



Mental Health Association

OF SAN MATEO COUNTY

Empowering People to Create Their Best Life

COMMUNITY SERVICE LEAGUE TO HOST 36TH ANNUAL KITCHEN TOUR

The Community Service League (CSL) is pleased to announce that its 36th Annual Kitchen Tour will take place on Friday, May 13, 2016 from 10:00 A.M. to 3:00 P.M. This incredible event will

once again offer self-guided tours of five of the most distinctive, recently remodeled and beautiful homes in Hillsborough and San Mateo Park. In addition to touring amazing kitchens, guests will

also have the opportunity to view many other areas of the homes and yards. At each home there will be demonstrations from local artisans as well as tastings from local businesses.

Proceeds from the event support MHA and StarVista and, to date, this event has raised over \$1 million, which has supported key and critical programs and services. Tickets are available for \$50 in advance and \$60 at the door. Tickets may also be purchased online at cslsmc.org or at Calico, Pot-Pourri, Pottery Barn and The Studio Shop in Burlingame; Brick Monkey in Redwood City, DaVinci Marble in San Carlos, Draegers, and Home Depot in San Mateo. ☺



LETTER OF GRATITUDE TO MHA

by Karlene Harvey

Have you ever felt alone without anywhere to turn when trying to help a mentally ill loved one? It seems like everyone wants to talk about mental illness, but when it comes to providing funds to effectively help and provide treatment and housing for these folks, our society can't seem to make it a priority.

Over the past several months, I have been assisting a mentally ill homeless woman. Her condition is complicated because she also has developmental delays. Our efforts to find appropriate shelter and services for her have been difficult as we meander through the complicated behavioral health and shelter systems. On several occasions, she has become so discouraged, scared, and full of despair that she almost resolved herself to "live under an overpass". *(continued on page 2)*

PENINSULA HEALTH CARE DISTRICT SUPPORTS MHA HEALTH AND WELLNESS SERVICES

The Peninsula Health Care District (PHCD) generously granted \$25,000 to MHA to support MHA's health and wellness services at St. Matthew Hotel in San Mateo.

MHA's Public Health Nurse, Kelsey Thompson, will lead wellness activities, provide medical case management, and offer direct services to residents. She will lead workshops on exercise, stress reduction, chronic conditions, and other wellness topics. She will educate residents about nutrition, food preparation, and food resources. Kelsey will also arrange for dental screenings, cleanings, and treatment.

Since 1996, the Peninsula Health Care District has invested over \$25 million in *(continued on page 2)*

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local organizations. Every year, PHCD awards grants to local organizations that address local health priorities and help carry out the vision of the District: that all residents enjoy optimal health through education, prevention, and access to needed health care services.

St. Matthew Hotel is owned and operated by MidPen Housing. MHA makes available case management, occupational therapy, and health and wellness services to the low-income, elderly, and disabled residents. ☺



(Helen Galligan, Michael Radding, Kelsey Thompson, and Rick Navarro, MD.)



LETTER FROM **MELISSA PLATTE,** EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

For those wondering, Waverly Place Apartments groundbreaking has been postponed. MHA had hoped to be able to provide pictures of our groundbreaking in this issue. Unfortunately, this delay is a result of escalating costs. As everyone living in the Bay Area is aware, the current amount of construction is higher than it has been in more than a decade. The demand for construction workers and subcontractors has escalated costs tremendously. Although we have successfully secured most of the funds needed, we are still short of our budget. We have been asked if we were going to give up on this project, but that certainly isn't MHA's culture, and so we will continue our fund raising until we are able to announce our groundbreaking. As anyone and everyone can attest, this project and housing for our clients is too important to give up on. Your continued support is appreciated, as well as your patience. ☺

HEALTH AND DENTAL FAIRS PROMOTE WELLNESS



MHA's Health and Wellness Program sponsored a Health Fair on February 24th 2016 at the Spring Street Shelter. MHA clients from throughout San Mateo County attended, with Case Managers providing transportation assistance for those in need. Organized by MHA Nurse Kelsey Thompson, the Fair was an opportunity

for clients to socialize while focusing on preventative health. Apple Tree Dental, Heart and Soul, NAMI, Job Train, and El Centro staffed resource booths. MHA staff provided education regarding smoking cessation and nutrition. The nursing station provided blood pressure and blood sugar checks, as well as Body Mass Index assessments. Chair massages and a nutritious lunch rounded out the day for the individuals who attended.

Apple Tree Dental held a Dental Fair at Cedar Street Apartments on January 20th. Residents received a dental exam and cleaning. Apple Tree Dental put great effort into making clients feel comfortable with the care provided during the mobile service visit. Some residents reported they had not received a dental exam for years. The convenience of treatment location, and familiarization of MHA staff, helped clients to feel less anxious while receiving dental care. MHA is looking forward to providing future mobile dental services at its other locations. ☺

LETTER OF GRATITUDE (CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1)

Most recently however, she was able to gain access to the Spring Street Shelter in Redwood City. This has been the first time that we both have felt a ray of hope! Spring Street Shelter exists to help, direct, and guide their clients toward housing options by personally engaging and collaborating with them. I have been so impressed by their knowledge and their personal care for their clients. It is truly a unique find within these overloaded and under-funded systems.

We are so grateful to Georgia Peterson and all the staff at Spring Street Shelter for restoring our hope. We have felt heard, less lonely, and less confused. They are truly making a difference by genuinely caring, understanding, and advocating on behalf of those who suffer with mental illness.

—With Restored Hope, Karlene Harvey

MHA WELCOMES NEW STAFF

SAFE AT HOME

Seham Said is our new Case Manager for our Safe At Home program. Thirty-four housing vouchers have been secured for people who are chronically homeless and disabled. Housing Authority, which spearheads this collaboration, and the County Human Service Agency contracted with Abode Services to secure apartments. Once Abode matches clients with housing, MHA staff then provides ongoing case management and support services. Since December, more than 15 individuals have been housed. Seham earned her undergraduate degree in Urban Regional Planning and conducted her senior project on ways to combat chronic homelessness. She has been working in the non-profit sector for over five years. “I value working for MHA as it speaks to

my lifelong goals of assisting the chronically homeless population. I value being able to assist clients in obtaining and maintaining housing.” The Safe at Home Program serves our most vulnerable and toughest to house population and MHA is honored to be able to provide hope, stability, and housing to these individuals. ☺



ST MATTHEW SUPPORT SERVICES



Andrew Soler is one of two new staff working with the residents of St. Matthew Hotel in San Mateo, as well as at Belmont Apartments. Andrew was born and raised in the Bay Area. He worked as a high school English Literature and History teacher for seven years before transitioning to the

mental health field. “In both fields, I’ve had the pleasure of collaborating with amazing colleagues from every walk of life. Ultimately, I value working at MHA because of its positive impact on clients.” Andrew is currently in graduate school studying psychology. ☺

Camilla Aceves recently started working at St. Matthew. She has several years of experience providing case management. She has worked to provide case management to residents in low-income housing communities in Solano and Alameda County, and she ran a resource center and afterschool program. ☺



SAYAT

Nia Meadors is the new Case Manager for the Support and Advocacy for Youth Adults in Transition (SAYAT) program, helping homeless disabled young adults obtain housing and other critical services. She has worked with homeless young adults at Daybreak Shelter for the last five years. As



a former Daybreak employee and resident, she brings her unique experience and empathy to her work at MHA. Nia is dedicated to making a difference in the lives of people that need it the most. “I am proud to be a part of the MHA team and thrilled that I can provide support, guidance, and life skill training for young adults in San Mateo County.” ☺



Lilia Roldan also works as a Case Manager for the SAYAT program. She has worked for MHA as shelter relief staff for six years before being promoted. “I am very thankful that MHA has given me this opportunity to do what I love because it’s a beautiful thing when

a career and a passion come together.” As someone who has overcome adversity, Lilia loves being able to walk into people’s lives, often during very difficult times. “To know that I helped a person in some small way is one of the greatest rewards I can get.” ☺

SPRING STREET SHELTER

Bob Hutchinson staffs the newest Shelter position, Shelter Services Coordinator. Bob comes to MHA with many years of experience working in homeless programs. For five years, he worked with Shelter Network as case manager, program director, and assistant director of programs and



services. Previously, he worked at Project 90 as a drug and alcohol counselor. Bob brings his experience to this new position, helping homeless and chronically homeless individuals obtain the needed services and housing that break the cycle of homelessness. ☺



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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 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Melissa Platte

MHA BOARD LOOKING FOR NEW MEMBERS

Mental Health Association is looking for up to three new and enthusiastic Board members who either live or work in San Mateo County and have a passion for the work we do which focuses on individuals living with serious mental illness, individuals who are homeless, and people with HIV/AIDS. In our 60 (+) years of operation we have grown from a volunteer agency focused on prevention, to a strong organization which is known for providing cutting edge direct services to some of the most vulnerable members of our community. Our Board of Directors provides policy and program direction, linkages to the broader community, and support to raise funds to develop and support critical services. We are currently looking for individuals who have experience in marketing, technology and finance. Board members are elected initially for a three-year term of office, with potential for a second term. Full Board meetings are held monthly, on the second Tuesday from 4:30 – 6:00 p.m. in Redwood City. Executive, Finance, Nominating, and Community Relations Committees meet throughout the year, as needed. If you would like to be considered to serve, please contact us at info@mhasmc.org.