

An abstract painting featuring a central heart shape. The heart is filled with a teal-blue color and has a dark purple outline. This heart is set against a large, textured orange background that resembles a thick brushstroke. The entire composition is framed by a vibrant green border, also created with thick, expressive brushstrokes. The overall style is painterly and emotional.

Heart Forward

LOS ANGELES COUNTY
MENTAL HEALTH COMMISSION

2019–20
ANNUAL REPORT

Cover by Anonymous Painted Brain Artist

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LOS ANGELES COUNTY
**DEPARTMENT OF
MENTAL HEALTH**
hope. recovery. wellbeing.

WELCOME

The Mental Health Commission (MHC) accomplished quite a lot – not in spite of, but because of – COVID-19 during the 2019–2020 fiscal year. Here are some worthy highlights:

- The Commission missed just one month of meetings before pivoting to a virtual platform. The transition eased access for many attendees, including Commissioners, as traveling to downtown Los Angeles and finding and paying for parking before meetings was removed as a barrier. As a result, the Commission meetings were more fully attended by Commissioners and department staff as well as the public.
- In addition, Service Area Leadership Teams (SALT) meetings and Underserved Cultural Communities (UsCC) meetings shifted online providing easier access for Commissioner attendance and enriching the relationships between the Commissioners and their respective service area and cultural groups. We also held a full public comment forum dedicated solely to MHSA three-year planning.
- Our Commission supported the passage of the Peer Support Specialist Bill SB 803 (Beall) by spreading the word among our constituents and hosting regular updates at meetings. This hard-won bill provides an avenue to our county to onboard Peer and Family Support specialists to connect peers to help and hope.
- Throughout the tumult of the year, we maintained focus on the three priority areas developed during our annual retreat: homelessness and housing, integrated care, and decriminalizing mental illness.
- We enjoyed new appointees to the Commission including Commissioners Mike Molina from Supervisor Janice Hahn in the 4th District and Luis Orozco from Supervisor Hilda Solis in the 1st District. At the same time, it was bittersweet to lose Commissioners Kita Curry and Merilla Scott, both of whom provided stellar and steadfast counsel and perspective to our Commission for a combined eight years.

To our collective health and wellbeing in
Los Angeles County!

Brittney Weissman, MPP
Chair,
Los Angeles County Mental Health Commission



COMMISSION APPOINTEES

BY LA COUNTY SUPERVISORIAL DISTRICT



1st District
Hilda Solis



2nd District
Mark
Ridley-Thomas



3rd District
Sheila Kuehl



4th District
Janice Hahn



5th District
Kathryn Barger

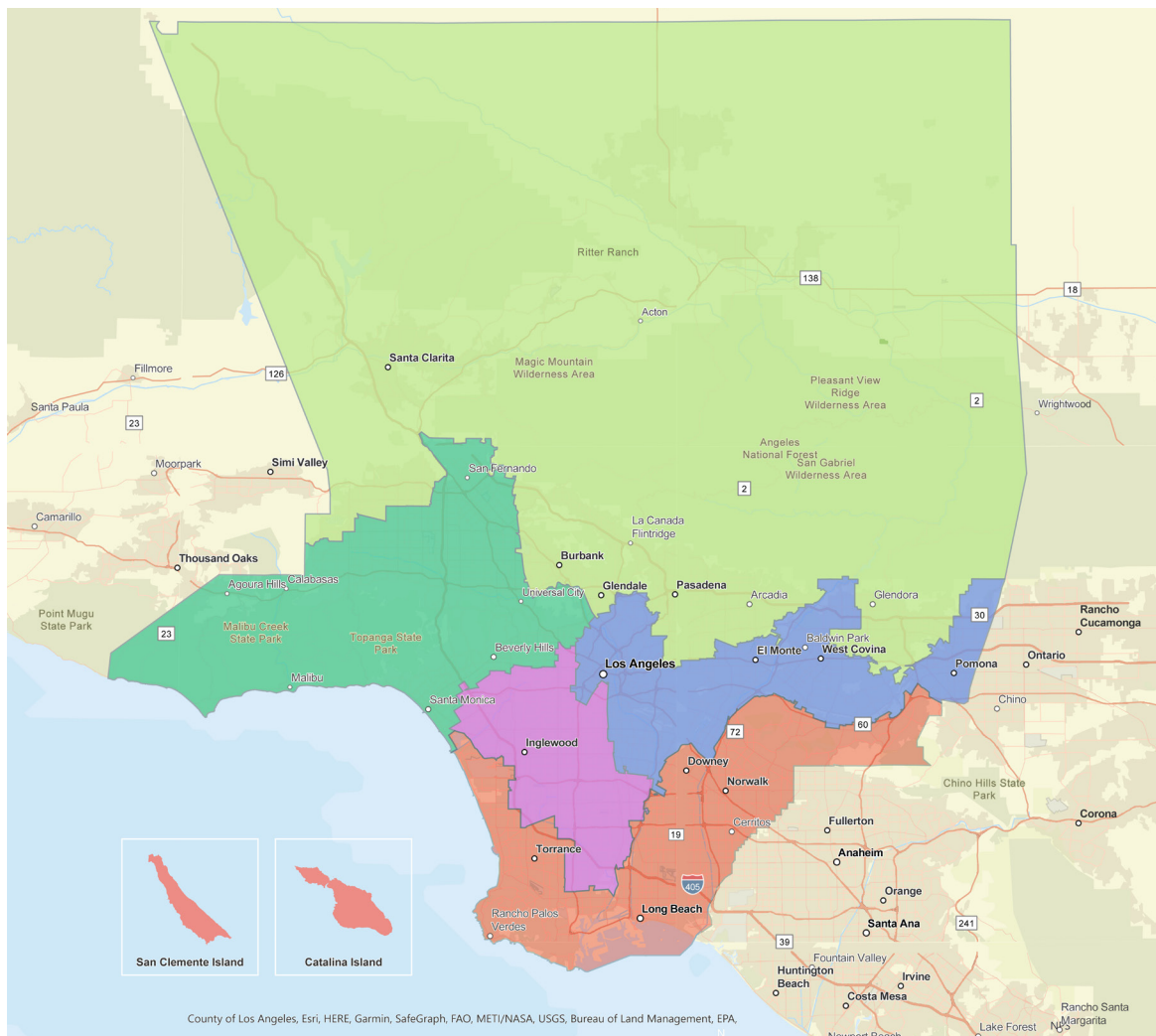
Imelda Padilla-
Frausto, Ph.D., MPH
Susan F. Friedman
Luis Orozco, LCSW

Kita Curry, Ph.D.
Reba Stevens
Harold Turner

Stacy Dagleish
Rev. Kathy Cooper
Ledesma
Merilla McCurry
Scott, Ph.D.

Kevin M. Acebo
Michael Molina
Patrick Ogawa

Judy Cooperberg
MS, CPRP
Brittney Weissman
MPP



HISTORIC BACKGROUND

State law requires each county to have a Mental Health Board or Commission.

The role of the Commission is established in the Welfare and Institutions Code (WIC) Section 5604. Pursuant to Section 5604 et seq. of the WIC there must exist in the County of Los Angeles the Mental Health Commission and that Commission is hereby continued in existence in the Department of Mental Health (DMH) effective October 29, 1957. The Los Angeles County Mental Health Commission consists of sixteen members. By law, one member of the Commission must be a member of the Board of Supervisors. Section 5602 WIC sets very specific membership requirements. Fifty percent of the Commission membership shall be consumers or the parents, spouse, sibling, or adult children of consumers, who are receiving or have received mental health services. Consumers constitute at least 20% of the total membership. Families of consumers constitute at least 25% of the membership.

Member	Required Percentage	LA County Percentage	Board of Supervisors
Consumer	20%	29%	
Family Member	25%	42%	
Board Representative 5 th District			Kathryn Barger

Due to the COVID-19 public health emergency, the Commission utilized online meetings to ensure the health and safety of commissioners, staff and the public. California Governor's Executive Order waived all in-person requirements for public meetings.

There is literally no time in our history that our shared mental health and wellbeing have been such a priority. Our work at LACDMH is a heart forward investment in our County's wellbeing.

– Jonathan E. Sherin, M.D., Ph.D.,
Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health Director

COMMISSION HEART FORWARD PRINCIPLES

Vision

All Los Angeles County individuals, families, and communities have access to effective mental health care.

Mission

- To advise the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors and Department of Mental Health Director on issues impacting the County mental health system
- To review and approve the procedures used to ensure community and professional involvement at all stages of the planning process

Values

Accountability for Care

Services and programs should be held to high quality standards and result in effective care and positive outcomes.

Access to Person Centered Care

Treatment should be easily accessed, in a welcoming and respectful environment, and tailored to meet differences in individual need. The individual should be a partner in their treatment process.

Comprehensive Care

The coordination of health care that addresses mental health, substance abuse and primary care services to ensure the best outcomes for those with multiple healthcare needs should be systematized. Comprehensive care should also address stigma and structural barriers to individuals in obtaining education, employment, secure housing and other needed services.

Trauma Informed Care

Organization and treatment frameworks should involve understanding, recognizing and responding to the effects of all types of trauma, not just on the individual seeking treatment but to the family and community.

Community Responsive Care

Recognize individual and systematic bias and respond to issues that lead to disparities in either allocation of resources or poor outcomes for specific communities or sub-populations. Cultural customs, practices or rituals that can positively impact treatment outcomes should be identified and incorporated, where possible.

COMMUNITY CONCERNS STAKEHOLDER INPUT

In our traditional way of life, we believe that I don't tell you who you are.

You tell me who you are, and that is who you are.

- Ahyoha (Keetoowah Cherokee from Tahlequah, Oklahoma)

Every meeting agenda includes Public Comment, a time allotted for community members to represent their mental health experiences and needs related to LA County. This list highlights some common themes across our meetings:

Housing

- Unsanitary shelter conditions
- Unsafe housing conditions
- Ongoing difficulty in getting safe long-term residential treatment
- Hopelessness of those experiencing homelessness

Peers

- Requests for expanded peer support services and increased opportunities for peer advocacy
- Need for Peer Resource Centers in every service area
- Well-paid employment for peers in each service area
- Help for older people

Stakeholder Engagement

- Need for adequate engagement and input from stakeholders on MHSA plan
- Shared power for stakeholder participation
- Provision of regular and ongoing training for community stakeholders
- Commissioner education in cultural competency and unconscious bias
- Need for more clarification, information, and communication on role of SALT
- Requests for increased translation services in more languages, and all materials to be provided in Spanish
- Availability of services for ethnic communities e.g. Latinx, Asian Pacific Islander, et al
- Inadequate data collection to assess real-time need

Placement and Access to Services

- Expansion of department services to unreached County residents: in schools, jails, or due to geography
- Need for more hospital beds

Hunger

- Need for clean water for drinking and/or bathing
- Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) inflexibility and amount

SERVICE AREA TOWN HALLS

Service Area 4



County of Los Angeles
Mental Health Commission

TOWN HALL

Thursday, July 25th 2019

Service Area 4—Metro Los Angeles

Registration & Breakfast
9:00AM-10:00AM

Town Hall
10:00AM-12:00PM

Location
Los Angeles Trade Technical College
Sage Hall Cafeteria
400 W. Washington Blvd., Los Angeles, CA 90015

FREE Parking located in the Olive Street Parking Lot
(Enter lot from Olive Street)

Service Area 5



DEPARTMENT OF MENTAL HEALTH
& MENTAL HEALTH COMMISSION

SERVICE AREA 5 (WEST LA) TOWN HALL

Saturday, January 25th, 2020
9AM to 4PM (Registration begins at 8)

The Department of Mental Health in collaboration with the Mental Health Commission will hold a stakeholder event to educate and inform and hear from community members on how to improve the landscape of mental health services in West Los Angeles (SA5).

LOCATION:
HISTORICAL WOMEN'S CLUB IN SANTA MONICA
ADDRESS:
1210 4TH ST, SANTA MONICA, CA 90401

This Town Hall is being held at the Historical Women's Club in Santa Monica whose purpose is to advance the lines of culture, education, welfare, service and civic affairs. Their mission is to enrich the lives of members of the community and their historic building provides a place in the community for social, civil, and cultural programs and event.

For more info please call (213) 738-4772 or e-mail MHCommission@dmh.lacounty.gov

Service Area 7



URDMH SOUTH EAST COMMUNITIES PRESENTS

TOWN HALL

OCTOBER 24, 2019 11:430PM - 8:30PM

JAMES A. GARFIELD HIGH SCHOOL
(AUDITORIUM)
5101 E SIXTH ST., LA, CA 90022

You are cordially invited to attend the Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health (DMH) Service Area 7 Town Hall Meeting! Throughout the evening, you will have the opportunity to meet executive leadership from Los Angeles County, including the Department of Mental Health (DMH), Mental Health Commissioners, and other County Officials. Be apart of the discussion to improve mental health services in the East Los Angeles and surrounding Communities.

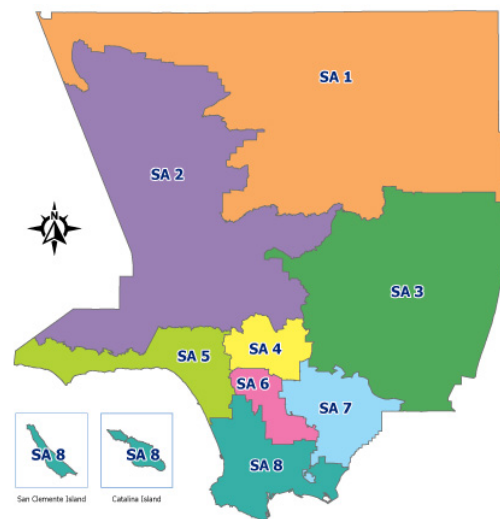
Free dinner, plenty of parking and community resources will be provided!

Open to the public!
Interpretation services will be provided!

Registration/Dinner	4:30pm - 6:00pm
Town Hall Meeting	6:00pm - 8:30pm

Contact Dr. Lori Arnold for more info:
LAarnold@dmh.lacounty.gov

Service Area Map



Commission Activity

During FY 2019-20, the Commission conducted **26 events**: seven full commission meetings, three town halls, Health Agency Integration, and 12 Executive Committee meetings. The March meeting was cancelled due to COVID-19, and the Commission is dark during August. We also produced two MHSA public meetings and one retreat. A quorum was present at each event.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Communications

This year, Commissioners maintained ongoing communications with their respective Board of Supervisors' office.

1st District Commissioners worked with their Supervisor's office to set up the East LA Town Hall Meeting on October 24, 2019. Supervisor Hilda Solis provided an informative and inspirational overview of the service area, addressing a large crowd of stakeholders and community representatives. Newly appointed Commissioners began their development of data/research around diversities within the Latinx community.

2nd District Commissioners continued working with a variety of stakeholders, consumer groups and community representatives. Commissioners surfaced various diversity issues impacting the African American population.

3rd District Commissioners hosted the West Los Angeles Town Hall meeting in Service Area 5 on Saturday, January 26, 2020 with 48 participating vendors and 200 attendees. The day included a Strategic Plan Update from Director Jonathan E. Sherin, M.D., Ph.D., and an update on the MHSA budget. Commissioners continued to update their respective Supervisor's office on concerns regarding shelter, food insecurity; secure permanent & interim housing; women's safety and the frightening loss of board & care facilities. COVID-19 brought renewed efforts to help residents living and working within the District to provide food and protective gear to those most in need.

4th District Commissioners worked with their Supervisor's office keeping them informed of the Commission priorities. Commissioners conducted virtual meetings with Supervisor Hahn on the need to expand the planning and input process for the MHSA 3-Year Plan and budget. Commissioners also worked directly with representatives of the Asian Pacific Islander community on critical needs for that population. A virtual conference call was conducted by the Supervisor with key representatives of the Asian Pacific Policy and Planning Council (APPCON) to share their recommendations for the MHSA 3-Year Plan.

5th District Commissioners continued to work with their respective Supervisor on her specific mental health priorities. As Chairperson of the Board of Supervisors, Supervisor Kathryn Barger maintained her commitment around mental health issues with education, criminal justice and health care. Her Health/Mental Health Deputy continued to participate in Commission meeting discussions, providing insight and guidance for the public in attendance.

CRIMINAL JUSTICE WORKING GROUP RECOMMENDATIONS

The Commission created a workgroup to research and develop recommendations around the intersection of the criminal justice system and mental health. Workgroup Commissioners Kevin Acebo, Patrick Ogawa, Michael Molina, and Harold Turner submitted the following recommendations for our consideration:

1. The Department of Mental Health provide a comprehensive overview of its interface with the County's criminal justice system and any data sets and performance measures associated with its work therein;
2. The County's mental health stakeholders be provided an opportunity for input into such an overview, data sets and performance measures; and
3. The Mental Health Commission consider making recommendations to the Board of Supervisors and/or to the 3-Year MHSA Plan regarding the criminal justice system.

The Mental Health Services Act (MHSA) statute acknowledges that a system of care for individuals with severe mental illness is vital for successful management of mental health. It requires a comprehensive and coordinated system of care that includes criminal justice, employment, housing, public welfare, health, and mental health to address mental illness and deliver cost-effective programs. (Welfare & Institutions (W&I) Code § 5802). The Workgroup recommended that the Commission review the final report from the countywide cross disciplinary Alternatives to Incarceration process in crafting next steps.

PEER ART GALLERY

The Peer Resource Center

Face Shield Designs - Art@Home
Curated by Joseph Cuevas,
DMH Mental Health Advocate



Shield by Jennifer Campos



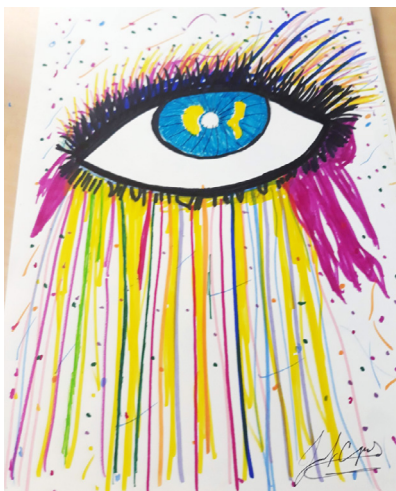
Paper Art by Suzie Kim



Alien by Vienna To



Painting by Ruth Wen



Painting by Joseph Cuevas



Painting by Ruth Wen

***Feet, what do I need you for
when I have wings to fly?***

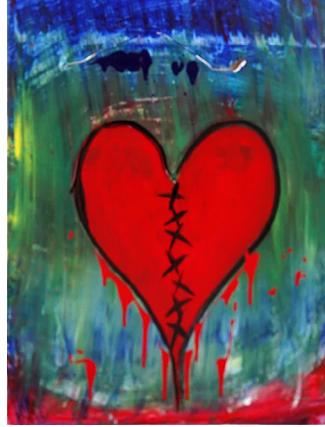
-Frida Kahlo

"Kahlo's words have become an inspirational mantra during the lockdown." - Thomas Campbell, San Francisco's de Young Museum Director

Safe Place for Youth – The Color of Hope Collective



"Mr. & Mrs. Mardem" – Darla



"Shreds" – Gary



"Volcanic Tree" – Erika

Painted Brain Artists

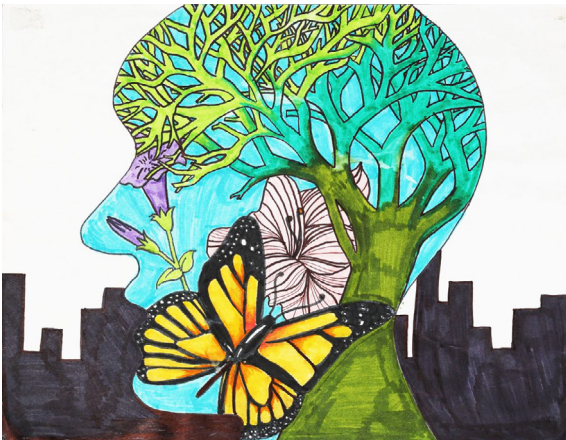


Illustration by Anonymous



Abstract Painting by Tristan Scremin



"Abstractions" – Terry Larue

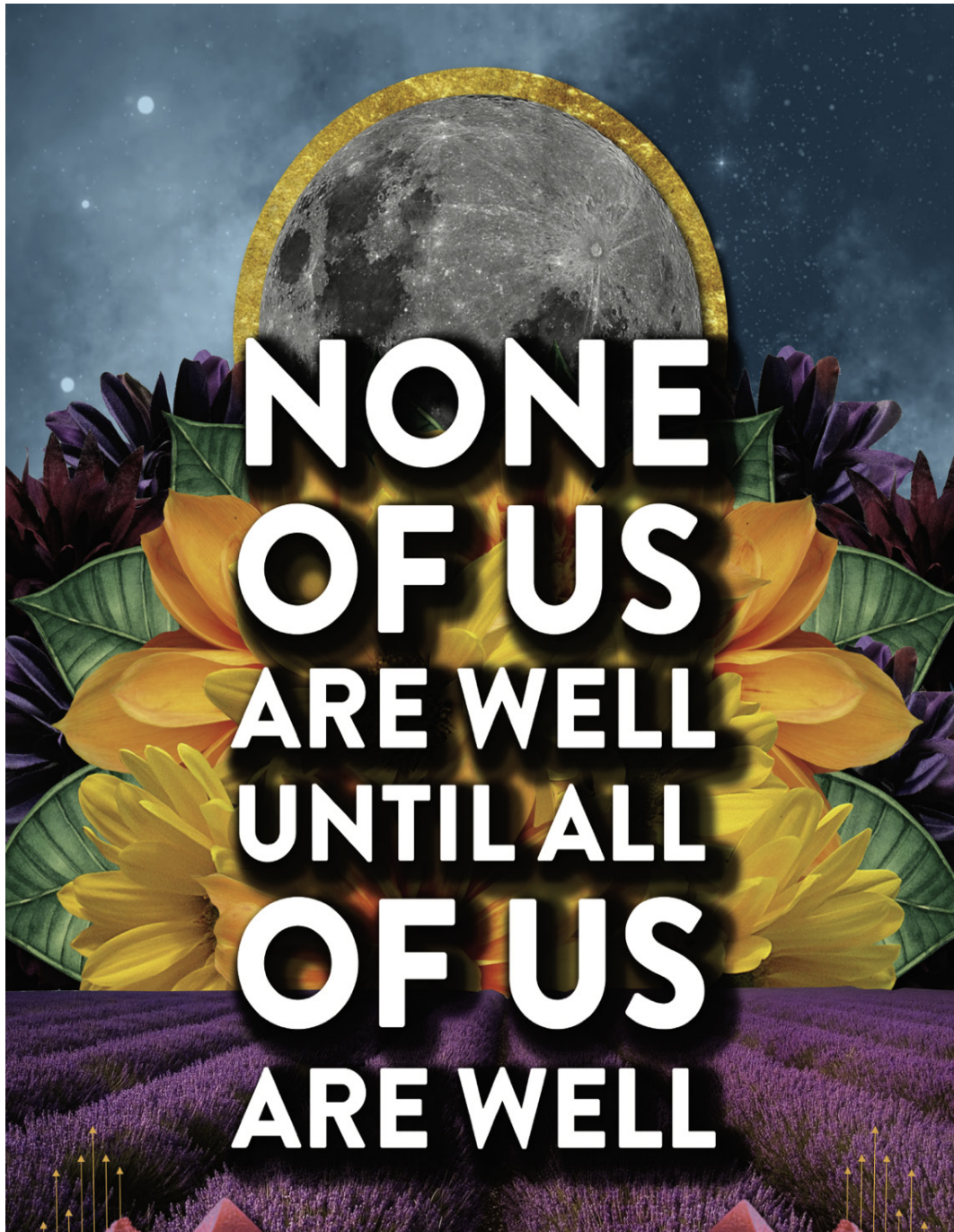


"Sgt. Nose's Lonely Brain" – Lawrence Rozner

The Commission thanks our Peer community for generously providing the beautiful and meaningful artwork contained within this annual report.

*Believe in life! Always human beings will live and
progress to greater, broader, and fuller life.*

– W. E. B. Du Bois



GET HELP NOW

24/7 LACDMH Help Line 800.854.7771
Crisis Text Line: Text LA to 741741