

DIRECTOR'S UPDATE

Scott Gilman, MSA, CBHE

Crushing The Curve Youth Campaign

Preventing the spread of the coronavirus through “physical distancing” has been difficult for many, and it is especially difficult for young people who may be grieving the loss of freedom to physically be with friends, participate in events such as graduation, prom, sports, and life’s normal daily activities. We need them to stay resilient and strong and yet we know that young people are struggling through the challenges of COVID-19’s impact on their academic, social, physical, and mental health.

Parents and caregivers may also be struggling to encourage their teens and young adults to adhere to the physical distancing recommendations while also trying to support them and their mental health.

Crushing The Curve is a social marketing campaign designed to educate youth about staying mentally and physically healthy during and following the pandemic. The pilot campaign was funded by the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) Foundation, the Chan Zuckerberg Initiative, Sequoia Healthcare District, and a collaboration between San Mateo County, San Francisco County, Alameda County, and Marin County. Chan Zuckerberg and CDC Foundation have additionally agreed to fund an expansion phase of the campaign to make these resources available throughout the seven Bay Area jurisdictions (Alameda, Contra Costa, Marin, San Francisco, San Mateo, and Santa Clara counties as well as the City of Berkeley).

A digital ad campaign, which launched June 1, directs teens and young adults to the *Crushing The Curve* website www.crushingthecurve.me. Here they can find a robust set of resources which include how to stay physically and mentally healthy during the changing phases of the pandemic, information about mental



www.crushingthecurve.me

health and substance use challenges and where to find support, and opportunities for leadership in their communities.

Information and resources for parents and guardians on how to support the young people in their life during this time will also be featured on a separate “Parents” [page](#) (crushingthecurve.me/parents/) which is also accessible from a link at the bottom of the website.

8th Annual Pride Celebration

San Mateo County hosted its 8th annual—yet very first—virtual weeklong Pride Celebration, “*Rainbow Vision 2020*.” It was held June 8 -13 and featured 14 events that illuminated inspiration and hope.

During the week, the community participated in a host of fun workshops including Census LGBTQ+ training, a Healthy Relationship workshop, a series of book readings and Q&A from LGBTQ+ authors, a documentary screening, and a forum on how BHR’s Health Equity Initiative’s co-chairs plan to address racial

28.3%

Revenue Ratio (R3)

12,346

Total Clients

876

Admitted

869

Discharged



- *The Signs* - Burlingame High School (First Place, Advancing to statewide round of judging)
- *Reach Out* - Burlingame High School (First Place, Advancing to statewide round of judging)
- *The Tracks* - Notre Dame High School in partnership with San Mateo County Behavioral Health (Honorable Mention)
- *The Beauty of Mental Health* - Hillsdale High School (Second Place)

"I chose this film category in honor of my friend who took his life at the beginning of October. I wanted to channel the extreme pain I have experienced in his loss into something that could help people in his situation in the future. If this video helps just one person then I will have achieved my goal in making this video. The piano piece in the end of the video is an actual audio clip of him playing my favorite piece he would play."

– Isabella Gaddini, Student Filmmaker

The program received 1,080 films created by 3,475 youth from 190 schools and organizations in California. Watch films from San Mateo and other counties [here](#).

Congratulations



Noelle Bruton, LMFT, Clinical Services Manager I, Child and Youth Service, overseeing Youth Case Management, Central Outpatient Youth team, and the Canyon Oaks Youth Center-Short Term Residential Treatment Program.

Noelle joined San Mateo County in 2000 and worked in the Prenatal To Three Program as a clinician, mental health program specialist, and then as the unit supervisor for the past 20 years. She helped implement *Partners for Safe and Healthy Children* and supervised the *Teen program*, a collaborative federal program aligned with Family Health.

Prior to coming to the county, she worked in day treatment programs at the UCSF-SF General Hospital Infant-Parent Program, and Langley Porter Children's Psychiatric Ward of UCSF. She has over 30 years of experience working with young children, youth, and adults providing trauma-informed and culturally responsive care, child-parent psychotherapy, and family therapy.

injustice and gender inequalities. There were about 20-30 participants at each workshop.

Over 1,300 people virtually attended the Grand Celebration on Saturday, plus those watching the live stream via Pen TV. The day was immersed in song, dance, laughter, encouragement and acknowledgement, and brought us together during a time when people are feeling isolated. The celebration also recognized our solidarity with Black Lives Matter, support for Black LGBTQ+ community members and our commitment to combat racism and injustice. There were 6,500 views on social media during the event and a total of 9,500 views for the entire week long celebration.

The celebration was sponsored by San Mateo County Pride Initiative, BHRS Office of Diversity & Equity, San Mateo County Pride Center and the County's LGBTQ Commission. Watch the event on [here](#) or www.facebook.com/PRIDEInitiativeSMC.

Regional Winners - Directing Change Program & Film Contest

The Directing Change Program and Film Contest is part of California's Mental Health Movement: *Each Mind Matters*. The program offers young people the exciting opportunity to participate in the movement by creating short films about suicide prevention and mental health that are used to support awareness, education and advocacy efforts on these topics.

This year, 10 films were submitted from three schools and organizations in San Mateo County. Regional winners include:

Mental Health Month

Each May, San Mateo County joins the state and country in celebrating Mental Health Awareness Month (MHAM) to promote wellness and reduce stigma against those facing mental health and substance use issues. This year, BHRS joined *Each Mind Matters*, California's statewide mental health movement, in promoting the theme *Express Yourself*.

COVID-19 brought along the unique challenge of having to host all events virtually. Thanks to an amazing planning committee, we were able to host virtual open mics, paint and dance classes, mental health panels, and much more.



Virtual paint class

The diversity of organizations who hosted these events led to a wider reach compared to 2019. This year, we held 23 virtual events with a total of 1,500 attendees, which averaged 65 participants/event, and reached 3,635 people via social media. Last year, we hosted 44 in-person events across San Mateo County with a total of 1,093 attendees, which averaged 25 participants/event, and reached 407 people via social media.

Mental Health is important beyond May and we are all champions in different ways throughout the year. With attention on the COVID-19 pandemic and the violence and racism against African Americans and Black communities, we must continue to promote and advocate for mental health for all.

Board of Supervisors Focus on Equity

In January, San Mateo County Board of Supervisors, led by Board President Warren Slocum, named equity and inclusion as one of their top priorities for the year. Since then, they've taken a number of steps to infuse equity into county practices.

Several months ago, the Board retained the Social Progress Index (SPI) firm to create an equity index for every census tract in San Mateo County. This would help the County develop measures to compare outcomes between different communities. This will be the first time any county in the United States has endeavored to do this and it will help provide needed data to make funding and policy decisions through an equity lens.

As a part of these efforts, the County also formed an internal equity core team (made up of staff from each department), to undergo training through Government Alliance on Race and Equity (G.A.R.E.). GARE uses a structured curriculum that focuses on strategies that normalize conversations about race and operationalize new policies and practices to work toward equity.

Each member of the core team will implement an equity plan within their department and support the efforts of bringing an equity lens to their work and practices. Maria Lorente Foresti, Ph.D. (BHRS, Director of the Office of Diversity and Equity) and Shireen Malekafzali, MPH (PHPP, Senior Manager for Health Policy, Planning and Equity) were selected to represent San Mateo County Health.

The County also plans to look for better ways to connect with and expand our local small minority-owned businesses and develop a strategy to make sure these businesses, especially in these difficult economic times, not only survive but thrive into the future.

Most recently on June 23, the Board of Supervisors adopted a [resolution](#) supporting the Black Lives Matter movement and reaffirmed the County's commitment to racial equity. The resolution acknowledges the structural racism, history of violence and racial inequities that have impacted Black community members. It also commits to continuing to address the root causes by using an anti-racist, racial equity focused lens to assess current and future policies and programs.

COVID-19 Highlights

- In April/May, approximately 76% of county operated BHRS services for adults and 83% of services for youth were provided via telehealth.
- BHRS saw a nearly 10% increase in the number of clients served from March through May 2020, compared to the same period last year.
- The BHRS Access Call Center reports that the calls they have received over the past few months have increased in length. They are seeing an rise in calls from parents concerned about their children, as well as previous clients asking to reinstate their services.
- The county's crisis line (operated by Star Vista) saw their call volume rise during the past few months, compared to the previous year (27% increase in March/April 2020 vs same time last year). The length of the calls have also increased and they've seen a steady rise in the percentage of calls received related COVID-19 (25%).
- In May, BHRS held two webinars to hear first-hand about fears, stresses and challenges related to COVID-19, economic insecurity, housing instability,

immigration enforcement and other needs.

The *Race & Coronavirus* webinar saw over 230 participants. The *Familia y Bienestar Durante COVID-19* webinar, which facilitated a conversation in Spanish on family and wellness during COVID-19, reached over 2,000 people during the first 24 hours on social media.

The key themes we heard from the community include: educate and link people to resources and services; provide culturally and linguistically appropriate community resources and COVID-19 related information—including for specific populations such as the undocumented community; rental assistance funding and eviction protections to help people stay in their homes; financial and food insecurity; internet/cell data education and access; support for families such as child care for essential workers and assistance with home schooling; and addressing racism, discrimination and xenophobia in our communities.

SNAPSHOT: BHRS Clients Served - as of May 31, 2020

Service Category	Total Clients	Admitted - May	Discharged - May
Mental Health Services (County)	5,486	430	522
Mental Health Services (Contracted)	5,584	362	247
AOD Services	1,276	84	100
BHRS Client Total	12,346	876	869

Total clients are unduplicated within each service category, however, if a client received services in more than one category during the same period, the client is counted in multiple categories.

R3% (28.3%) is the revenue ratio of billed services as of 5/31/20.