

Asian and Pacific Islander Obesity Prevention Alliance and Tongan Community Service Center



Before-race picture with some team members.

APIOPA and TCSC Run the LA Marathon!



Six months ago, Asian and Pacific Islander Obesity Prevention Alliance (APIOPA) and the Tongan Community Service Center (TCSC), both projects of Special Service for Groups (SSG), took on the challenge of participating in one of Los Angeles' biggest and most iconic events - the Los Angeles Marathon. It was not only an opportunity to "walk the walk," engaging individuals in living and practicing healthy living, but it was also a way for us to think bigger. Funds were raised to provide new innovative programming to address the social justice issues both organizations take on.

Some of our runners shared that reaching the finish line was the easy part: reaching the starting line though, was a much more difficult task. For about 5 months, those who joined our team took part in weekly trainings which consisted mostly of 3 weekday runs of 3-7 miles, concluding with a long run on the weekend (up to 20 miles). Long runs varied, from running loops around the Rose Bowl, to running from our own homes to the next city and back. Our team consisted of over 30 dedicated runners, and by the end of the marathon, we calculated that our team ran a staggering 733.6 miles together!

Our fundraising efforts were just as amazing. In the span of a few months, we were able to raise over \$11,000, which will be evenly split between APIOPA and TCSC. With these extra funds, APIOPA can move forward with its Asian community-supported agriculture system, which connects local Asian farmers with local API communities. Find out more about how we are planning on making organic Asian produce affordable for all here: <http://www.apiopa.org/programs/csa/>. Similarly, TCSC can now move forward on starting another round of Tongan language classes, aimed to preserve Tongan traditions and culture. Find out more about how TCSC is advocating for the Tongan community here: <http://www.tonganla.org>

Brian Hui Co-chair of Empowerment Congress Leadership Council



On January 19th the Empowerment Congress hosted its 21st Annual Empowerment Congress Summit in Bovard Auditorium at the University of Southern California, which assembled key stakeholders of the Second Supervisorial District of Los Angeles County to discuss issues that impact the local community. This year's Summit

hosted the primary season's first Los Angeles Mayoral debate. The five major candidates -Eric Garcetti, Wendy Gruel, Kevin James, Jan Perry, and Emanuel Pleitez - responded to questions on a variety of subjects submitted by the Empowerment Congress membership and South Los Angeles community. SSG's Brian Hui served as Co-Chair for the Summit, as one of the first duties of his term as Co-Chair of the Empowerment Congress Leadership Council.

WEBER COMMUNITY CENTER

Incredible Years at Weber Community Center

One of Weber Community Center's evidence based practices is their amazing Incredible Years group. The weekly group is led by Weber Therapists Karla Garcia, Norma Guerrero-Lewis, and Lashaun Lawson. The 18 week intervention is a child social skills training program that uses constant praising and positive reinforcement to improve the children's behaviors and to decrease aggressive behaviors. The group serves clients between the ages of 4 and 8. Incredible Years facilitates the use of puppets Dina the Dinosaur, Tiny Turtle, and Lola to engage the young children. As the children begin interacting with the puppets, therapists have commented that the children become focused on only the puppets. At times it appears that the children forget about the therapists and fully engage in the session through the puppets. Incredible Years has been a great success for Weber Community Center and they look forward to continuing the group.



HOMELESS OUTREACH PROGRAM INTEGRATED CARE SYSTEM

Homeless Connect Day

HOPICS coordinated the 7th Annual SPA 6 Homeless Connect Day on February 15, 2013 at South Park. This effort was led by Jennette McCombs and Tonia Johnson of HOPICS. More than 250 individuals attended and 32 vendors offered a wide array of services, e.g. housing, medical and legal services, mental health and substance abuse, youth services and also services for veterans.

This year we were able to donate many items to the attendees, thanks to our contributors: Sols4Souls donated 103 pairs of new shoes; In & Out Burger donated 10 meal vouchers and the Los Angeles Regional Foodbank donated over 2,800 pounds of apples oranges and pears.

Senator Curren Price, 26th Senatorial District, was on hand to welcome our attendees as well as present Certificates of Recognition to HOPICS for their service and continued support to the community.



Jennette McCombs, HOPICS and Senator Curren Price

SPA 6 Homeless Count

HOPICS proudly participated in the 2013 Los Angeles Continuum of Care Homeless Count in SPA 6 on January 31, 2013. The Broadway location served as a Deployment Center for our 50 great volunteers; including Senator Curren Price. Twenty-three Census Tracts in South Los Angeles were included in the area covered in the count; volunteer counters identified 425 homeless Individuals, including 62 youth; and 184 vehicles, tents or other make-shift shelters. The results from the Homeless Count are included as part of the formula that determines funding levels for homeless services in SPA 6 and Countywide.



Volunteers with Deetra Briggs, HOPICS (far right)

SSG NEWS & HIGHLIGHTS

THE PAINTED BRAIN

“Expansiveness” Released

The 9th issue of the Painted Brain’s magazine, *“Expansiveness”*, was released at an all out gala event at the DAC Gallery just around the corner from SSG Headquarters this past month on March 9th. A large crowd of almost 200 people viewed the artwork contributed from dozens of artists, living with mental illness. The show included work from artists from within the SSG family at Weber and APAIT, as well as artists from Lancaster, Santa Ana, and even Peoria Illinois. Artists sold almost \$1,000 worth of artwork with all proceeds from the art sales going directly to the artist. In addition to great art we had poetry, acting and musical performances, including a brief classical interlude from **Painted Brain Director Dave Leon** playing cello music on his upright bass. If you'd like copies of the latest issue of The Painted Brain magazine for yourself or your clients, contact thepaintedbrain@gmail.com. Thanks to all those who attended and/or assisted SSG consumers in showing their work.



*To laugh
often and much;
To win the respect of intelligent
people and the affection of children;
To earn the appreciation of honest
critics and endure the betrayal of
false friends;
To appreciate beauty, to find the
best in others;
To leave the world a bit better, whether
by a healthy child, a garden patch or a
redeemed social condition;
To know even one life has breathed easier
because you have lived.
This is to have succeeded.*
Bessie Stanley

**OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY TRAINING
PROGRAM - SAN FRANCISCO**

Client Success Story

“Max” was referred to OTTP last summer from the San Francisco Probation Department. He was initially referred for the purpose of receiving case management and mental health services to assist him in working through his substance abuse issues and completing school. After the OTTP-SF case manager completed her initial assessment it was clear there were many issues this youth was struggling with, in addition to his probation status. He was depressed, testing positive for marijuana regularly, truant in school, fighting with his parents, and completely uninterested in making any life change. In the beginning, he would consistently tell his OTTP case manager that he knew staff were “just doing their job,” and that he didn’t feel like anyone needed to know his business. Initially, he was very difficult to engage in services and was often dishonest with his case manager. His probation officer expressed that he had little confidence in Max’s ability to complete probation successfully.

It was during month 2 that Max and the OTTP case manager had a breakthrough. Max and his case manager had a very long and candid session regarding his progress, his future and the natural consequences of his lack of participation in the services being offered. It was after this session that something seemed to change for Max. He had a new sense of motivation and his demeanor towards treatment was much more open and positive. He was finally “engaged” in the services OTTP was offering. During the following months the OTTP case manager continued to work with Max on completing school, building his relationships, and finding alternatives to his substance use.

We are now in month 8 of working with Max and he is about to be discharged successfully from OTTP services. He has made a complete turn-around in his life. He stopped smoking marijuana and has been testing clean for 4 months. He earned his high school diploma and is working on enrolling in community college. He is now employed at a coffee shop. His mood has shifted and he often appears happy and content. His relationships with family and significant others are stronger and positive. Max has completed the terms of his probation and expresses confidence in being ready to take the next steps toward adulthood. Max is a huge success. OTTP-SF is very proud of him!



Benefits Assistance Clients' Urban Project/ LIFE Center

The Art Corner



Juan Burgueno Jr.

When the Life Center began at BACUP in 2007, the use of art as an outlet to express and to heal was important for BACUP to provide in the community. Since then, our Art Corner has flourished with the guidance of **Juan Burgueno Jr.**, who

joined BACUP 2 years ago as an Intern from WCIL. With his vision, he sees potential art activities in everything and abilities in anyone. Some of these activities include creative masks out of palm tree fronds, sketching of objects in the office, and painting on paper plates. Many art participants when they started have never touched a brush, crayon or pencil but have become dedicated art enthusiasts and have been attending regular classes for the past 2 years. The most gratifying aspect of the Art Corner is the personal healing that takes place and the development of skills that the individuals never realized they had. BACUP's Art Corner has recently collaborated with fellow program the Painted Brain to further develop art opportunities for the community. Please share this wonderful program in your communities or drop-by and see all the fun that is taking place! Also, if you have any type of art supplies you would like to donate, let us know. For more information on the Art Corner, contact Juan Mondays-Wednesdays at 213-368-1888 x 21 or jbargueno@bacup.net. Be sure to also ask Juan about the community murals he has worked on in Venice, CA!



Juan sharing with class.

Occupational Therapy Training Program - Los Angeles

Wellness Center Opening



OTTP celebrated the grand opening of the new Wellness Center at Washington Prep High School. The Wellness Center will provide comprehensive health care including medical, dental and mental health services and serve the local community.

OTTP is named as a community partner in providing mental health services. A portion of The Wellness Center funding came from Supervisor Mark Ridley-Thomas' Office



I-r: Hayley Levy, Cristina Cosio, Laura O'Connor, Luisa Lowe, Isaac Feliciano, Suzanne Afuso-Sugano, and Herb Hatanaka

SSG WEBSITE FYI & REMINDERS

CAREERS

Place your Job postings on the Careers page on the SSG website. Limit one page in a Word document; for content questions, contact the H.R. Dept. at 213-553-1892 or email to the SSG HR Dept. at: hr@ssgmain.org.

DONATIONS

The SSG website can receive donations via credit card payments; this resource can be incorporated into your website or email campaign, contact Wendy Chiu, Dev. and Operations at: wchiu@ssgmain.org.

PUBLICATIONS

Forward publication information to: Wendy Chiu, Dev. and Operations at: wchiu@ssgmain.org. Include 2-3 sentences description of the publication, date published, and weblink or reference to the full article.

HEALTH, WELLNESS & YOU



Springtime Driving

Driving in the springtime can be a great time. The weather is nice, the sun is out, and it's time for you to hit the open road. Whether you're driving a long-distance, taking a drive around your neighborhood on a sunny Sunday or just driving to and from work, spring driving has its own set of challenges and concerns.

- Beware April showers! Yes, it tends to rain a lot in the springtime, making the roads slick and wet and often dangerous. Be sure to allow enough space between you and the car ahead of you so that you can stop in time, and drive more slowly on wet roads than you would if they were dry. This will provide you with more time to slow down if you need to.
- Watch your visibility. When the rain is coming down hard, you may find yourself having difficulty seeing the road and the others vehicles on it. Fog can also reduce visibility—so be extra careful when your visibility is limited by these conditions.
- Keep an eye out for pedestrians. On a beautiful spring day, you'll find that all the runners, bicyclists and children come out to play. Be sure to share the road with them, and watch out for them, even if you have the right of way.
- Make sure your tires are properly inflated. You should check your tire pressure often, making sure they are not underinflated or overinflated. Check your owner's manual or door panel for the recommended amount of pressure.

Keeping these handy tips in mind this spring will help keep you and everyone around you on the road safe and sound. Just remember to drive carefully and cautiously, no matter the weather, and you'll find that staying safe is a snap!

Tire Inflation

MR. DEALER, PLEASE DO NOT REMOVE THIS STICKER!			
TIRE INFLATION (P.S.I.) PRESSURES "COLD"			
P235/75R15 TIRE SIZE	SL LOAD RANGE	NORMAL LOAD	MAX. LOAD
NORMAL SPEED		28 FRT.	35 FRT.
		28 RR.	35 RR.
SUSTAINED HI SPEED (OVER 65 M.P.H. 104 KM./HR.)		31 FRT.	35* FRT.
		31 RR.	35* RR.
NORMAL LOAD: FREQUENTLY SELECTED ACCESSORIES PLUS DRIVER AND TWO (2) PASSENGERS MAXIMUM LOAD: GROSS VEHICLE WEIGHT RATING (G.V.W.R.) *75 M.P.H. OR *120 KM./HR. MAX. SPEED PART NO. 5364789			

Locate the recommended tire pressure on the vehicle's tire information placard or certification label, these are attached to the vehicle door edge, door post, glove box door or trunk lid and can also be found in the owner's manual.

Tires are designed to be used on more than one type of vehicle. The correct pressure for your tire is what the vehicle manufacturer has listed on the placard. NOT what is listed on the tire itself.

Live Well, Work Well*Stretching*

Have you noticed these signs of stiffness? You move slower getting out of the car or bed. You ache when you bend over to tie your shoes. You can no longer sit cross-legged. If so, it's time to improve your flexibility.

Flexibility refers to how well your joints move through their range of motion. You can develop more joint flexibility by doing slow, gentle stretches held in a static position for several seconds to a minute. Stretching is not strenuous, but it requires focus and consistency.

The American College of Sports Medicine recommends stretching at least 3 days a week. Stretch more often if you have lost some joint motion or have ongoing stiffness.

Primarily target stretches that aid your back, side, hip and leg muscles and follow these guidelines:

Warm-up: Stretch after warming up the muscles and joints for 5 to 10 minutes, or after your regular exercise.

Duration: Hold each stretch for at least 10 seconds, working up to 30 seconds.

Repetitions: Perform each stretch 3 to 5 times.

Technique: Stretch slowly and smoothly only to the point of mild sensation. Focus on the muscle being stretched; limit movement elsewhere and don't bounce.

The length of time you devote to a stretching workout will depend on your individual needs and the number of specific stretches you perform for each muscle.

These are basic guidelines. If you have back or joint problems, consult your health care provider before you begin an aggressive stretching routine.



SSG POLICY MATTERS

EMPLOYMENT VERIFICATION CHECK, REQUEST FOR INFORMATION AND
ANY OTHER LEGAL DOCUMENTS

Any inquiries either in person, by phone or by mail seeking verification of employment or requesting any information concerning current or former employees are handled by the Human Resources Department ONLY. Should you receive this type of inquiry, forward it immediately to the Human Resources Department. DO NOT provide the person inquiring with ANY information, refer the person to:

SSG's Human Resources Department:

605 W. Olympic Blvd., Suite 600
Los Angeles, CA 90015

Phone: (213) 553-1892 | Private Fax: (213) 553-8489

Must call for an appointment.

The following are examples of common requests:

- Subpoena of employee records
- Legal served documents - **employment related only**
- Wage Garnishments
- Employment Development Department (EDD) Claims - State Disability/Unemployment Insurance
- Verification of Employment - Home Loans/Other Loans

The HR Manager, Director of Administration, Risk Manager, or Executive Director are the only authorized personnel to accept/sign any employment related legal served documents against SSG. In their absence, direct the serving party to come back the next business day.

Generally, anyone attempting to serve summonses, complaints or subpoenas in a non-criminal lawsuit will need to be checked in at front desk. If a State or Federal law enforcement officer seeks to execute an arrest warrant, the officer should be told that unless he or she has a search warrant, he should stay in the public lobby area.

PROCEDURES:

1. Anyone attempting to serve summonses, complaints or subpoenas in a non-criminal lawsuit should be asked, (without use of force), to check in at the front desk. The lobby security guard or the receptionist should immediately contact the appropriate Agency representative (Division Director, HR Manager, Director of Administration, Risk Manager, or Executive Director, as applicable), not the employee named in the subpoena or process. SSG representative should then advise the document/process server of SSG's policy against allowing non-employees and uninvited members of the public into the private areas of the facility. Human Resources should be contacted if there are any difficulties.
2. If the agency is being served with employment related legal documents, refer the person to the HR Department.
3. If a State or Federal law enforcement officer seeks to execute an arrest warrant or otherwise to arrest or detain an employee or other person in the building, the officer should be told that, unless he or she has a search warrant (as opposed to merely an arrest

- warrant), he should stay in the public lobby area. Human Resources should be contacted and informed of (a) the identification of the person serving the papers, (b) the name, location and employment status of the person being served, (c) the type of paper or document being served, and (d) whose signature is being requested.
4. SSG Representative should not: (a) encourage flight or suggest it as an alternative to the employee who is the subject of the inquiry by the law enforcement officer, or (b) forcefully detain or coerce the targeted employee to surrender to arrest. If the targeted employee leaves the building upon learning of the purpose of the officer's visit, SSG representative should inform the officer of the flight and should immediately notify Human Resources.
 5. If a law enforcement officer produces identification and a search warrant, a copy of the warrant should be requested and sent to Human Resources immediately. The officer should be told that we object to the search occurring at all before we have had adequate time for review of the warrant by Human Resources and legal counsel. If the officer refuses to wait, he or she should be permitted access to those areas which are covered by the search warrant.

Non employment matters (such as personal lawsuits) are the sole responsibility of the employee. If the issue is unclear contact the HR Department for clarification.

EMPLOYMENT VERIFICATION CHECK/REQUEST FOR INFORMATION

SSG recognizes the individual employee's right to privacy. It is SSG policy for the Human Resources Department to provide date of hire and current job position over the phone when asked. Any other information must include an employee's written permission. This may include, but not limited to: 1) the fact that an employee worked for or is currently working for SSG, 2) the dates of employment, 3) position held, 4) job location, 5) work hours per week, 6) final rate of pay, and 7) responsibilities. The current/former employee's employment record, conduct, attendance, or reason for leaving will be provided only when specified on the Agency's Disclosure Authorization Release Form.

USE FORM # 320, DISCLOSURE AUTHORIZATION AND RELEASE FORM

The Agency is required to respond to all requests for employee information that are accompanied by a court order.

SSG will require each employee involved in record keeping to adhere to this policy and practice, and violations may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination. SSG policy forbids all current employees, including Supervisors, from bypassing this policy. Do not provide anyone with information regarding another employee, including former employees. Violation of this policy may lead to disciplinary action up to and including termination.