love seeing and being a part of is having old friends ask for guidance to change their lives as well.

**Matthew**

I suffer from anxiety and depression, as well as addiction to alcohol and mind-altering drugs. I ended up in PES after being kicked out of all the places I lived. I was sent to the Bruce Badilla 12-Step Care Home, which sent us to the Alano Club for A.A. (Alcoholics Anonymous) meetings six days a week.

Bruce Badilla introduced me to North County Mental Health Services and to True Hope in Daly City, a peer support center at Heart & Soul, and to peer counselors Chris, Aireen, and Jacki.

I haven't had a drink or drugs in seven years. Back in 2008 when I would attend classes at True Hope, I was introduced to fun groups. We would do a check-in of how our past week went, followed by a Recovery Life Skills development group. We went on field trips like the NAMI walk, to Marine World, and other events.

I was introduced to Caminar's Supported Education by Jerry Hill, Jonay Grant, and Walter McVeigh, where I took my Peer Counseling class at the College of San Mateo and received my Peer Counselor certificate.

I stayed close to True Hope of Heart and Soul, where I volunteered for three years while living in Daly City. I educated myself at all the Total Wellness

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## Free Family Event: 3rd Annual Latino Health Forum & Annual Parade for Peace and Justice

"Community Health  
Equity" ¡Sana, Sana!  
Colita de Rana!

**Saturday,  
September 26**

**10:00 am**  
Parade from Coastside  
Lutheran Church  
900 N. Cabrillo Hwy,  
Half Moon Bay

**12:00 Noon**  
Sana Sana  
Health Forum  
Cunha Intermediate  
School, 600 Church  
Street, Half Moon Bay

For more info, visit  
[www.smchealth.org/  
sanasana](http://www.smchealth.org/sanasana)



**Recovery Happens**

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classes that True Hope had to offer.

Being able to take advantage of the services that True Hope and Heart & Soul offer has benefitted me by giving me a beautiful life in recovery. I am very grateful to all the staff of Heart & Soul, and to all my peers that attended along with me, as we all were on a recovery journey together. Today as a Peer Support Counselor for Heart and Soul, I am able to give back and support others.

**Melissa**

I am a woman in long term recovery and what that means is I have not had drugs or alcohol since Aug 8, 2014. I was the youngest of four kids and was emotionally abandoned in my home. In my teens I looked for acceptance, attention and love whereever and however I could find it. After several failed relationships, including one that I endured domestic violence for six years, I was emotionally and mentally broken. I was so miserable I didn't care anymore what happened to me and I turned to drugs to numb myself and not have to feel anything.

In my addiction I lost everything, my dignity, self respect, relationships with family

members and every material thing I owned. I found myself going in and out of jail, homeless and hopeless.

When I was finally sick and tired of being sick and tired I started my recovery journey. In recovery I was introduced to WRAP through Voices of Recovery San Mateo County. I learned tools that help me to overcome events in my life that could trigger me to relapse.

Thanks to my recovery and WRAP I am a productive member of society again. I have a job with Voices of Recovery San Mateo County, I have a sponsor, a strong support group, I volunteer to feed the homeless and I visit the program that I recovered to be a role model to the women that are currently going through what I have been through. I have restored relationships with my family and enjoy my grandsons. I am grateful for the path my life is on today because of my recovery.

**Patty**

I started drinking and using drugs when I was eleven. I used anything and everything I could to change the way I felt. I used everything I could swallow, smoke, snort or inject. It was a very lonely existence.

When I reached bottom, I became homeless and was

living out of the back of my car. I went into a detoxification program for several days.

I went from there to Women's Recovery Association (WRA), a drug and alcohol program for women, for three months. While I was there I got a two week temporary accounting position in a high tech company working on going public.

When I graduated the WRA program I went to a homeless shelter. Living with 35 street people was very difficult, but I had my priorities. They allowed me to stay for four months because I was paying my bills and saving money.

While I was there I was offered a full time position at my job which turned into a ten year career. I was paid very well and I loved my boss and my job.

When I left the shelter I went to a Project 90's Sober Living Environment for a year. Then I rented a little apartment in San Mateo with my boyfriend at the time.

While I worked for that company, I bought a brand new jeep and paid cash for it.

I also bought a three bedroom, two bath house in San Mateo all by myself.

Now my life is good! I help others any way that I can. I am a proud person today. ☺



### **8th Annual Housing Hero Awards**

Thursday, October 22  
3:00 - 4:30 pm

Redwood Shores Library  
Community Room  
399 Marine Parkway  
Redwood City

Nomination forms can be found on the BHRS blog:  
[www.smcbhrsblog.org](http://www.smcbhrsblog.org)



To most people this just looks like an average necklace. In fact, this is a one year clean and sober chip. My grandfather was a heroin addict and alcoholic for 40 years. At the age of 55, he decided to go to treatment. He was clean and sober for one year until he passed. Ironically, he died because of his addiction. At 56, he passed away from Cirrhosis of the liver. Most people wear necklaces that don't have any symbolic meaning. To me, this necklace symbolizes overcoming addiction.

## Full Circle

You often hear how "It takes a Village" to accomplish ones goals or just get through life. This is the story of Luis, a man who has turned his life around with the support of his village. Luis spent two years in San Quentin for a crime he is not proud of and stated "as difficult as it was being in prison, in a way it was a blessing in disguise." He went on to say, "I missed the little and big things, like my wife, kids, family and freedom to eat and sleep when I wanted to." After a year in prison, his kids came to visit and he said, "They didn't even recognize me. I had cut my hair and lost a lot of weight. It broke me." Another year passed and Luis was brought to San Mateo County after serving his sentence. His Probation Officer assisted him with getting connected with services through Service Connect, a collaboration between the Human Services Agency and Behavioral Health and Recovery. While at Service Connect, he worked with Social Worker Colleen Estrada, who referred him to the Children's Fund for clothing and backpacks for his children. She also assisted him and his family with getting items from the food pantry. Luis soon began to realize with the encouragement of his Probation Officer that he really needed to find a job to keep busy and provide for his family.

It was at this time that he was referred to 550Jobs!, a 3 month training and transitional program at Vocational Rehabilitation Services (VRS) that provides ex-offenders the ability to earn money, work on soft skills and time to look for a job. He was also referred to a Vocational Counselor and Job Developer. His Vocational

Counselor, Jennifer Armstrong assisted him with identifying job goals and discussed potential jobs he could do. His Job Developer, Keith Young, assisted him with resume development, mock interviews and online applications. While at 550Jobs!, Luis transitioned to a 2-year training and transitional program at South Bay Recycling (SBR). He worked full time with a 98% attendance rate, earning up to \$11 per hour. Luis stated, "The time at SBR taught me to be patient, not stress out and also provided a paycheck." He went on to say, "I had never really earned money the right way and it felt good to get that paycheck in my hand."

After 14 months, he was ready to transition into community employment. His Job Developer had made contact with Delta Star, a company that makes large electrical transformers, located in San Carlos. Keith and his Supervisor, Gretchen Glynn took a tour at Delta Star and the CFO and General Manager of Delta Star toured VRS. After the tours and discussions, Delta Star decided they wanted to partner with VRS to help with their hiring needs, as they had been having a difficult time filling positions. Luis felt this company would be a good place to work and would provide him with things he had never had, such as stability and supportive co-workers. After applying online and going through several mock interviews with Keith, Luis was offered an interview. However in the meantime, Luis had been hired by Flextronics doing janitorial work earning \$13.50 per hour. After talking about the pros and cons

with his support team he decided to move forward with the Delta Star job. He interviewed and then had to wait for his background to clear. A month later, he received the call he was hoping for and was offered a Production Worker job earning \$14.50 per hour, full benefits and a Union Shop! After his probation period, his pay will increase to \$18.00 per hour with lots of overtime hours. He has been working 7 days a week and is trying to learn as much as he can. He wants this to be a career for him and would like to work his way up. He states, "I am there to learn and taking all the trainings that Delta Star offers." When he was asked how having the job at Delta Star has impacted his life, he answered, "It's changed everyone's lives. My family is happy and it makes me proud to be working. I can take my kids to Chuck E. Cheese and not have to worry about money. I work hard for my money and I'm earning it the right way. It's made me a man and that makes me feel good. I'm proud!"

Luis made a point to thank everyone who helped him along the way and believed in him. As you can see, it really does take a village and his village will continue to support him along his journey. ☺

- Gretchen Glynn, VRS

### Family Assertive Support Team

Are you concerned about an adult family member who may be showing signs or symptoms of serious emotional distress and don't know what to do?

**Call FAST:**  
**(650) 368-3178**

**We Make a Difference AND We Come to You!**

Spanish and Mandarin speaking capacity are available. Other languages are available upon request.

Free service made possible by the voter-approved Mental Health Services Act (Prop. 63).



## The NAMI Convention Illuminates the Spirit of Recovery

Through the course of my own personal recovery in dealing with depression and anxiety, I've acquired a new-found identity over the years, one that fills me with pride and honor- that of a mental health advocate. It hasn't been an easy journey but it has been a rewarding one where I have felt compelled to raise awareness on mental health issues. As a result, I am always thrilled and instantly appreciative of when I meet someone who shares my passion and dedication to this cause. A cause that is so often swept under the rug by a stigmatic society. Nevertheless there is progress being made and there are countless individuals raising the flag of hope for those of us in recovery. One of the prime examples is the NAMI (National Alliance on Mental Illness) organization. Through San Mateo's Office of Equity and Diversity, I was graciously allowed to attend this year's NAMI Convention in San Francisco on July 7th. The energy was captivating with the multitude of people in attendance, most of them NAMI members but also others like myself who were newly being introduced into an exciting facet of mental health advocacy today. There were many people, all perfect strangers to me, yet I felt inexplicably connected to each and every one of them. You see, we all had a story to share. Some stories were intense and riveting, others were quieter and subtler, yet, they were all po-

werfully united in the same spirit of recovery.

While there were many fascinating exhibits and fun activities in the day's schedule, my biggest impression came from the Young Adult Center. Granted there were no lavish presentations or microphones in the room, but none of that was needed. Slowly but continuously, the room became immersed with the voices of all the young individuals who had attended the convention. There were people from all over the country ecstatic to be present, and who were so incredibly active in their advocacy. Many of them had initiated support groups and NAMI clubs at their universities, and were active members in their societies. Others were in the early stages of their recovery and seemed intrigued at the sight of so many people willfully speaking about their experience. There was an incredibly welcoming and dulcet atmosphere of compassion and acceptance. Never before had I met so many people my own age who were just as passionate about raising awareness and also coming together to earnestly discuss the complex challenges many of us face day-to-day.

Even, one of NAMI'S leading psychiatrist's from Boston came and humbly spoke with us about these issues and stressed the significance of sharing our stories with others.

As a matter of fact, what I

personally found the most inspiring was the sincerity with which everyone expressed themselves. Speaking about one's recovery does not signify that the journey is obsolete, it is one that does not end but does evolve. It is about knowing and recognizing one's mental and emotional limitations, and learning to live well with them.

Personally, the acceptance, that final nod of recognition to my own mental illness was life changing for me. It has taught me to embrace and honor the deceptively beautiful part of me that allows me to be human. To be able to look in the mirror and say "I accept you" is powerful beyond measure. That is why attending the NAMI Convention was so dynamic for me as I am positive it was for all of those who were present. This organization is a prime example of how anyone and everyone can make a difference in the lives of others. How you and I can collectively contribute to the progress being made surrounding mental illness but also stand up for the challenges still being faced. Undoubtedly, to many of us, it is those courageous and inspirational individuals willing to share their stories that make recovery not a journey of despair and impossibility but one of spirited hope and perseverance.

~

- Rocio Cornejo



### BE IN THE KNOW

With the BHRS Blog: [www.smcbhrsblog.org](http://www.smcbhrsblog.org)

Get the latest news, info on events, trainings and more!

## Expanded Services to Engage the Young Adult Population

The YTAC team provides intensive clinical case management services, including individual therapy and case management. In addition, the team provides occupational therapy and AOD support to 18-25 year old BHRS clients.

Last year, services provided for the initial engagement and emergency case management to the young adult population by the Youth to Adult Transition team at BHRS was expanded with the help of Measure A.

Three new clinicians were added to the existing team. In the past, prior to this expansion, the team consisted of only two clinicians, along with a part time OT, some AOD support, and a few hours of psychiatry.

The goal of this major expansion of specialized services for young adults is to engage more of this population in behavioral health services and treatment and to reduce repeated crisis events.

To address these goals the team introduced a practice of having a clinician available on-call to Psychiatric Emergency Services (PES) when a person between age 18-22 is admitted with a psychiatric emergency. The clinicians are on-call, 7-days-per-week, to have face-to-face contacts with the client admitted to PES. This work has allowed the team to have timely contact with these young adults during these crisis events, with the hope of building rapport and engaging them in services. The clinicians pro-

vide follow-up with these clients and works to link them with services in the community to help address some of the underlying issues that led to the crisis.

In addition, the clinicians each follow a number of short-term and long-term young adults, providing case management, therapy, and crisis intervention. The services are largely community-based and focused on supporting the clients with their often complex mental health and resource needs. The services are most often provided in the homes, residential programs, or wherever the client is comfortable (park, library, café, etc.)

The expanded program started the on-call, face-to-face contact, with the 18-22 year olds admitted to PES at the San Mateo Medical Center, in July of 2014.

For the fiscal year 2014-15 the following data was collected:

- 225 total 18-22 year olds admitted to PES
- 137 had face-to-face contact with a YTAC clinician (61%)
- 118 male (52%) and 107 female (48%) clients

In addition, the data indicates an overall reduction in return visits to PES. ~

- Jason Kimbrough



**YTAC Team:** Back: Jason Kimbrough; Kent Halpern; Gustavo Beltran; Mark Mosely, AOD/BHRS. Front: Maria Tan, Natalie Breen, Meliza Sandoval, Sharzad Kaviani, (not shown) Rashmi Garg.

"Lick my finger and swirl it round the bottom and make sure I got all of it." - 3 A.M. by Eminem

When the bottle is empty,  
there is no escape.  
You can scream at the top of your lungs.  
We all go through phases and changes.  
Various cycles with moods.  
Not knowing what to do.  
Always contemplating..  
Nodding..  
Being hooligans.  
Blacking out.

I guess it must have happened.. .  
Who are the not knowings?  
This order is a disorder?  
It's dominant.  
It leaves nothing behind  
but a craving.  
And the packaging of the help I need  
is at a temporary stance.  
In the same psychological way,  
it displays my repetition.



## Let's Talk About Suicide

Shhhh...For many years, the word *Cancer* was never spoken about. The newly diagnosed person could not receive the understanding and compassion as they now can and it was scary.

The word *suicide* also is a word that is very frightening. No one will talk about it, even though 39,000 people in the U.S. take their own life annually, with this statistic, unfortunately, increasing. Suicide is the second leading cause of death for youths, age 15 to 24. Worldwide, 800,000 people commit suicide every year.

Don't you think it's about time we talk about it? I do.

I personally have suffered for many, many years from suicidal ideation and acting out. I certainly did not want to die, but the pain of clinical depression left me so exhausted and pain-ridden that I couldn't function and accomplish what I wanted to do. It was the only way to take the pain away - so I thought.

It's my firm belief that everything is programmed to survive. Notice the little sprigs of grass between the mortar on the sidewalks that struggle, even under drought conditions, to try and survive.

I, myself, and others dealing with thoughts of suicide, need help and resources and this assistance is beginning to finally emerge.

Our own County of San Mateo has formed a Suicide Prevention Initiative, consisting of concerned community partners who meet regularly to work together on various efforts to prevent suicide here in the County. One of these highly interested and invested partners is CalTrain, which has experienced 14 deaths on the tracks already this year. They

have been working very diligently, putting up barricades and fencing along miles and miles of track and are eager to do whatever it takes to curb these preventable tragedies. With the media's reporting of these deaths, via TV and newspaper; they refrain from using the word *suicide* anymore for fear of encouraging the copycat effect. (A couple of weeks ago, I read in the paper: "person was illegally on the tracks.")

This year's national SAMHSA'S (Substance Abuse Mental Health Services Administration) Voice Awards will spotlight the impact that the tragedy of suicide has on individuals, families and communities. It also will address what each of us can do to connect those in need to the information, services and supports that could save lives.

For the last three years, I was a part of a 14-member suicide attempt survivors task force from around the U.S., under the guidance and directorship of the National Action Alliance for Suicide Prevention. We had two face-to-face meetings and then held frequent conference calls, setting the stage for innovation that brings the expertise of attempt survivors into focus with that of healthcare providers. The major focus of these meetings was to develop a technical document titled: "*The Way Forward*," which lays out recommendations for policies, practices and programs to support people experiencing suicidal thoughts and feelings and for the engagement of people with this 'lived experience' in services and system change.

All of us need support and solace from others; it's part of the human condition. Doesn't

it feel better to talk to someone about a particular problem? The problem is still there, though, isn't it? But we don't feel quite so alone and overwhelmed when we speak to another person who cares.

One of the best exchanges for me, personally, was from a crisis-line volunteer many years ago. I was on the edge of total despair and got the courage to call the suicide prevention hotline. I am very fragile and overly sensitive at a time like this and am afraid that I will get someone who I feel is tired, or, for many other reasons, I am not able to connect with. This can be devastating -"the final straw"- and causes me to act out. It's difficult to be so vulnerable, but one is when they're trying to hold on to life.

However, this crisis-line volunteer was very helpful and said she was overwhelmed with the amount of pain I was experiencing and could we talk about it. In so doing she validated me and what I was experiencing, and, as we talked, the pain became less and less, some hope was restored and we closed our conversation actually laughing at something that was said. This was an honest, sincere exchange and very helpful to me.

I am in my 8<sup>th</sup> decade now and still here! I have support and I can't say enough how important this is. For those "out there," there is hope and available resources. Please take a chance, try again and reach out for help.

"Wait for the wisest of all counselors, Time." Pericles, Ancient Greek statesman. ☺

- Carmen A. Lee  
Consumer Advocate,  
Stamp Out Stigma Director

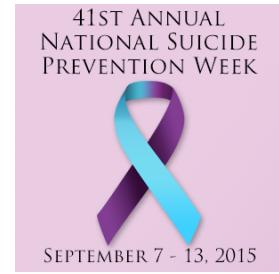
### Speak up, Save a life: Suicide Prevention Forum

Friday,  
September 25  
12:00 – 1:30 pm

Oak Room, San Mateo Main Library, 55 West 3rd Ave., San Mateo

Program: keynote speaker, panel, and resource tables. Refreshments provided.

More info at:  
[www.smchealth.org/  
suicideprevention](http://www.smchealth.org/suicideprevention).



## Wellness Corner

As part of our integrated care model, Total Wellness peer coaches provide a wide range of services to our program's clients. These services include peer-led health and wellness groups (such as smoking cessation, weight management, WRAP on wellness, yoga, walking and physical activity groups) as well as one-on-one coaching. The support that the peer coaches provide to our clients has greatly benefited many Total Wellness clients in making positive behavioral changes. The fact that all the peer coaches have a shared behavioral health history similar to that of the clients allows for stronger rapport building, and effective engagement and intervention with the clients. Peer wellness coaching embodies principles of cultural competency, recognition of personal strengths and wishes, and the actualization of recovery.

In honor or Recovery Month, we have invited three peer coaches to share their personal experiences in going through the journey of recovery and in being the peer coach for Total Wellness!

- Shirley Chu,  
Chair, Total Wellness  
Advisory Committee

### My Recovery Journey

I started drinking alcohol in high school and was introduced to drugs at the age of 21. After having my children, I realized I wasn't happy with the relationship I was in at that time. I turned back to drugs to make myself feel better and was hanging out with wrong people. I started committing crimes, was incarcerated and was put on parole. After I was released, I was able to pull myself together,

started working for an attorney service and stayed clean and sober for almost ten years. Later, I enrolled in community college and completed my GED. Subsequently, I enrolled in a medical coding class and received my certificate. Yet, I relapsed and found myself back in jail for six months in the Choices program.

I got into a residential treatment program which changed my life entirely. I embraced the Strength Based Therapeutic Community (TC) process, exploring a new way to approach life on life terms. The staff and residents of the program were very instrumental in my sustaining of sobriety. I even completed my personal Wellness Recovery Action Plan (WRAP), and now am certified as a WRAP facilitator.

Currently, I am a graduate and staff member of Our Common Ground; I am also a part-time Recovery Coach at Voices of Recovery, and am a Peer Wellness Coach at Total Wellness!

- Dayna Perkins,  
Total Wellness Peer Coach

### Healing in Helping

I have been very thankful to work with Total Wellness in a peer coach capacity. Without realizing it going into the position, it has been probably the best therapy for my own recovery that could have happened. Working with other people who are having similar conditions as I have had and in many cases much worse, has allowed me to not only reflect on various past experiences and hence heal some of my own issues, but also to stretch my practice of kindness, compassion and unconditional care for others. Helping other people is probably one of the

best ways to heal oneself.

- Constance Rose,  
Total Wellness Peer Coach

### Wellness through Good Choices

I have been a peer coach with Total Wellness for over a year now, and am happy to bring what I have learned about making good, responsible choices from my recovery journey to my coaching work. The very first critical and responsible choice I have learned to make is keeping an active life. I believe that getting out every-day, doing exercises routinely, eating healthy, and eating right are keys to a well-balanced living; they are also keys to our physical and emotional wellness! I also believe that these are all fundamental things that we all should engage in to take good and responsible care of ourselves. The other critical choice I have made is to surround myself with good people so that healthy and gratifying relationships can be grown. Once a good friend told me, "Friendship should be a mirror for where you are at." I strongly believe in this saying and practice to live this way.

I share these important practices with my coaching clients when appropriate and encourage them to make good, responsible choices for their well-being! ~

- Melanie Sims, Total Wellness  
Peer Coach

## Pathways Clubhouse Celebrates Four Years

Pathways clinician, Tennille Tucker and community worker, Theresa Bassett-McConnell envisioned creating an environment that would benefit both men and women of the Pathways Program with group activities on Saturdays. After securing a location with Heart & Soul at their San Mateo facility, The Source, the Pathways Clubhouse was developed and their doors opened on June 4, 2011.

The Pathways Clubhouse Saturday group activity was designed to assist both men and women in increasing awareness, improve leisure interaction, and to develop social and daily living skills. The Clubhouse environment's main focus is to empower clients to use beneficial coping techniques, promote healthy living and build skills to take steps towards recovery to improve their quality of life.

The Pathways Clubhouse averages 13 clients regularly each Saturday with occasional visits from alumni. A light breakfast is served; and clients attend from 9:00 - 11:30 am. The agenda varies from topic discussions to board games, bingo, movies and/or just hanging out socializing among one another. Pathways Clubhouse has proven to be a great success as friendships formed and camaraderie developed among the clients. Some clients are mandated by probation to attend, however, once there, they enjoy themselves and actively participate.

Pathways Clubhouse now uses Heart & Soul's main facility which has recently moved to Industrial Road in San Carlos. Pathways new clinician, Sharon Jones, is now co-facilitating the group activities with Theresa. As they celebrate their 4th year of provid-

ing such a unique service to this population, Pathways Clinical Service Manager, Carlos Morales, would like to thank Heart & Soul's new Director, Cardum Harmon, for allowing Pathways to continue furnishing clients with a safe and comfortable environment to come to every Saturday.

### What is Pathways?

Pathways is an alternate path through the criminal justice system for those with a serious mental illness. Participants may have a co-occurring disorder as long as a serious mental illness is also present. The criteria for eligibility includes:

- Statutory eligibility for probation
- San Mateo County resident
- Age 18 yrs. or older
- Diagnosis of a serious mental illness
- Voluntarily agree to participate

The Pathways Program began in 2006. They currently have 72 alumni with a 90% reduction in recidivism.

For more information please call 650-573-2159. ↵

- Tennille Tucker &  
Theresa Bassett-McConnell

### The End of an Addiction

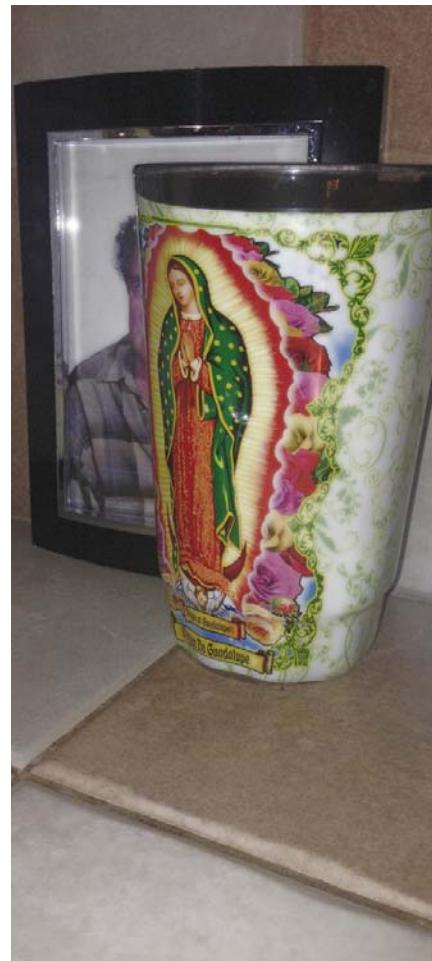
The grandfather that I only saw once  
But oh how I knew of his addiction  
Now all that is left is a picture of you  
A picture that a daughter keeps of her father

His addiction was something that seemed no  
big deal  
My mother grew up with an alcoholic father  
He drank for fun and because he wanted to  
get away  
A father that was always drunk, but did not  
see it as "A problem"

But when he passed away  
The drinking was a problem  
It was not old age that took him away  
But it was his addiction to alcohol  
That made us all grieve

No addiction should take a life  
No father should leave his daughter because  
of an addiction  
Why must an addiction be so powerful?  
So powerful that it takes a life away before it  
should

Now the daughter burns a candle next to his  
picture  
All she has are memories when looking at the  
picture  
She knows it is not his fault that alcohol took  
him too early  
He is still her father, who she loves, even with  
his faults.



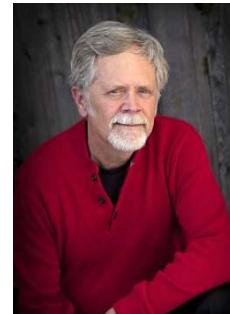
## Cordilleras Corner: Redesign Project - Terry Wilcox-Rittgers

A bit more of the Cordilleras Campus history has been unearthed in exploring the past. As many of you have already known, Cordilleras was first opened as a TB Center for the residents of San Mateo County back in the 1950's and was called the County Tuberculosis Hospital. They provided complete medical care including x-ray and surgical facilities. Tuberculosis was a major cause of death in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. One in every ten deaths was attributed to TB in the United States.

In the 1960's, the treatment of TB with antibiotic streptomycin led to the substantial reduction in the loss of life and the need for hospitalization. The San Mateo County Tuberculosis Hospital only

averaged 5 to 8 patients per day by the time it closed in 1973.

What you probably didn't know was that on the same grounds, Canyon Sanatorium was built in 1920 consisting of 27 little cabins and a small central medical facility. It was believed that this "open air" sanitarium provided superior care over a traditional hospital atmosphere. Canyon was one of many similar open air sanatoriums developed across the United States. Later in 1927, the Hassler Hospital was built by San Francisco in the hills above the Canyon Sanitarium to serve the residents of San Francisco. If you go for a walk up the trails behind the Cordilleras Campus today, you will come across some of the



Terry Wilcox-Rittgers

stone work that made up the hospital. Make time to take a walk up there sometime soon before other changes take place. ☺

## Believing In Change: From Crisis To Collaboration

The annual 2015 Crisis Intervention Training (CIT) Statewide Conference was held in San Diego this year and will return to the Bay Area in 2016. San Mateo County is a key partner in promoting CIT awareness and in sponsoring the annual conferences. San Mateo County Behavioral Health and Recovery Services provided MHSA funds to support the conference. The California CIT Association which puts on the annual conferences works to establish evidence based practices and provide program support for Crisis Intervention Training throughout California.

Our 2015 Conference was attended by almost 300 people with many turned away due to the limitations of seating at the conference site. The attendees were comprised of law enforcement officers, behavioral health

professionals, consumers, family members, lawyers and others.

Some of the key plenary and breakout sessions included:

- Suicide Prevention within the Law Enforcement Community
- Law Enforcement's Response to Wellness – Taking Care of Our Own
- NAMI – When Medicine Got It Wrong
- Moving Forward With Laura's Law
- Excited Delirium, Bath Salts and Meth Use Effects on the Body
- The Hidden Population in Disasters

This conference was very well received by the law enforcement community. This type of event along with providing CIT education and awareness is helping to create a more collaborative environ-

ment in our county and throughout the State of California. Please visit the CACITA website for details and updates at [www.cacita.net](http://www.cacita.net). Click on the "Photo" link to view pictures from the conference.

Our 2016 Annual CIT Conference will be in the late summer or fall of 2016. We will select a venue that can accommodate a larger number of people. I will provide advanced notice so that you have the opportunity to sign up early since we expect a significant response from around the state. ☺

- Terry Wilcox-Rittgers

## Trainings

- Sept. 8:** Grand Rounds  
“The Impaired Provider”
- Sept. 18:** Harm Reduction
- Sept. 22:** Grand Rounds  
“Teaching and Mentoring for Professional Development”
- Sept. 24:** Managing and Preventing Assaultive Behavior (Introduction)
- Sept. 29:** Understanding, Using and Implementing the ASAM in a Managed Care Envi-

ronment.

**Oct. 8:** Managing and Preventing Assaultive Behavior (Advanced)

**Oct. 20:** Law and Ethics and Confidentiality Issues in Substance Abuse Treatment.  
Visit the training calendar linked below for details.

Training Calendar: [www.smcbhrsblog.org/bhrs-calendar-staff-and-provider-trainings/](http://www.smcbhrsblog.org/bhrs-calendar-staff-and-provider-trainings/)

## Employee Service Awards

### Employee Service Awards

#### 40 Years

- **John Darby**, EPA Community Counseling Center

#### 20 Years

- **Todd Feeley**, Central Clinic

#### 10 Years

- **Roxanne Dean**, School Based Mental Health
- **Stephen Kaplan**, BHRS Director

### Mental Health and Substance Abuse Recovery Commission

**Wednesday,  
October 7th**

3:00 – 5:00 pm  
Silicon Valley Community Foundation  
1300 El Camino Real  
San Mateo  
(Call to confirm location)

Commission meetings are open to the public and are generally held the first Wednesday of the month. For location or more information, call 650.573.2544 or visit: [www.smchealth.org/MHSARC](http://www.smchealth.org/MHSARC)



## Employee Spotlight



**Maureen Lin, LMFT**  
Primary Care Interface Team  
**Hometown:**  
Taichung, Taiwan  
**Years at BHRS/SMC:**  
6 years

#### What do you do?

I provide brief treatment and triage for both adult and youth referrals from primary care providers at county primary care clinics.

#### What do you enjoy most about your job?

I enjoy working with clients and having opportunities to outreach to the Chinese community in San Mateo County.

#### Most rewarding/memorable experience:

Providing support for the family members at the Chinese Family Support Group that I co-

facilitate with Alice Tong and Mark Wang at Central County Mental Health. The group has helped some family members to reduce the stigma around mental health services so they were able to step forward to advocate for and initiate mental health services for their mentally ill family member.

#### Favorite hobbies/activities:

Spending time with family, traveling, watching movies.

**“If I weren’t in my current role, I’d be a...”**

School counselor. ☺

## Q-Tip for Quality - Holly Severson, RN MSN

In honor of Recovery Month, we'd like to extend a special welcome to clients/consumers, family members, staff or others who are affiliated with BHRS and who are *in recovery* to join the Quality Improvement Committee. The QIC meets every odd numbered month in San Mateo and is an important meeting where members learn about system changes, provide valuable input, and review and vote on system-wide policies. A diverse membership en-

sures that different stakeholder perspectives will be heard - please join us and add your voice!

Clients and family members get stipends for time spent attending the QIC. If you'd like to get your feet wet before jumping in, feel free to attend any QIC meeting before deciding whether to join as an ongoing member. (The next meeting is next Wednesday, as indicated in the side-bar.) However, once you do join it's

important that you attend every meeting if possible so that your constituency is represented and heard by BHRS leadership.

If you are interested in learning more or joining, please contact me at [hseverson@smcgov.org](mailto:hseverson@smcgov.org) We'd love to hear your views and work with you on system improvements!

QM always appreciates any feedback or ideas you'd like to share with us. ☺

#### Next QIC Meeting:

Wednesday  
September 9, 2015  
10:00 am–Noon  
2000 Alameda de las Pulgas, Suite 200, Room 201, San Mateo

## California Clubhouse

(Continued from page 2)

- tion for new members.
5. On May 27, 2015 the Clubhouse held an Open Enrollment Event to officially begin the process of enrolling new members. Since that date, the clubhouse has enrolled 24 members who have clocked over 300 visits.
  6. Hosted on average four social activities per month in the evenings and on weekends. In keeping with

the Clubhouse model, the clubhouse has been open on every holiday. The next holiday celebration will be the Labor Day Picnic.

7. Currently conducting community outreach efforts to underserved ethnic communities such as African American, Latino, Chinese, and Filipino.
8. Members and staff have created, published and distributed the first official California Clubhouse newsletter.

We are excited to see the Clubhouse succeed and offer adults with severe mental illness a network of support and skills needed to transition to independence. For more information, visit [www.californiaclubhouse.org](http://www.californiaclubhouse.org) or 650-539-3345. ~

- Doris Estremera

To subscribe to *Wellness Matters* or to view previous issues, visit:  
[www.smchealth.org/wm](http://www.smchealth.org/wm)  
(To subscribe, click the red envelope at the top of the page.)

Forward comments, suggestions or contributions for *Wellness Matters* to Diane Tom, Editor:  
[DiTom@smcgov.org](mailto:DiTOM@smcgov.org)



Behavioral Health and Recovery Services  
San Mateo County Health System

225 37th Avenue, Suite 320  
San Mateo, CA 94403  
Phone: 650.573.2541  
Fax: 650.573.2841  
Website: [www.smchealth.org](http://www.smchealth.org)  
Blog: [www.smcbhrlsblog.org](http://www.smcbhrlsblog.org)  
[www.sanmateo.networkofcare.org/mh](http://www.sanmateo.networkofcare.org/mh)