



Los Angeles County
Mental Health Wellness Magazine

Minds & Matters

SPRING 2015

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LACDMH CELEBRATES CEDAR SPRINGS GROUNDBREAKING

On Thursday, January 29, 2015, the Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health (LACDMH) celebrated the groundbreaking for the Cedar Springs Apartments in the city of La Verne, located in Supervisor Mike Antonovich's Fifth District.

The community came out in full support of the project. "Nothing succeeds unless community supports it, and this turnout today shows me it will fully succeed. Thank you," said Marvin Southard, DSW, LACDMH Director.

The groundbreaking marked the beginning of construction for the housing community developed by David and Margaret Youth and Family Services and its partner A Community of Friends. The Cedar Springs Apartment Housing Development is partially funded by the Mental Health Services Act (MHSA), and consists of 36 total units. Twenty-five of the units will house Transition Age Youth (TAY), ten will serve low-income families and one apartment will be reserved for the on-site manager.

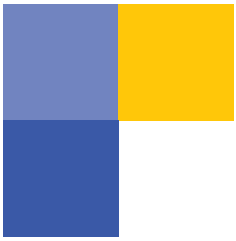
The housing development is an expansion to the already existing David and Margaret Youth and Family Services which has been in the community for more than 110 years. Cedar Springs will also include a retail space and community building with a kitchen, computer room and media room. Completion is slated for March 2016.

Supporters of the Cedar Springs community include LACDMH, California Housing Finance Agency, California Tax Credit Allocation Committee, Citi Foundation, Community Development Commission of the County of Los Angeles, Corporation for Supportive Housing, California Department of Housing and Community Development, Enterprise Community Investment, Housing Authority of the County of Los Angeles, Tri-City Mental Health and Wells Fargo Bank.

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Minds & Matters

From Marvin J. Southard, D.S.W., Director
Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health



SORROW NO MORE

You know how sometimes you get a song stuck in your head and then it surfaces throughout the day in all kinds of different contexts? That happened to me recently. A friend reminded me of a “Minds and Matters” article I wrote sometime in 2003 in which I made reference to the hit song “Sorrow” by the LA group Bad Religion. The truth is I no longer remember anything about what I wrote in the article, but I do remember vividly why that song was on my mind and what it meant to me at the time. In 2003, I had a close family member who was just embarking in the process of recovery from mental illness and addiction and things were not going well. We, in the family, had by no means given up hope, but it was an extraordinarily difficult and dangerous time. So, this is the lyric that spoke to me back then:

“Will you guide me now, for I can’t see
A reason for the suffering and this long misery
What if every living soul could be upright and strong
Well, then I do imagine
There will be sorrow
Yeah, there will be sorrow
And there will be sorrow no more.”

Well, over the last decade, things have worked out well so far for my family. Our family member is, one day at a time, “upright and strong”. But it does not always work out that way for many families, at least in the short term. Many of those we serve and their families are still engaged to some degree in suffering from a recovery process that is not complete.

So, as that tune rolls through my head, it makes me think of how grateful I am for the work that all of you do in the Department of Mental Health. Your work is extremely challenging, and many times the positive work that you do is overlooked because the magnitude of the sorrow and misery we confront is so large. Still, there is no work that could be more important than the work of taking, as we can, each step possible to make things a bit better. Our vision is supporting hope, wellness and recovery, but maybe another way of thinking of that vision is that we are trying to help “every living soul to be upright and strong”. Of course, we will never get there, but if we could, there would be sorrow no more. Thanks, everyone at DMH, for trying to get there.

Marvin J. Southard, D.S.W.

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Employee Recognition

Retired

January 2015

Anjik Margharian, 18 yrs
Carol Whitfield, 41 yrs
Christine Warren, 29 yrs
Christine Arismendez,
40 yrs
Donna Vernados, 7 yrs
Rocio Gonzalez, 27 yrs

February 2015

Emma Caparros, 15 yrs
Joan Bullock, 15 yrs
Maria Linda Fazio, 15 yrs
Mary Garcia-Davis,
35 yrs

March 2015

Agnes Reyes, 25 yrs
Allen Fernandez, 26 yrs
Brady Gallagher, 31 yrs
Camelia Elias, 26 yrs
Carol Simpson, 13 yrs
Deborah Williams, 25 yrs
Doris Johnstone, 14 yrs
Eileen Libbey, 21 yrs
Emma Duncan, 49 yrs
Estela Ilagan, 19 yrs
Hallie Carter, 49yrs
James Watson, 13 yrs
Maximo Hernandez,
40 yrs
Mitsuru Kubota, 22 yrs
Paul Longobardi, 34 yrs
Richard Miller, 15 yrs
Robert Diaz, 39 yrs
Sharon Carlson, 15 yrs
Shirley Robertson, 17 yrs
Virginia Borrero, 40 yrs

OFFICE OF CONSUMER AND FAMILY AFFAIRS, REVISITED

By Helena Ditko, Director,
Office of Consumer and Family Affairs

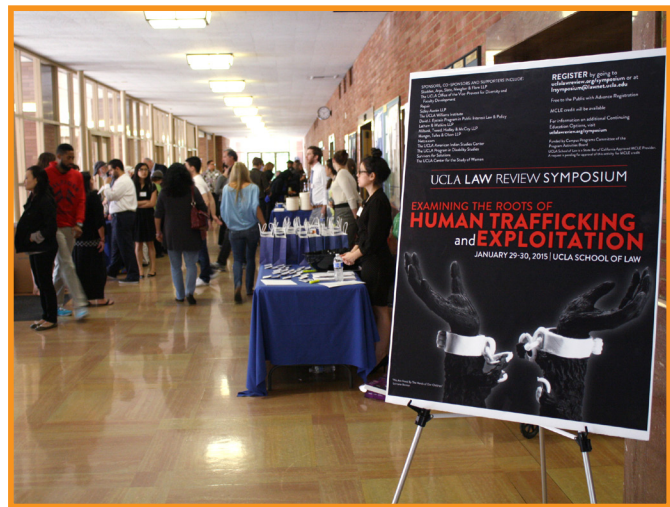


In suite 502 at LACDMH HQ, you will find a little haven in the Office of Consumer and Family Affairs (CFA). Consumers and families can make a stop here when they need help; a voice to express their needs, direction about where to go next, general mental healthcare information or dialogue about the services provided at LACDMH.

The Office of Consumer and Family Affairs was previously identified as two separate offices – Consumer Affairs, as Empowerment & Advocacy and Family Engagement. The two met and married under one roof in August of 2014 to provide conversation, information, education and inspiration. Unlike the Patients' Rights Office, which corrects error and investigates the violation of rights of consumers, the Office of Consumer and Family Affairs is here to give quality improvement to mental health services.

Of the many services that the Office of CFA provides, including administering bi-annual satisfaction surveys from consumers and families for the LACDMH Executive Management Team, producing the Hope and Recovery Conferences, supporting NAMI programs, Client Coalition event coordination, Family Psycho Education trainings for staff, countywide NAMI Walks event coordination, special assignments from Dr. Southard, Quality Improvement trainings and response to individual family calls, the Office is a touchstone for all of the age bureaus to give a voice to family members and consumers in many countywide meetings. Being that voice, staff listen in detail to concerns of consumers and family members, so that we can all work together to improve the services provided in our system.

Stop by our little haven, suite 502 at HQ, and get a little encouragement for everyone on the road to hope, wellness and recovery.



UCLA LAW REVIEW HOSTS SYMPOSIUM TO EXAMINE ROOTS OF HUMAN TRAFFICKING

By Kathleen Piché, L.C.S.W., Public Affairs Director

Hundreds of advocates, law enforcement personnel, clinicians and community members attended the UCLA Law Review Symposium, *Examining the Roots of Human Trafficking and Exploitation*, held from January 29-30, 2015, at the UCLA School of Law.

The symposium opened with a welcome from UCLA Law Dean Rachel F. Moran, who highlighted the importance of fostering discussion on trafficking and exploitation in law, policy and practice and in addressing community needs.

An esteemed group of scholars and community leaders in the fields of law, medicine, social work, sociology and public health, as well as leaders among trafficking and exploitation survivors, provided insight on historical causes, the current state and future of trafficking, and engaged in deeper questions on racial, gender and economic vulnerability to exploitation.

The Thursday morning panel, *The Roots of Violence: Indigenous Perspectives on Trafficking, Exploitation & Law*, focused on indigenous North American (Native American) populations who contend with increased risk of trafficking and exploitation. The historical context of Colonialism, placing this population in poverty with limited resources, along with present legal and social realities, was discussed and especially enlightening.

California Attorney General Kamala D. Harris served as keynote speaker on Friday morning, discussing the state's efforts to combat trafficking and bring perpetrators of these crimes to justice.

Other panels throughout the conference discussed specialized ways to treat survivors of trafficking and the difficult challenge of prosecuting those responsible.

For further information about this topic or regarding efforts within LACDMH, please email: CSECinfo@dmh.lacounty.gov. Also, for more facts and information, please check out the DMH Fact Sheet(s) online: http://file.lacounty.gov/dmh/cms1_211312.pdf.



SUPERVISOR MARK RIDLEY-THOMAS AND LACDMH KICK-OFF TWO-DAY CSEC TRAINING SERIES

By Karen Zarsadias-Ige, Public Information Officer II

On February 18 and 19, 2015, Los Angeles County Supervisor Mark Ridley-Thomas and the Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health (LACDMH) hosted a two-day training for mental health agencies to treat victims of child sex-trafficking with evidence-based treatment practices. This event kicked off a series of trainings that will take place around Los Angeles County and its service areas.

The in-depth training for mental health agencies helps clinicians identify and treat victims of Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children (CSEC) and Youth. By invitation only, it was held at the Martin Luther King, Jr. Outpatient Center in Los Angeles, and was offered to the LACDMH provider network. About 50 people attended each training day.



The training was emceed by Kathleen Austria, Deputy for Mental Health Services and Homeless Issues for the 2nd District, and by Erica Reynoso, PhD, LCSW, TAY-SOC, Juvenile Justice Mental Health Programs and Project Lead for CSEC Initiatives & Efforts. The event was also organized by Terry Boykins, LCSW, Deputy Director, TAY-SOC, who serves as the Lead Manager for CSEC Initiatives & Efforts.

On the first day, Supervisor Mark Ridley-Thomas provided opening remarks, affirming the importance of creating awareness about sexually exploited children and youth. Next, LACDMH Director Marvin Southard, DSW, welcomed the provider community. After discussing the lifelong journey and process in healing from trauma, Dr. Southard told the clinicians: “Be as wise as serpents and innocent as doves” (in helping victims of sex trafficking). For the remainder of the day, Nola Brantley, CEO of Nola Brantley SPEAKS!, provided a 6-hour training on CSEC, offering context to the psycho-social factors of CSEC.

The second day continued with more CSEC training from Crittenton Services for Children and Families. Barbara Hernandez, PsyD, LMFT, Vice President of Community Services at Crittenton, presented with her team on the psychological impact, development and trauma of CSEC victims. They also discussed their holistic approach to treating the child (from identification, screening, intake, assessment through treatment and aftercare).

The long-term plan is to eventually expand the CSEC training to all the districts so more clinicians can participate and attend.

HGTV HOST SUZANNE WHANG SPEAKS AT CLIENT COALITION MEETING

By Kimberli Washington, Public Information Office

The Los Angeles County Client Coalition (LACCC) and Asian Client Coalition held their monthly meeting on Friday, January 23, 2015, in the LACDMH headquarters second floor conference room. The featured guest speaker was television personality Suzanne Whang, who spoke on the topic of "Coping & Surviving Breast Cancer," her personal journey with mental health while coping with eight years of breast cancer. Suzanne is an actress and comedian, best known as being the host of HGTV's "House Hunters" for almost a decade. She has a B.A. in Psychology from Yale University, a Master's degree in Cognitive Psychology from Brown University and is a stage four breast cancer "thrivor."

"I don't like to call myself a survivor because it makes it seem like I'm hanging on to something. I'm a thrivor," said Suzanne Whang.

Suzanne spoke with the group about her family history, specifically how her grandfather influenced her life and helped her to become a comedian. She also opened up about her cancer diagnosis, jokingly calling herself an "over-achiever, always trying to outdo others," referencing a recurrence of the disease three times within a four-year period. Suzanne described how, at first, a lump was removed, and then went into detail about how the cancer affected her emotionally.

Susan's tumor grew from the size of a quarter to the size of a grapefruit. She was in excruciating pain and unable to sleep for months. "The pain and insomnia was making me insane," said Suzanne. One night while looking for gauze to treat her tumor at home, she snapped and started breaking things from the emotional stress of having cancer and the abandoning effect it was having on personal relationships.

She decided at that moment she wanted to kill herself and started thinking of different ways to do it. After contemplating the different outcomes of each proposed suicide, she exhausted herself and decided to go to bed. The next morning when she woke up from a night of much needed rest, Suzanne realized she wanted to live and was happy to be alive.

Suzanne talked about her third diagnosis; through a back injury, she found out that cancer had spread throughout her body. She decided to "come out of the cancer closet" in 2011 and share what she had been going through. After revealing her cancer secret, her health got better. Suzanne realized who her real friends were. Although she had gone into debt paying for treatment not covered by insurance, she started receiving financial support from friends, loved ones and even fans. Suzanne said that she used to wake up sad because of the cancer, but now wakes up happy because she is happy.

Suzanne is now completely cancer-free and writing a book about her miraculous journey back to health. She is currently starring in a sitcom called "From Here On Out," on Here TV. To learn more about Suzanne, go to www.suzannehang.com.

GOLDEN GIRLS KEEP KIDS WARM AT TIES

By Karen Rathburn, Ph.D., Program Manager, TIES for Families, South Bay

TIES for Families community worker Keeley Gilmore connected with "The Golden Girls," a group of 10-12 retired women out of Westchester who get together every Tuesday at Tanner's Sewing & Vacuum (tannersewandvac.com). The store provides the space, machines and classes to monogram and make quilts, pillowcases, blankets, etc., for populations in need.

The Golden Girls started by donating to dialysis patients, then veterans, homeless, and now children. Each year they select a group and make things for them. Golden Girl Barbara Littlejohn delivered 100 blankets to TIES for Families, South Bay, for clients and for parenting women in drug treatment at Options for Recovery at Harbor-UCLA and other centers that we also serve. The blankets are individually monogrammed with cute sayings or cartoon characters.

For more info about TIES: <http://harboruclapsychology.org/externship-2/ties-for-families/>.

hope wellness recovery

LACDMH Mission

Enriching lives through partnerships designed to strengthen the community's capacity to support recovery and resiliency.

Our Values

Integrity: We conduct ourselves professionally according to the highest ethical standards.

Respect: We recognize the uniqueness of every individual and treat all people in a way that affirms their personal worth and dignity.

Accountability: We take responsibility for our choices and their outcomes.

Collaboration: We work together toward common goals by partnering with the whole community, sharing knowledge, building strong consensus, and sharing decision-making.

Dedication: We will do whatever it takes to improve the lives of our clients and communities.

Transparency: We openly convey our ideas, decisions and outcomes to ensure trust in our organization.

Quality and Excellence: We identify the highest personal, organizational, professional and clinical standards and commit ourselves to achieving those standards by continually improving every aspect of our performance.



Los Angeles County
Department of Mental Health
is dedicated to partnering with
clients, families and communities
to create hope, wellness and recovery.



<http://dmh.lacounty.gov>

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A Final Thought



HAVE QUESTIONS ABOUT THE LA COUNTY HEALTHCARE INTEGRATION? By Kathleen Piché, L.C.S.W., Public Affairs Director

This year has started with many changes. Perhaps the most obvious and concerning to staff is the Board of Supervisors' motion with regard to the integration of the Los Angeles County Public Health, Health Services and Mental Health departments. The idea is to have an umbrella agency over the three departments to streamline services in a more cost-effective manner, with each department retaining separate directors and budgets.

Many of us may wonder if our jobs, units and programs will be affected. In order to answer questions you might have, LACDMH will host a live Town Hall meeting on Wednesday, April 29th with leaders from all three agencies present.

If you have questions about the healthcare integration in Los Angeles County, send them to PIO@dmh.lacounty.gov. They will be sorted and answered in April and placed on the DMH Intranet Town Hall site which can be found here: <http://dmhhqportal1/sites/th/default.aspx>

Before you send a question, please review the website created to provide information to the public about the integration process. To go directly to the site: <http://priorities.lacounty.gov/health/>

Categories are divided by sections, including:

- Vision
- Phases and Timeline
- Meetings
- Interdepartmental Workgroups
- Key Departments
- About Us
- Stakeholders
- Documents
- FAQs
- Contact Us