

# CENTER NOTES

*Moving Lives Forward*

Vol. 29, No. 1



## Notes from the President

*Ian Hunter, Ph.D.*  
President/CEO

### Snapshot on the Affordable Care Act

As you know, the Supreme Court upheld the Affordable Care Act (ACA). There are provisions in the ACA that will have an impact on Americans living with mental illness and for the psychiatric rehabilitation community. According to the US Psychiatric Rehabilitation Association (USPRA), these provisions include:

1. Requiring benefit packages to include treatment for mental health and expanded access to rehabilitative, preventive, and wellness services.
2. Creating additional incentives to coordinate primary care, mental health, and addiction services.
3. Enhancing community-based service options for individuals with a serious mental illness.
4. Developing capacity to provide services in an effective, modern mental health system through various workshop initiatives, education and training grants, and loan repayment programs.
5. Providing that transitional age youth can remain on their parent's health insurance policy and receive treatment for mental illness until the age of 26.

This is a very complex law and I will continue to monitor and report on the impact of this on the consumers and services of the Center as the details become clearer.



## Center Offers Groupon and Partners with Walgreens to Offer Toiletry Kits to Homeless

During the week of May 28 - June 3, the Center was featured in a Groupon campaign. Groupon is deal-of-the-day web site offering discounts on all kinds of products and services.

In this particular campaign, a \$10 donation went towards the purchase of a toiletry kit that our Cornerstone program outreach staff will then distribute to individuals living on the streets in the San Fernando Valley. We're pleased to announce that thanks to the donations received, we will be distributing more than 350 hygiene kits! The hygiene kits include: a toothbrush, toothpaste, shampoo, deodorant, bar soap, lotion, razors, hand sanitizer and other items. Walgreens Canoga Park, the Center's partner in this campaign, offered discounted prices on products to create these kits.

Cornerstone, a day-time drop-in Center for the homeless, routinely goes out in the community, outreaching the homeless. Cornerstone offers counseling services, shelter, transitional housing, assistance in securing permanent housing and the drop-in center provides showers, laundry, meals, lockers and even voice-mail.

The Cornerstone staff encourage those who are sleeping on the streets to join the program. Being able to offer a hygiene kit to a homeless person is not only appreciated by the individuals receiving them, but also goes a long way towards building trust between the homeless and Cornerstone staff. Eventually, with continued outreach efforts and building this relationship, the homeless individuals do make their way to "drop in" to the Cornerstone program. In fact, having access to basic hygiene needs not only puts homeless individuals on a path to better health, but it also turns out to be the most important step in ensuring that they enroll with Cornerstone and begin the path to a productive life once again.

Thank you to everyone who participated in this campaign. These donations will help ensure that these clients get healthy and stay on a healthy path to recovery.

Together, we truly are *moving lives forward* and making our community a safer and healthier place for everyone.

Would you like to receive information about the Center via email?

Send your email address to [info@sfvcmhc.org](mailto:info@sfvcmhc.org).

We will never sell your name to anyone!

## Welcome to CAC Today

The Consumer Advisory Council (CAC) held its 9th annual awards luncheon on May 23 at the Sportsmen's Lodge in Studio City. The CAC uses this opportunity to thank Community Partners that are integral to the day-to-day operations of the Center. They also honor fellow consumers who have made enormous strides in their recovery and have been role models to others still struggling. This is an event that consumers look forward to all year long.



Dr. Ian Hunter with  
CAC Today Host Roger Seward

**CAC Today** followed a talk show style format where our Show Host and Center Employee Roger Seward entertained everyone with his comedy and witty banter with guests. The show highlighted the current work that the CAC is engaging in.



Senator Alex Padilla

The afternoon started on a very poignant note as Senator Alex Padilla greeted attendees and courageously spoke about how mental illness has touched his family. Our Center is proud that he is on our Advisory Board of Directors.

Each Community Partnership award was given out with gratitude as staff and consumer presenters recognized the enormous contribution each honoree

has made in our consumers' lives. Each consumer shared touching stories of how the Community Partner's involvement directly and positively impacted their lives while consumers in the audience nodded in agreement.

Bonnie Roth, Associate Director of Homeless Services, presented an award to Ruth Schwartz, CEO/President, **Shelter Partnership**, for the generous donations they have been providing for many years. The donations through their **S. Mark Taper Foundation Shelter Resource Bank** greatly enhances the lives and well-being of the Center's homeless clients. Danielle Galitz, Program Manager, thanked the **LAPD Camp Team** for their continuous, dedicated support and assistance in responding to Center consumers in emergency need. Karyn Anderson with the Adult FCCS program presented **The Voyager Motel** with their award for going above and beyond, providing affordable emergency shelter and outstanding support to Center consumers in need. Shelly Perry of the Center's Food Bank presented **Fresh and Easy Market** in Van Nuys with an award for donating to the Center's Emergency Food program.

In attendance were representatives from the offices of Supervisor Michael Antonovich, Congressman Howard Berman, Assemblymember Bob Blumenfield, Councilmember Tony Cardenas, Assemblymember Mike Feuer, Councilmember Paul Krekorian, Senator Fran Pavley and Congressman Brad Sherman.

## Decadence — A Fine Wine and Chocolate Tasting Event We Sold Out!

*Fine wines, sumptuous chocolates, gourmet hors d'oeuvres and classic cars - what a great way to spend an afternoon while raising money for the Center.*

The 4th Annual Decadence - A Fine Wine, Gourmet Food & Chocolate Tasting Event, which was presented by the Center, Galpin Motors and The Horseless Carriage Restaurant, was held on May 20 at The Collection at Galpin Motors. The Collection is Galpin Motors Owner Bert Boeckmann's private collection room, closed to the general public.

Individuals strolled among a large assortment of cars including Dan Wood's "Ice Truck," Liberace's Zimmer Golden Spirit, one of the original Beetles from "Herbie the Love Bug," and large collections of Ed "Big Daddy" Roth and Von Dutch cars.

Vendor sponsorship was incredible and that was reflected in the record turnout of individuals that came to sample their goods. Chocolate tastings were



L-R: Chefs Giovanni Euceda, Jesus Mendez provided by **Natas Pastries**, **PK's Chocolates**, and **Se' La Vi Sweets**. Wine tastings were provided by **Cas'Almare Winery**, **Eos Estate Winery**, **Giessinger Winery**, **Kobrand Wine & Spirits**, **Le Vigne Winery**, **Reyes Winery**, **Sculpterra Winery**, and **Southern Wine & Spirits**. All of our vendors helped to make the day a success and enjoyable for everyone.

This event would not be possible without the unwavering commitment from the **Boeckmann family** who generously offer their support for this event and the support the mission of our Center. We would also like to thank **The Horseless Carriage**, especially **Geovanni Euceda**, for providing the fantastic hors d'oeuvres, which have become a signature component of Decadence. A big thank you to our generous sponsors - **Stone Tapert**, **GNW Evergreen**, **Health Net**, **LDI Color Toolbox** and **Union Bank**. Program book printing was generously donated by **LDI Color Toolbox**.

We look forward to making Decadence bigger and better next year, but until then ... cheers!

To see more photos from Decadence please visit [www.movinglivesforward.org](http://www.movinglivesforward.org).





## Mental Health Month - Celebrated in May

In 1949, Mental Health America established May as Mental Health Month. It has since become a time to raise awareness about mental health issues, and educate the community about treatment options. There is still much stigma associated with mental health, but through the Center's efforts, we hope to bring more understanding to staff, community members, and mental health consumers alike.



This year, the Center's many programs organized a wide variety of activities to mark the occasion. All of the Center's children's programs collaborated and held a **Family Wellness Festival**, located at the **Youth and Family Center** in Van Nuys. Children and their families participated in art projects, parachute games and a drum circle. Youth wrote and recited original poetry and interacted with certified therapy dogs through **PAWS for Healing**. There were informational booths for the Center's **CalWorks** and **Valley Employment Services** programs and the **Department of Mental Health** had a booth set up as well.



**Adult Field-Capable Clinical Services** held their annual BBQ to raise funds for dental and medical care for their clients. The event was open to the public, and in addition to serving grilled hamburgers and hotdogs, the program hosted a silent auction with items donated from Maria's Italian Kitchen, San Fernando Valley Adult Day Health Care Center, and several staff.

**Center for Family Living** partnered with the **Transitional Aged Youth** programs and also held an afternoon BBQ. Clients and their families sang karaoke,

played games and ate lunch at their program site. Some of the Center's programs offered informational presentations and workshops for clients. **Valley Employment Services** hosted the **Promoting Healthy Minds Resource Fair** for those clients looking to re-enter the work force as part of their recovery from mental illness. The program provided information on opportunities and resources that promote self-care.

**Cornerstone**, part of the homeless continuum of services, focused on peer support through mental health recovery and held a lunch and presentation for their clients on "Mental Health from a Cultural Perspective." Several consumers presented on how different cultures perceive mental illness and mental health services within their communities.

**CalWorks** presented "Ask the Experts" in English and Spanish for their clients looking for information on how to help themselves and their family members who are struggling with mental health and domestic violence issues. Clients were able to ask questions from a panel of several program and community representatives regarding housing resources, substance abuse and co-occurring disorders, child custody, visitation and restraining orders, and GAIN timing out questions.

To wrap up the festivities, the **Wellness Center**, **Client Run Center** and **Independent Living Program** staff and clients came together for their annual Walk-A-Thon. A large group of consumers walked from Sherman Oaks Park back to the program site in Van Nuys for a picnic.

## Volunteers Are Making a Difference!



Volunteers Gather for Annual Recognition Luncheon

Volunteers are positively impacting the lives of our clients at 18 programs centerwide, 12 children and six adult programs. Volunteers help our staff to provide better services to our clients, whether it is through front office tasks, projects that need completing or activities directly with our clients.

It is the personal undivided attention to our clients - forging friendships, being tutors, mentors and role models - that is making the difference. Relationships are being built. Referrals come from many places. The Center recruits its volunteers from: CSUN, Pierce, Valley and Glendale colleges and Volunteer Match.com to name a few.

If you are interested or know anyone who might be interested in making a difference in someone's life, please contact our Volunteer Coordinator Charlie Rubin at 818-901-4830, ext. 3106. For more information or to download an application, please visit our web site at [www.movinglivesforward.org](http://www.movinglivesforward.org).

## Community Partners

### Donating Products and Services to Improve Lives

Community partners allow the Center to go above and beyond the general services that are provided. At the Victory Wellness Center, the Food Bank is serving more than 300 clients monthly. The food bank receives grocery, bakery, dairy, meat and fresh produce items. Special thanks go to the following grocery retailers for their food donations: **Albertsons**, **Bagel Brigade**, **Fresh and Easy**, **Lucky Market and Sprouts**. **Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD)** donates hundreds of excess lunches to Cornerstone and Sylvan Place on a weekly basis. The Center recently conducted a survey of those who receive these food donations. The survey helped the Center to better understand how these donations are impacting the lives of our clients and what they think of the quality of food. Clients rated the food very good and excellent, and indicated that they are eating healthier food as a result.

**Western Beauty Institute (WBI)** in Panorama City offers free haircuts to Center clients on a weekly basis. It is a great way for WBI students to get their needed hours and it also helps build our clients' self esteem. When you look good, you feel good!

**Thank you community partners! We appreciate all you do.**



# CENTER NEWS

## Grant Announcements!

### Expanding Services for Vets, Homeless and Housing

**Kaiser Permanente Panorama City** awarded our Center with a grant to fund a registered nurse for our homeless programs. This is an important component for this population who is often afflicted with serious physical health and substance abuse issues in addition to their mental health issues.

The **U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs** awarded the Center with a two-year grant to offer supportive services to very low income veteran individuals and their families. This grant addresses their multiple unmet needs including providing housing with supportive services.

The **Housing Authority of the City of Los Angeles (HACLA)** has awarded

the Center with 100 Section 8 vouchers and in a separate proposal awarded us with 25 Shelter Plus Care vouchers. These vouchers provide for permanent housing for homeless individuals and families. The Center also offers supportive services that will enable these residents to remain stable and successfully housed for the long term.

**United Way** awarded the Center with a two-year grant through the **Home for Good Funder's Collaborative**. The project is a partnership with HACLA. This grant provides for permanent Supportive Housing services to the chronically homeless in the San Fernando Valley who have mental illness, substance abuse issues, trauma, and health conditions.

## UPCOMING EVENTS!

### 2012 Moving Lives Forward VIRTUAL Awards Gala

Our Center will be trying something different this year. We will be sending out a *virtual* invitation for our Moving Lives Forward Gala. Details will follow soon in the mail!



### Food Truck Festival

The Center holds a monthly Food Truck Festival on the third Wednesday of the month from 11 a.m. - 2 p.m., weather permitting. The Food Truck Festival takes place in the south parking lot (Sherman Way side) of Lucky Market on the corner of Sherman Way and Van Nuys Blvd. Please visit our web site to find out which trucks are coming to the next festival and confirm that it will take place. We do have tables and chairs available to dine.

## Center Adds New Program — AB 109

The Center was recently contracted through the Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health to provide intensive case management, psychiatric support and community linkage to individuals who have been released from state prisons and county jails. Through collaboration and a "team" approach, the Van Nuys Probation and the Center's AB 109 team have been working together to provide these intensive services.

These clients, upon release, typically have limited funds and no family support. They are often homeless, at-risk of homelessness and lack direction in life. The Center is able to offer them meals, lockers, laundry, mail services and access to immediate and transitional housing. The ability to offer housing has been an integral component for the success of this program. In fact, to date, 95 percent of clients receiving services through AB 109 have successfully transitioned into the community and have not become repeat offenders.

## San Fernando Valley Community Mental Health Center, Inc. would like to thank all of those who have supported the Center in the previous fiscal year.

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