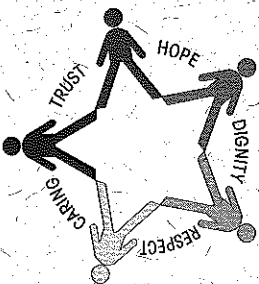


# MINDS & Matters



## The Consummate Consumer

Donna Eemunchagote begins her day early to get a head start on the long commute from her home in Victorville, over the Cajon Pass, to Glendale where she works full-time as a Peer/Self Advocacy Coordinator for Protection and Advocacy, Inc. (PAI). Donna was introduced to PAI through her work as a consultant with the Program Support Bureau for the Department of Mental Health.

Protection and Advocacy, Inc. is a nonprofit agency that provides legal assistance to people with disabilities, including physical, developmental and psychiatric. Services provided by the agency include: information and referral to other sources of assistance; peer and self advocacy training; representation in administrative and judicial proceedings; investigation of abuse and neglect; and legislative advocacy. As a Peer/Self Advocacy Coordinator, Donna is required to travel to Sacramento on a regular basis where she acts as a lobbyist for mental health causes. In addition to her PAI responsibilities, Donna also works as a facilitator for a self-help group at Patton State Hospital.

Although much of her time is taken up by her job responsibilities, Donna spends a great deal of her personal time volunteering for worthwhile mental health, social, and church causes. On June 9, 1996, Donna will be set aside as a Deacon at the Metropolitan Community Church of Los Angeles. Her activities for the church include hospice visitations and pastoral counseling. In the past, she volunteered at Step-Up-On-Second where she worked on the newsletter and helped out with the reception duties. Donna's work as a volunteer for the Aids Project for Los Angeles Neighborhood Network sent her to Sacramento where she met with representatives of Governor Pete Wilson and other dignitaries.

The long road Donna traveled has not been an easy one. Although Donna's mental illness interrupted her life from an early age, her perseverance saw her through to a degree in psychology from UCLA in 1975. Shortly thereafter, Donna ended up at the emergency room at Martin Luther King Hospital from which she was transferred, on a 5150, to Metropolitan State Hospital. That hospitalization was followed by a major episode which resulted in an extended admission to Kaiser Hospital.

After Donna was discharged, she sought treatment at Santa Monica West Mental Health Center. She had already been treated for major depression for many years when a breakthrough in her treatment helped surface issues of incest and abuse that Donna had suffered as a child. The issues that surfaced lead to diagnosis and treatment for Multiple Personality Disorders and Post Traumatic Stress Disorder.

With the help of treatment and a lot of hard work, Donna is able to live a quality life and in so doing she has succeeded in making a real contribution towards a better future for many others less fortunate than herself. ☆



Donna Eemunchagote

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## Across Desert, Mountains and Ranch Country Antelope Valley Mental Health Center Is There

The Antelope Valley Mental Health Center (AVMHC) a directly operated program, is the major comprehensive adult mental health center in the North County area, covering 1,643 miles of desert, mountains and ranch country. The communities served by AVMHC represent 34% of the total County area, and it is about 50 miles from the closest directly-operated facility. The center is located in Service Area I in the northernmost part of the County, extending from Acton to the San Bernadino County line to the east, and the Kern County line to the north.

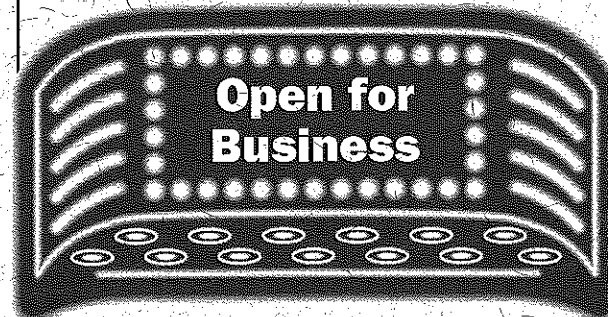
The center's location presents challenges; methods and routes of transportation available to clients residing in the outlying areas and San Fernando Valley area are limited, which makes it difficult for isolated clients to visit the clinic. In order to help mitigate these logistical challenges, the center maintains a close working relationship with contract provider agencies providing services in Service Area I. Both the Mental Health Association (Friendship Center), which provides rehabilitative and support services for mutual clients, and B.R.I.D.G.E.S., Glorieta Ardiente's Dual Diagnosis Residential Treatment Program, work with the center in a cooperative effort.

The AVMHC has an active caseload of over 650 severely and persistently mentally ill clients. Staff at the center provide a wide array of services, including psychiatric/medication assessments and maintenance and group therapy. In addition, the center operates several Supplemental Rate Programs. As a result of the large caseloads, group therapy is the primary mode of treatment. The AVMHC offers 24 ongoing groups, six of which are Liberman Module Symptom Management training groups.

The goal of these Liberman Module groups is for the clients to learn to manage their own medication in order to achieve the maximum benefits that come from self-management and responsible medication usage. The training includes five skill areas and incorporates a manual workbook, a videotape, and ongoing consultations with staff psychiatrists. The clinic recently honored seven successful Liberman Symptom Management training group graduates at a ceremony which was attended by the honorees, friends and significant others.

The graduates expressed their gains with pride and demonstrated what they learned from the training group to those who attended the ceremony. Based on the demonstrations and comments by the graduates, there is no question about the success of this training module. The AVMHC clearly goes the extra mile for its clients. ☆

## Augustus F. Hawkins Mental Health Center's Latino Psychiatric Clinic is



Stephanie Alexander reports that the Latino Psychiatric Clinic recently opened its doors to Spanish-speaking clients needing health services at the King/Drew Medical Center. The need for comprehensive psychiatric services for the Spanish-speaking population has increased dramatically.

The treatment at the Center will include comprehensive psychiatric evaluation, multi-disciplinary team treatment planning and management of patients who suffer from mood and anxiety disorders, psychotic illnesses, stress related disorders, crisis intervention, and referral to drug/alcohol programs. The modes of treatments will include psychotropic medications, supportive and other modalities of individual and group psychotherapy.

The multi-disciplined staff will be funded from the existing budget. The Spanish-speaking staff of the Augustus F. Hawkins programs will contribute some hours to staff the clinic. Departmental Spanish-speaking interns as well as other mental health case management staff will also contribute hours to this long awaited and critical service to the Willowbrook community.

The Latino Clinic will be under the responsibility of Dr. Yee, Chief of the Adult Outpatient Services, and Dr. Rowell. ☆

## A Year of Heartfelt H.U.G.S.

The DMH Employee Recognition Committee's Thank you Gang Squad has recognized many Departmental employees throughout its first year in operation. Many of the H.U.G.S. honorees have been featured on the pages of past editions of this publication. The employees have been recognized by Committee members and many of their co-workers for a variety of reasons. The Department would like to congratulate all the employees that have been recognized over the past 12 months, including the following recent recipients:



**Carol Morton, (with balloons)**  
LCSW  
San Pedro Mental Health Services  
*"has given staff and clients 15 years of steady, skillful and caring support."*



**Carol Bullard, (center)**  
Senior Typist Clerk  
Compton Mental Health Services  
*"is appreciated for her always helpful and pleasant manner."*



**Delia Sanchez, (seated)**  
Intermediate Typist Clerk  
San Pedro Mental Health Services  
*"is the always friendly greeter to all who come to San Pedro. For staff, she is the person we can all depend upon."*



**Stephanie Platt (holding baby)**  
Intermediate Typist Clerk  
Rio Hondo Mental Health Services,  
*"is loved by clients and staff for her always friendly, courteous and happy disposition."*



**Sunly Winkles (on right)**  
Case Manager  
Long Beach Asian Pacific  
*"is known to staff as their Sunshine Lady. She comes to work with such positiveness and helpfulness. She is a consummate professional."*

**Tana Accardi (on left)**  
Senior Clerk  
Long Beach Mental Health Services for 25 years;  
*"is liked and respected for her terrific work ethic. She is always available to help others."*



**Diem Ngo (center holding card)**  
Psychiatric Social Worker  
Coastal Asian Pacific  
*"is appreciated by staff for her creativity and hard work, and for being an inspiration to others."*

**Lina Demonteverde (camera shy)**  
Supervising Psychiatric Social Worker  
Long Beach Mental Health Services  
*"has been with the program since its inception and has been the mentor for so many staff in providing guidance and support."*

**Don Chaplin (camera shy)**  
Community Worker  
Long Beach Mental Health Services  
*"plays a key role in the clinic's senior program, life skills classes, pre-vocational and club house programs."*



The Program Support Bureau's Community Support/Homeless Division and Adult Services Bureau recently met with the Directors of the State Department of Rehabilitation's Independent Living Centers to develop an action plan that would lead to an increase in services for persons with severe mental illness. The first project is to sponsor a training for Independent Living Center staff regarding the mental health services provided by the Department.

The Adult Services Bureau assumed responsibility for services to clients previously served by El Centro Human Services, which closed its doors at the end of January 1996. Uninterrupted services are being provided by the County at the same four facilities (Commerce, East Los Angeles, Bell Gardens and Pico-Union) under the new name of the East Los Angeles Mental Health Center. The staff previously working for El Centro were hired as temporary County employees while the Request For Proposal (RFP) process and new contract can be completed.

The Mental Health Justice Programs is pleased to report that Dr. Jacobson's mental health staff at Sybil Brand Institute for Women made a presentation at Safe Harbor, a twelve-step substance abuse program that accepts dually-diagnosed patients. The goal of the presentation was to improve communication between the two programs to enhance the transition process for mental health clients transferred to Safe Harbor. This public/private interaction enhances the options for the dually diagnosed, incarcerated mentally ill population which the Department serves.

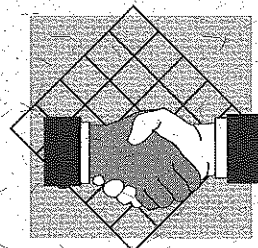
The Quality Outcome Bureau reports that the Client Satisfaction Survey for Medi-Cal consumers receiving service in Fee-for-Service hospitals is being tested in eight hospitals and will then be finalized and used ongoing as a quality management tool.

The Administrative Services Bureau (ASB) introduced a new Warehouse Stock Requisition process that saves time and ensures accuracy in the ordering process while reducing the current costs. The Bureau developed a new all-in-one Stationery/Office Supplies Request order form and catalogue for use when requesting forms and office supplies. The new form represents another step towards process simplification and efficiency as part of the Department's Vision 2000 goals.

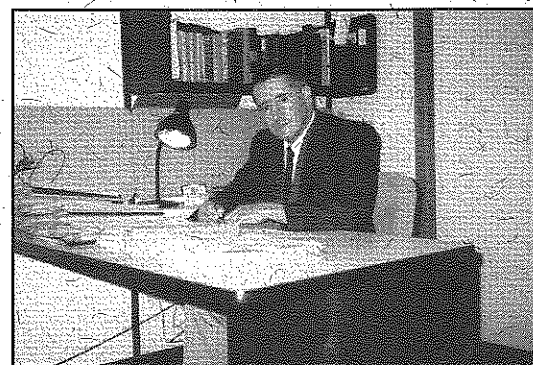
## March of Dimes Walk America 96 Needs Your Support

It is that time once again. Walkers and volunteers are needed to make this year's Walk America event a success. Come and join in the fun for a good cause. For additional information, please contact Sherrill Lee at (213) 738-3813.





# KUDOS FOR *colleagues*



**Benjamin Mendez-Herrera, M.D.**  
**Mental Health Psychiatrist**

During recent months Long Beach Mental Health Services has been extremely short of psychiatrists. Dr. Herrera willingly extended himself so that our clients could be seen for their medications. Despite the heavy workload, Dr. Herrera is always cheerful, and he is very kind and considerate towards his clients and staff. It is a pleasure to work with him.

*Nominated by: Phyllis Eddleman and Staff  
Long Beach Mental Health Services*



**Maria Perez**  
**Administrative Assistant II**  
**and**  
**Theodore Capuano**  
**Mental Health Services Coordinator II**  
*(pictured right) with  
Dr. Diaz (far left)*

It gives me great pleasure to honor two administrative team colleagues. They have displayed heroic and ethical qualities while assisting in the delivery of the highest quality of care for our clients. As program supervisors they have been instrumental in eliciting the best from their staff, which is essential to the success of our program. Ted and Maria are loyal, efficient, effective and compassionately critical employee supervisors who convey a sense hope to their clients and staff.

Ted and Maria, please accept my gratitude and appreciation for being exemplary County employees.

*Nominated by: Milagres C.N. Dias, Ph.D.*  
*Mental Health Clinical Program Head*  
*Therapeutic Residential Center Executive Office*



**Linda Gueringer**  
**District Chief (left),**  
**and**  
**Yvette Townsend**  
**District Chief (below)**

Recently, two of my staff were honored as positive role models during the Black History Month celebration. I would like to add my personal congratulations to Yvette and Linda. Their ongoing contributions to this Bureau and this Department, exemplify professionalism at its best.

*Nominated by: John Hatakeyama, M.S.*  
*Deputy Director*  
*Children and Family Services Bureau*



**Joan Vitale**  
**Volunteer Program Coordinator II**  
**Office of Public Guardian**

Over the past several years, with the full support of her Deputy Director Chris Fierro, Joan's leadership, dedication, commitment, and fund-raising efforts have been instrumental in the yearly contribution of over \$2,000 to the Department's Community Support Campaign. We sincerely and deeply apologize for the inadvertent exclusion of Joan and her assistant Chris Hicks' from the listing of Coordinators, Assistants, and

Friends in the January/February, 1996 edition of *Minds & Matters*.

Joan recently announced her May 17, 1996 retirement date; her dedicated support and warm smile will be sorely missed.

*Nominated by: Sherrill Lee,*  
*Community Support Chairperson*  
*Program Support Bureau Administration*

## CROWELL'S *corner*



This spring we have unusually hopeful prospects of obtaining significant system improvements for Los Angeles County Mental Health clients. As you may already know, members of the Board of Supervisors traveled to Washington to meet with the Clinton administration and returned feeling confident that the federal government will soon distribute a portion of the \$364 million "bail out" funding needed to offset some of the shortfall that the Department of Health Services (DHS) is facing. Although the shortfalls may appear in the DHS budget, they potentially hurt all DMH clients in many ways if essential health services are curtailed. The federal funding will save the County from having to implement deeper, even more devastating cuts in the delivery of health services to our most vulnerable population. This funding is vital to maintaining the current DHS inpatient and outpatient psychiatric service levels (which had to be reduced this year to 70% and 90%, respectively).

In addition to the funding for DHS, we have something to be very thankful for. The Department will receive funding, through the State Department of Mental Health, which will support approximately \$9.8 million (annualized) for expanded Early and Periodic Screening, Diagnosis and Treatment

(EPSDT) Medi-Cal services for children and youth for FY 1995-96 through FY 1996-97. We are confident that the Department will meet the level of service delivery that is necessary to use all available EPSDT State and federal dollars. This enhancement will not incur additional County costs, since the State had to provide access to federally mandated entitlement services.

Under the EPSDT program, children and young adults under 21 years of age are examined (screened) by health care professionals to determine their health care needs. Services must be provided to meet the identified needs. Beneficiaries who are dually diagnosed with mental health and substance abuse problems, as many of our clients are, may also receive treatment directed at the substance abuse component if the treatment is consistent with and necessary to attain the goals for the mental health treatment.

The Department's administration, John Hatakeyama, the staff of Children and Family Services, and the community contract provider agencies have worked hard to develop the EPSDT program implementation plan that best reflects the Department's system of care service priorities.

Finally, the economic recovery is yielding increases in sales tax and Vehicle License Fee revenues, and the CAO is recommending that the County contribute overmatch funding so that the basic Countywide service level would be kept constant next year even though the mandated County Maintenance of Effort can legally be decreased.

Together with the DHS and EPSDT victories, this represents a light of hope at the end of the tunnel. In these trying times of fiscal crisis, the Department's ability to maintain services for adult clients and expand mental health services to our youngest clients is truly a blessing for which we can all be thankful. ☆

☆

**MINDS***matters* is published by the LA County Department of Mental Health on a regular basis. Articles, comments and suggestions are encouraged. Please write or call:

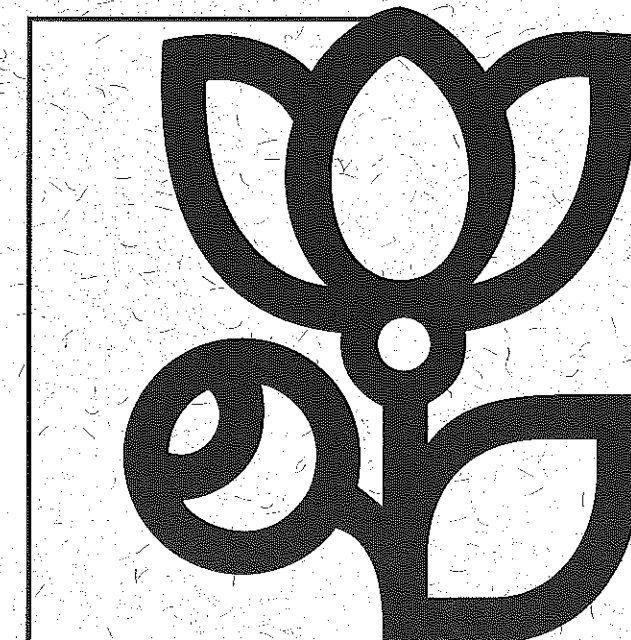
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**Chief Deputy Director**  
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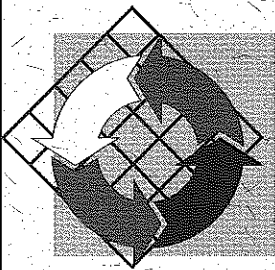
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# POTPOURRI



## **Senior Health and Peer Counseling to Co-Sponsor Screening**

A National Anxiety Disorders Screening Day will be held on Wednesday, May 1, 1996, co-sponsored by Senior Health and Peer Counseling, St. John's Hospital and Health Center. Anxiety disorders are the most common mental illnesses in the United States. The event is open to the public and will include a psychiatric presentation, a video, a screening questionnaire administered by licensed professional staff and interns from the sponsoring agencies, and a list of community resources. For additional information please contact Dawn Baker at (310) 576-2550.

## **San Pedro Mental Health Services Holds Open House**

San Pedro Mental Health Services held a "Three-In-One" celebration, on March 6, 1996 was held in honor of its 30th year of service, its 20th year at the San Pedro Neighborhood Facility and also a tribute to Supervisor Deane Dana. The event included a tour of the facility, displays, music, and plenty of food. A good time was had by all.

## **Verdugo Mental Health's Sober Social Event**

Positive Directions Coffeehouse holds a monthly sober social event celebrating creativity and friendship in sobriety and recovery. For information or questions about other Positive Directions' programs, contact Deborah McColl or Ed King at (818) 247-8180.

## **Glendale Family Service Association Accepting New Members**

Glendale Family Service Association is accepting new members for its upcoming series of workshops that address the problems and concerns raised by seniors. The workshops will feature discussions on stress management, successful aging, staying active and healthy, and other issues related to normal aging. The workshops meet every Wednesday from 10:00 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. at Glendale Family Service, located at 3436 N. Verdugo Road in Glendale. For additional information contact Myrna Samuels, Ph.D. at (818) 248-2286.

## **Los Angeles Child Guidance Clinic Appoints New Director**

Los Angeles Child Guidance Clinic is pleased to announce the appointment of Donna Heider, MFCC, ATR, as the Director of Clinical Programs. Ms. Heider's background includes extensive experience in working with seriously emotionally disturbed and abused children and adults.



## **Adult Services Bureau Recognizes Employees**

Employees with 25 years of County service were recognized at Adult Services Bureau's holiday celebration, attended by Dr. Crowell. Pictured above at the celebration are (left to right) Dr. Crowell, Phyllis Key, Ambrose Rodriguez, Vera Castro, Barbara Young, and Manuel Mora and Steve Fishman and Barbara Trincherro (seated).

## **Community Counseling Service Moves**

The new address for Community Counseling Service is 1145 Wilshire Blvd. Suite 100, in Los Angeles. The new phone number is (213) 481-7464.