



Mental Health Association

OF SAN MATEO COUNTY

MHA CLIENTS RECOGNIZED AT FIRST ANNUAL INSPIRATION AWARDS

Earlier this year staff met to discuss ways in which they could honor our clients for their hard work and determination in improving their lives. Staff members decided that the common thread among our clients was their ability to inspire the staff in the work they do. On April 21st, MHA hosted our first "Inspiration Awards" at the Belmont Friendship Center. In this newsletter you will find stories about four of our honorees and their Case Managers' reasons for nominating them for the award. We hope and expect that going forward we will be able to feature more of

these inspirational individuals, both in our newsletter and on our website because they truly are the reason we do this work.

Maria Wendleberger has served as a Community Friend with MHA for five years. She is a single mom who also is currently caring for her own mother and working part-time at Target. Maria's positive attitude and professional manner impress everyone who knows her.



She has never let the fact that she is in a wheelchair slow her down. She has become a Community

Friend to several individuals who are very isolated and who wouldn't have much contact with the outside world if it weren't for Maria. I love working with Maria and she truly inspires me in the work that I do.

— Angela Bruno Castro, Friendship Center and Community Friend Coordinator



Randy Delosada has struggled with many challenges over the years, including long periods

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WAVERLY PLACE GROUNDBREAKING TARGETED FOR EARLY 2016



The groundbreaking for Waverly Place Apartments should take place early in 2016. Plans are under final review by the County Departments and finishing touches will be made on the design before the end of 2015.

SEQUOIA AND KAISER STEP UP FOR MHA

The Sequoia Healthcare District continued its support of MHA's wellness program through a generous grant. Sequoia supports MHA's public health nurse, who leads health workshops, provides direct care, and advocates for our clients with healthcare providers. MHA's wellness program furthers the Sequoia Healthcare District's priorities of active and healthy living, preventive healthcare, and treatment of priority health conditions. For the last nine years, MHA has supported a public health nurse to promote wellness among our clients. MHA is deeply grateful to the Sequoia Healthcare District for its generous support.

The Kaiser Permanente Northern California Community Benefits Program awarded \$15,000 to support MHA's

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LETTER FROM MELISSA PLATTE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

This newsletter celebrates many of the wonderful individuals we work with at MHA. We have great staff, volunteers and clients and together we have been able to make incredible things happen.

As you can see, we are highlighting the First Annual Inspiration Awards, we have two wonderful new additions to our Board of Directors, and new staff who are enthusiastic and talented. We are taking time to celebrate not only the wonderful things that are happening now, but also honoring the lives of those we have lost.

And finally, we are looking ahead to 2016 as the year we will open Waverly Place Apartments, providing permanent supportive housing for another 15 individuals. In a County with one of the highest costs of living in the country, ensuring that our clients have safe decent housing is so important and we are all very proud of MHA's role in making this happen, and we are so very grateful to those who support us in this effort.

On behalf of the Board, staff and our clients, we thank you for your support and we hope you enjoy reading about the wonderful things that are going on at MHA. ☺

CHRIS HOOVER BY ANGELA BRUNO-CASTRO



Chris Hoover, who just celebrated fifteen years as a peer counselor with the Daly City Friendship Center, is described by the Center members as “sweet, caring, patient, relaxed, friendly, smart, an excellent cook, a good dresser, and just fun to be around.” In addition to working two days a week for the Friendship Center, he also

works at Heart & Soul and the Industrial Hotel. Sometimes people are so well suited for their job they tell you it doesn't feel like work and that is how Chris describes it. When he walks into the room, the group applauds. Friendship Center members report that he makes the best coffee at “top of the hill in Daly City.” Chris has never missed a Mental Health Board meeting and has been inducted into the Mental Health Consumer Hall of Fame. Chris is one of the most dedicated people we know and it has been a pleasure and honor to work with him all these years. Next time you see him, please congratulate him! ☺

ANNUAL INSPIRATION AWARDS (CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1)

of homelessness. Most recently he has struggled with budgeting. We have worked together and with his treatment team to develop a plan, but for months on end it didn't work. I was about ready to throw in the towel when he came to the office and admitted he really wanted the help! Today Randy has been able to save money, enough to go clothes and shoe shopping. Randy inspires me and reminds me that the smallest things, like saving a dollar, are a step in the right direction. Randy has taught me to be patient and to realize that my expectations are just that, mine, and they may not be shared by the person I am working with.

—Lenore Gotelli, Case Manager



Scott Turnage is a ray of sunshine each and every time I meet with him. Despite his multiple disabilities, he pushes himself to persevere, to form new and meaningful relationships, and to take advantage of the support offered to him. Scott recently completed a 10-week WRAP program, the only person of the group to complete all ten weeks. Scott has also demonstrated resourcefulness

by locating a deaf community church in San Jose which he attends weekly and where he helps to serve meals to the less fortunate. Scott pushes himself each day to improve the quality of his life and the lives of others and in that way he truly inspires me.

—Kjirsten Santaferraro, Case Manager

Naomi Lange spent many years homeless, living on the streets and in Shelters in both San Mateo and Santa Clara County. In 2005 Naomi moved into Belmont Apartments. Living with her disability and on a very limited income is not easy, but over the years Naomi has fought to make and keep friends, find an appropriate level of medication that works for her, and is now able to participate in activities she truly enjoys such as bible study, church, groups with her peers, and she has re-established and is now maintaining contact with her family. With all that Naomi has struggled with, her perseverance is inspiring to me.



—Robert Casillas, Support Service Coordinator for Belmont Apartments

NEW BOARD MEMBER GINNY STEWART

What interested you about becoming a member of the MHA Board of Directors? When I was invited to become a member of the Board of Directors I was very pleased as I have always been involved in the community. I have been a Licensed Clinical Social Worker in private practice for many years in San Mateo, but mental health goes beyond seeing clients in the office.



What do you do outside of your role with MHA? I have been in the leadership of Disaster Mental Health with the American Red Cross for twenty years so I see people in crisis circumstances beyond the limitations of the clinical hour. I have a contract with CalTrain to help people affected by train disasters. I have been a Board

Member of the Citizens Review Panel which oversees the functions of Children's Protective Services. I am a member of the Community Service League which raises money for mental health.

What have you enjoyed about your role with MHA? I was delighted to attend an event which brought recognition to the achievements of MHA clients. It was satisfying to see the increase in self-esteem brought by receiving congratulations for their hard work. And it was special to see the staff members who clearly are devoted to their clients.

What would you like to see MHA accomplish in the next 5-10 years? I hope to be helpful in raising money for housing which provides safety and security for many in need. I am also aware of the recent research about the functions of the brain for cognition and music. I am aware of the Singers of the Street, a chorus formed by the homeless to help homeless persons become more functional and happier. I hope that it might be possible to include music and singing as part of the healing of those we serve through the Mental Health Association. It can be a real possibility to have the experience of joy to be part of healing. ☺



NEW BOARD MEMBER LOIS WEITHORN



What interested you about becoming a member of the MHA Board of Directors? I have always been interested in and concerned about mental health and persons experiencing mental illness, which has influenced my choice of career and areas of specialization. Because I work in academia, I deal a lot with the theoretical and policy issues related to mental health and law, but don't have much opportunity to what is

being done on a day-to-day basis in my own community to serve and support persons and groups experiencing mental illness. I was interested in learning more, and hopefully helping out, in a great organization like MHA, which plays such an important role in the community.

What do you do outside of your role with MHA? I am a law professor (who was also trained as a psychologist). I teach subjects like Mental Health Law and Children & the Law, and have written on related topics. Outside of work, I enjoy spending time with my family and our quirky little rescue dog.

What would you like to see MHA accomplish in the next 5-10 years? As a new Board member, I have not yet formulated a sense of what might be appropriate new directions. For the moment, I am learning about the marvelous programs now in existence.

What should people know about MHA that they may not already know? That the MHA provides a range of desperately-needed community-based services, such as housing and other support services, for those dealing with and recovering from mental illness. ☺

SEQUOIA AND KAISER (CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1)

work helping Spring Street Emergency Shelter residents obtain appropriate mental health care and housing. Spring Street Shelter is the only year-round emergency shelter operated specifically for individuals with serious mental illness. MHA's case manager connects residents to needed services, helps them to navigate entitlement programs, and assists residents to move from shelter into appropriate long-term housing. MHA greatly appreciates Kaiser's support. ☺

GEORGIA PETERSON TO RECEIVE HOUSING HEROES AWARD



On October 22, 2015, MHA's Spring Street Shelter Site Manager, Georgia Peterson, received the Housing Heroes Award at the Redwood Shores Library. Georgia has been with MHA for eight years, starting as a part-time relief

staff employee and moving into the Site Manager role within two years. In addition to her job of managing the Shelter, Georgia has gone well above and beyond to locate housing for Shelter residents. In the face of the current housing shortage, Georgia has been able to forge relationships with landlords and find housing when people said it was not possible. We are truly proud of her and grateful to those who recognized her hard work and tremendous heart. She is extremely deserving of this award. ☺

SUSAN TZORAS-IN MEMORY

BY ANGELA BRUNO-CASTRO



Susan Tzoras was a dedicated volunteer, working four days a week in MHA's Friendship Centers for the last four years. She was first to arrive and last to leave. Staff, volunteers and members relied on her to spearhead activities, both at the Friendship Center and at Belmont Apartments, where she organized Saturday breakfasts and brunches. Susan loved being with friends, playing cards, and attending church. She is remembered as a strong, fiery and loving person who will be missed by all of her friends and colleagues. ☺

MHA ANNUAL PICNIC

MHA's annual picnic was held on September 22 in Central Park in San Mateo. More than 100 of our clients attended the event, which included a full barbecue, table games, origami lessons, music, volleyball and lots of time to enjoy friends and colleagues. MHA Nurse Kelsey Thompson brought along her dog, Gizmo, who was a real favorite among those who attended. Many thanks to the staff who organized the event and worked incredibly hard to ensure everyone was able to attend and have a wonderful time. ☺



LORENZO



KELSEY AND GIZMO



MHA STAFF



BEN AND SCOTT

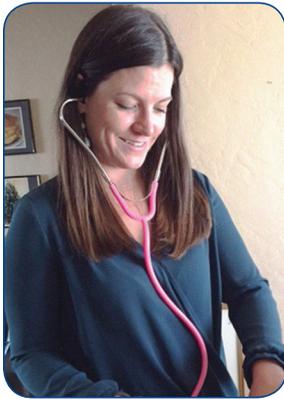


WENDY, LEA, BEN



RAMON

MEET NEW MHA STAFF



Kelsey Thompson, our Public Health Registered Nurse, leads the wellness program at MHA. Kelsey promotes healthy and happy lifestyles for MHA clients. She is passionate about decreasing stigma associated with mental illness. She enjoys working as a client advocate and believes every client should have the right to an excellent healthcare standard. Kelsey has over eight

years of nursing experience and is working towards her nurse practitioner degree.



Michael Manno recently joined the team at MHA as a case manager. Michael was born and raised in Sonoma County and feels fortunate to call the Bay Area home. He's a die-hard Bay Area sports fan. Since graduating from Sonoma State University with a degree in criminal justice, he

has worked with various organizations that are committed to social justice and assisting under-served populations. Michael says, "I greatly enjoy my work due to the relationships I foster and the dynamic nature of working with people." Michael enjoys playing sports, cooking, and spending time with friends and family.



As an Occupational Therapist, **Lea Endo** empowers clients to improve activities of daily living skills with a compassionate, client-centered approach. Lea graduated from San Jose State University in 2014, where she received her Master's in Occupational Therapy. Lea gained

experience through her internships at the San Jose Family Shelter and in the inpatient psychiatric unit at El Camino Hospital. From these experiences, Lea found a passion in providing services to individuals who are homeless and need mental health support. ☺

FOOD RUNNERS KEEP SHELTER RESIDENTS HEALTHY, HAPPY

"Food Runners are the most amazing people. Our meals have never been better," exclaimed Georgia Peterson, Director of Spring Street Shelter. Volunteers from the nonprofit organization Food Runners pick up perishable and prepared food from businesses such as restaurants, caterers, and bakeries that they deliver directly to Spring Street Shelter. Food Runners also delivers produce from stores such as Trader Joe's and Whole Foods.

Food Runners comes by twice a week. Meals from a catered event can provide dinner for all the shelter residents. "Residents are extremely grateful," said Georgia. "They ask, 'Can we have Food

Runners more often?'" Food Runners provide this service to a number of programs. Presently, Peninsula Food Runner delivers over 35,000 lbs of food a week, 140,000 lbs a month, and 1,680,000 lbs a year.



MARIE YAP
FOUNDER,
PENINSULA FOOD RUNNERS

JUDY MORTON

On August 21st, Judy Morton retired after more than sixteen years with MHA. Staff and clients will miss Judy's contribution to the program, her unfailing support of co-workers and her sharp humor. We wish her only the best.





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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.

MHA'S OPERATION REINDEER DRIVE BEGINS

MHA's Operation Reindeer fund drive is underway. Your donations ensure that individuals in need throughout San Mateo County have the opportunity to celebrate the holidays. Operation Reindeer donation requests will be sent out soon, along with invitations to join us December 11th for the 41st Annual Holiday Party. The amazing event includes a traditional holiday meal with all the trimmings, DJ, dancing, and Christmas gifts. The visit from Mr. & Mrs. Claus highlights the

celebration. The party is open to any adult who lives with mental wellness. For many, the Friendship Center members and volunteers are like family and the Annual Holiday Party is their only holiday celebration.

You will be receiving a flyer with more information and an envelope for contributions, but please feel free to donate now if you would prefer. We appreciate all of the support we receive for this very special event and we hope you will consider making a generous contribution this year. ☺



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