



# Mental Health Association

OF SAN MATEO COUNTY

*Empowering People to Create Their Best Life*

## STAYING HEALTHY AND CONNECTED

Roy Rasmussen has worked with MHA as a Community Friend for ten years. The program was established over 15 years ago as a way of pairing peer staff with individuals in the community who were isolated or who needed some support to try new activities or opportunities. According to Roy, "I started as a Community Friend ten years ago when my social worker at the Veteran's Administration suggested I try it out as a way to meet new people....I was a dishwasher at Main Street Coffee and I live with a roommate, but even I got isolated sometimes." Roy applied and was accepted and over the years he has been a Friend to more than



7 different individuals, helping them feel confident enough to venture out to social events, educational activities or just to see things and go places they have never been. Roy reports

that part of his success as a Friend is to listen to what the participants have wanted to do, but couldn't for one reason or another. "I have gone with participants on the Bay Cruise, to the Monterey Bay Aquarium, to the beach....Being a Community Friend requires me to be more open to people and to new ideas...I would tell someone who is considering being a Friend that it can help you as much as the participant. You get to be more sociable, you get to make friends, it's a help financially and even spiritually. It has made me stronger by being of service to people in need...My best experience was shaking Craig's (participant) hand at the end of the day and

having him tell me that 'It was the highlight of my week'".

The Community Friends (CF) program is a peer staffed, social and recreational program designed to assist individuals living with mental illness in the community to enhance their quality of life by becoming more active outside of their homes. The CF and participants attend outings in the community based on mutual interest. If you would like more information about working as a Community Friend or becoming a Community Friend participant contact Angela Bruno-Castro @ 650.257.8823 or email to [Angbc@mhasmc.org](mailto:Angbc@mhasmc.org).

### SAVE THE DATE

*Mental Health Association of San Mateo County Presents:*

## Navigating the Mental Health System

Friday, June 9, 2017  
9:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.



Learn about what services exist, how to access them and hear from the providers, family members and consumers about what worked and why.

Topics will include Mental Health Policy and the Law, Mental Health and Housing, Gateway to Services, What Families Need to Know and more. For more information go to: [mhasmc.org](http://mhasmc.org)



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of San Mateo County  
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www.mhasmc.org

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## SAVE THE DATE

# Waverly Place Apartments Groundbreaking

Tuesday, May 9, 2017

3:00 – 4:00 p.m.

105 Fifth Avenue, Redwood City



As part of Affordable Housing Week 2017:  
Making the Most of Public Land

## MHA'S MISSION

The Mental Health Association of San Mateo County (MHA), a nonprofit organization, enriches quality of life, restores dignity, and reduces homelessness, particularly for those affected by mental illness and HIV/AIDS. MHA strengthens hope by providing shelter, support and opportunities for socialization.

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