

BRIAN HUI (SSG/SURV), EMCEE FOR HARBOR-UCLA GRAND OPENING

On January 24th 2014 hundreds of residents, elected officials and community leaders came together to celebrate the grand opening of the new Harbor-UCLA Medical Center Emergency Department. SSG's own **Brian Hui** (SSG/SURV and former Director of SSG/Tongan Community Service Center) was an emcee for the event along with his Empowerment Congress Co-Chair **Andrew Henderson**.

Right on the border of Carson and Torrance, Harbor-UCLA is a critically important county hospital serving the communities of southern LA County. When the former MLK/Drew Medical Center closed their trauma center (2005) and hospital (2007) Harbor-UCLA's emergency department became the major portal for emergency services and hospital access for these communities.

The new facility boasts over 190,000 sq. ft. of additional space. The waiting areas for families and friends of patients are much larger and decorated with original artwork by artists among the medical personnel, making it a warm and welcoming environment. The new facilities are a vast improvement from the cramped, chaotic, and unhealthy environment of the previous Harbor emergency room.

Harbor-UCLA plays a key role for diverse local communities. **Kitione Tuitupou** and **Paua Tuisoso Manuatu** from SSG/TCSC were also in attendance to provide support for this grand opening event. With personal experience helping community residents (many facing cultural and language barriers) to navigate and receive health services they applauded the new improvements.

It is without a doubt that unflinching advocacy efforts of community leaders like Kitione and Paua together with groups like the Empowerment Congress and other nonprofit providers are the driving force for advancements in health care delivery such as this.



THANK YOU LINO! HAPPY RETIREMENT WISHES AFTER 35 YEARS



Lino Raquel

Thank you and happy retirement wishes to Lino P. Raquel, Senior Accountant of the SSG Core Office Fiscal Department. Hired on January 16, 1979 Lino has been a wonderful co-worker, friend and mentor for 35 years. He has been witness to SSG's amazing growth over the years. In the early 1980's SSG's budget was less than \$3M with fewer than 45 staff agency-wide. He was part of the first accounting team that began the shift to a computer

driven system 30 years ago! What a difference when you compare it with today - a budget of \$50M and more than 600 staff. As a Senior Accountant (Level III) Lino maintained fiscal books and records for assigned divisions including analysis and recommendations regarding fiscal and contract/compliance issues. He assisted in training entry level accountants with contracts as well as systems. Lino is proud of the work he has done over the decades that helped create a solid foundation for the organization to thrive. He looks forward to various home projects with his wife Aida and spending time with friends and family. Executive Director Herbert Hatanaka says "I speak for all of us at SSG in expressing thanks to such a long-standing and dedicated staff member. He will be missed and we wish him all the best!"

Pictured l-r: Richard Williams - Patient's father, Elizabeth Ruiz - 12th grader at Academy of Medical Arts at Carson Complex, Father Ruther - St. Philomena Catholic Church, Assemblyman Al Muratsuchi, Congresswoman Janice Hahn, LA County Supervisor Mark Ridley-Thomas, LA County Supervisor Don Knabe, Andrew Henderson, Co-chair Empowerment Congress, Families for Children, Dr. Mitchell Katz - Director, LA County Department of Health Services, Brian Hui, Empowerment Congress Co-chair, SURV, Shari Afshari - Deputy Director, Department of Public Works, Patricia Soltero, RN - Clinical Nursing Director, Harbor-UCLA, Delvecchio Finley, MPP, FACHE - CEO, Harbor-UCLA Medical Center

SSG NEWS & HIGHLIGHTS

WEBER COMMUNITY CENTER

'Twas the Days Before Christmas at Weber

By: Delores Montes

'Twas the days before Christmas,
And all through the place,
The Weber Staff worked diligently
Trying to keep pace!

The hallways were hung
With Christmas decor and art
(Andrea even started in November
to get a head start!)

The IY children were bouncing
Off ceilings and walls,
And seemed to forget
How to walk in the halls.

With 'holiday shirts'
And 'jingle bell jewels',
The therapists looked festive
Enforcing the rules.

When out of the kitchen
There came such a clatter
Carlos dropped his tea and ran in
To see what was the matter.

The staff was all hiding
And trying to refuel,
On coffee and cookies
And treats from the Yule.

When what to their wondering
ears do they hear,
But the paging from Irma
-It's the children they fear!

More rapid than reindeer
The little ones came,
And the therapists all shouted
And called them by name;
Walk, Christian! Walk, Manuel!
Walk, Arturo and Aaron!
Sit, Angel! Sit, Ronald!
Sit, Jonathan and Karen!

To your seats in the room!
To your spots in the line!
Now walk to them! Walk to them!
Norma said "No running this time!"

So straight to their places
The IY children all went.
With fear of disapproval,
Wanting to keep their teachers content

With manual of lessons
Cradled in arms,
The therapists began
To use all their charms.

But the lessons presented
All fell on deaf ears.
The children were all thinking
Of Santa's reindeers!

With a toss of their hands
The therapists just sighed,
Went straight to the closet
Where the arts & crafts hide

As the managers left the kitchen
With a grin and a smirk
They returned to their offices
To finish their work

So as Jess met his last group,
Lydia worked on the e-mails she wrote
Maria met with the WRAP team,
And Jasmine approved the last Clinitrak note!

But it wasn't long before "La Patrona" paged
At the end of the day
Attention All Weber Staff-
Have a wonderful, happy and
L-0-0-0-0-0-0-0-0-N-G HOLIDAY!!!"



WCC hosted its annual client **Holiday Party**, long standing tradition where clients and their families are able to celebrate the holidays safely. Food and entertainment were provided as well as a Holiday Gift for Weber clients. The event took place on Monday December 23, 2013 at WCC.

Clinical Director **Jennifer Schott** reprised her role as Mrs. Claus and Therapist **Gamaliel Beltran** filled in as Santa Claus. The event continues to be a great success and has helped create stronger ties between WCC and the community.

WCC continued a tradition with its "Second Annual **Holiday Door Decoration**" contest. Staff really got into the spirit and made elaborate displays. Neighboring UMMA and Weingart Agencies served as the judges to determine who had the most creative decorations. Weber Departments ICS, MIS, and Wraparound won recognitions for being the most creative.

*Special Thanks*

SSG wishes to thank **Steve Lee of Steele Industries** for his generous donation, which resulted in over 2,400 children receiving toys through SSG programs.

SSG wishes to thank the **LA City Fire Department, Spark of Love program** which provided toys to the children of SSG programs (Pacific Asian Alcohol and Drug Program, Parents Neighborhood Youth Program and Homeless Outreach Program's: Homeless Women & Children's Project, Families in Transition and Family Dependency Drug Court Project). We thank you for your service throughout the year and your extra efforts during this holiday season.

SSG NEWS & HIGHLIGHTS

PROJECT 180

NEW DIRECTIONS AND NEW ROADS
DR. VICTORIA SIMON

Victoria Simon

While Dr. Victoria Simon has stepped aside to usher in a new Director for Project 180 (see article on Emily Bell) she is not leaving SSG! After training and transitioning new leadership for Project 180, she will continue her criminal justice work for SSG with a focus on forensic mental health training and program development. Her goal is to also work closely with Executive Director Herb Hatanaka to provide

strategic guidance on the integration of forensic mental health and primary healthcare services. Her office will continue to be located at Project 180.

Dr. Simon's impressive record speaks for itself. She initially began at SSG in 2006 as a Clinical Coordinator for the AB2034 program of Central Mental Health working together with Dr. Trang Hoang (current Division Director of ALLIANCE). Dr. Simon was then promoted as Forensic Program Director for CMH. Her mission was to apply an innovative forensic mental health system to create successful pathways for offenders of the criminal justice system.

There was no turning back at that point - and she went on to create PROJECT 180 that is now considered one of the top forensic mental health programs in LA County and recognized statewide and nationally. In LA County some partners include the Sheriff's Dept., Public Defender's Office, District Attorney's Office, Probation Dept., Mental Health, SAPC, and many more. Dr. Simon has developed a number of innovative groundbreaking projects including the collaboration with the co-occurring drug courts in Los Angeles (presided over by famed Judge Michael Tynan), the development of the clinical treatment unit that is embedded in the Twin Towers County Jail, and more recently, the development of the "distance" residential treatment program in Acton California and the use of telepsychiatry to service our clients.

Project 180 received the "Best Teamwork Award" by the County of LA 24th Annual Productivity and Quality Awards Program, October 2010. They also received the "Science and Service Award 2010" by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. In 2011, they received an Achievement Award from the National Association of Counties (NACo). Also in 2011, they received a Best Practices Award from the Council on Mentally Ill Offenders (COMIO).

Under Dr. Simon's leadership Project 180 created a central office in downtown LA close to the various criminal justice offices they work with that is welcoming to all. The waiting areas are adorned with donated artwork from famed local artists specializing in 'street art' style and the professional offices are warm and welcoming reflecting the warmth and dedication of staff. At this time there are also 3 additional locations including sites in Hollywood, Acton and Palmdale.

Dr. Simon can continue to be contacted at vsimon@project180la.com.

CONGRATULATIONS TO EMILY BELL!
NEW DIVISION DIRECTOR FOR PROJECT 180

Emily Bell

Project 180 is an SSG Division that specializes in forensic mental health. Forensic mental health is one of the fastest growing areas of specializing in mental health and criminal justice. Project 180 is well known for their critically acclaimed programs and services that reduce recidivism and enhance successful re-entry. See accompanying article on Dr. Victoria Simon exiting Director of Project 180.

SSG is proud to announce the appointment of EMILY BELL, LCSW as the new Director of Project 180 beginning formally January 1, 2014. She had been in training under Dr. Victoria Simon for several months in preparation for her new role.

Emily holds a Master's Degree in Social Work and a Master's Degree in International Affairs from Columbia University in New York City. Emily has been with Project 180 since 2010, and helped develop and launch the AB 109 treatment program. Most recently she was overseeing one of Project 180's off-site programs, located at the Antelope Valley Rehabilitation Center campus, in addition to providing clinical services to Project 180 clients. Committed to social justice issues, she has worked in both the non-profit and public sectors internationally and domestically in the areas of mental health, community development, and education.

Emily may be contacted at ebell@project180la.com.

THE PAINTED BRAIN

Tristan's Head
on Bark

The Painted Brain's Speaker's Bureau continues to grow; recently we were invited to speak to graduate students in USC's Dept. of Occupational Therapy, where four of our participants shared their personal stories about living with mental illness. Tristan, one of the Speaker's Bureau participants, stated that he felt empowered being a part of the speaker's panel and felt that the students were receptive to the stories and information that was shared; he could

feel the difference and change in attitude based on some of the questions students were asking. One of the students explicitly stated that listening to the panel changed her mind about some of her preconceived notions related to mental illness. Tristan appreciated that the professor thanked each panel speaker personally for sharing their story.

ASIAN PACIFIC COUNSELING AND TREATMENT CENTERS & ASIAN PACIFIC POLICY AND PLANNING COUNCIL

SPEAKERS BUREAU COLLABORATION

SSG/APCTC and A3PCON are currently collaborating on the *Asian Pacific Islander Speakers Bureau* through funding from the Mental Health Services Act of California and the California Mental Health Services Authority. The Speakers Bureau is a voluntary group of consumers, families and friends who are trained to speak about recovery experiences with a focus on mental health stigma and discrimination in Asian and Pacific Islander (API) communities. The Speakers Bureau, which has been running since last September and will be active through June, has already engaged with audiences at area community-based agencies and conferences, and has speaking engagements scheduled with area universities including the University of California, Los Angeles MSW program and the California State University, Northridge MSW program. If you would like to schedule a speaking engagement with the Speakers Bureau, contact **AI Choi** at (213) 483-3000 Ext. 250, achoi@apctc.org, **Elvie Quintos**, (213) 483-3000 Ext. 300, equintos@apctc.org, or **Mark Masaoka**, (213) 239-0300, mmasaoka@a3pcon.org.

PARENTS NEIGHBORHOOD YOUTH PROJECT (PNYP)



PNYP staff and students are thankful to **Parker Lyons**, Senior Consultant at The Centennial Group and his father **Gene Lyons** (retired) for their generous \$750 donation to PNYP! As one of SSG's long-standing grassroots program, PNYP provides much

needed after-school homework tutoring and activities to children of Norwood St. Elementary School. This donation will go a long way to provide program supplies and help support program activities. As a special thank you, students and staff put together a quilt where each student had the opportunity to give a personal message of appreciation to the Lyons Family. **THANK YOU Lyons Family!**



HOMELESS OUTREACH PROGRAM INTEGRATED CARE SYSTEM

United Way Homewalk 2013



On Saturday November 23, 2013 the HOPICS division, hosted by Homeless Women and Children Program (HWCP), participated in the United Way's 2013 HomeWalk. HomeWalk is a 5k walk/run, with a mission to create a pathway out of homelessness for all Angelenos. The event was held at Exposition Park and garnered a record breaking 12,000 participants.

To bolster participation amongst clients, staff, and family alike, "TeamHOPICS" had a competition to see which department could garner the most participation and cross the finish line! With two titles up for grabs, "TeamHOPICS" clients, staff, relatives, fraternities, and sororities stepped up and accepted that challenge. We are pleased to say that the "TeamHOPICS" family had over 100 participants in this year's HomeWalk. A special shout out goes to the "TeamHOPICS" winning departments HWCP (for winning the title for most representation) and Adult Outpatient Program (AOP) (for being the team that crossed the finish line first!).

We'd like to add you to our team next year!



SSG PARTICIPATES IN THE 22ND ANNUAL EMPOWERMENT CONGRESS SUMMIT

The Empowerment Congress was formed in 1992 to provide a platform for young activists, community leaders and elected officials to promote participatory democracy in South Los Angeles. The Empowerment Congress 1-day Summit traditionally convenes on the weekend of the Martin Luther King, Jr. holiday. The 2014 Summit was particularly meaningful as it was held only weeks after the passing of another legendary figure, Nelson Mandela. This year's Summit was held on January 18, 2014 at USC. SSG was well represented at the Summit including attendance by **Executive Director Herbert Hatanaka**. **Brian Hui** (SSG/Sustainable Urban Revitalization) is the Co-Chair of the Empowerment Congress Executive Committee and **Scott Chan** (SSG/API Obesity Prevention Alliance) is part of the Leadership Council, **Alisi Tuluva** of APIOPA was also in attendance..

SSG NEWS & HIGHLIGHTS

KIZUNA
(SSG AFFILIATE ORGANIZATION)

Kizuna's Summer Youth & College Programs for the Japanese American Community

Special announcement to our SSG family.

Applications for our summer programs are now available online. Kizuna's mission is to educate, empower and engage the next generation of leaders for the Japanese American community. Read below for summer program information.



Elementary & Middle School Day Camp Program: The Nikkei Discovery Camp is for students ages 7 to 12. This camp allows children to learn about Japanese American culture while building a strong sense of identity and who they are

as people. Each session has different fun-filled activities, workshops, and field trips designed to help students discover for themselves the rich history and colorful heritage of the Japanese American community. There will be two separate week long sessions in July and August in both the South Bay and in Orange County.

High School Leadership Development Program: The Youth CAN program offers students a unique opportunity to discover their passion for being involved in the Japanese American community, as well as develop skills and experience in leadership and community organizing. Over the course



of the 10 weekly sessions, students engage in interactive workshops discovering personal identity, exploring important community issues and addressing critical needs in the Japanese American community through community service projects. All sessions are located at the Japanese American Cultural and Community Center (JACCC) in Little Tokyo, Los Angeles.



College Internships & Counselor Positions: Two programs are offered for college students, the Nikkei Community Internship and Campus to Community. The Nikkei Community Internship provides students with the opportunity to gain leadership

skills, cultural and professional knowledge, and network with leaders in the Japanese American community. Campus to Community places students in various counselor positions for youth programs.

BENEFITS ASSISTANCE CLIENTS' URBAN PROJECT/ LIFE CENTER Plant Project Fundraiser



On December 17, 2013, BACUP held their 1st annual plant fundraiser. All plants were nurtured and decorated by BACUP's staff and clients from the Flourishing Plant Project. The Plant

Project provides individuals the opportunity to care for plants as a way to promote healing, wellness, and mental health recovery. Funds raised will go towards supporting activities at the Wellness Center such as the Reading and Writing classes, Art program, and Computer lab. Thank you to everyone who adopted plants, the community nurseries, and Big Man Bakes Bakery for their support and generous donations. Our success is due to all of you and we thank you from the bottom of our hearts!

OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY TRAINING PROGRAM - LOS ANGELES

OTTP Welcomes South Bay Family Health Care!

On January 22, 2014 South Bay Family Health Care officially co-located at OTTP in Torrance.



SBFHC provides medical services at OTTP on Monday and Wednesday from 9:00 am - 5:00 pm. The on-site pediatrician serves both OTTP clients and members of the South Bay community between the ages of 0-25 years old. If you would like to refer your client to South Bay Family Health Care at the OTTP-Torrance location, please call Maryra Membreno at (310)323-9887 ext. 247.



Natalie Sartin

Congratulations to **Natalie Sartin, MA, Doctoral Candidate**, OTTP LA. She was a presenter at the The National Association of African American Studies Conference, which was held February 10-15 in Baton Rouge, LA. Her presentation was titled: *Lifting As We Climb: The Relevance of the Critical Methods and Approaches of the Late Nineteenth Century Black Women Activist to Educators Today.*

EMPLOYEE RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES UNDER THE FAMILY AND MEDICAL LEAVE ACT

Basic Leave Entitlement

FMLA requires covered employers to provide up to 12 weeks of unpaid, job-protected leave to eligible employees for the following reasons:

- For incapacity due to pregnancy, prenatal medical care or child birth;
- To care for the employee's child after birth, or placement for adoption or foster care;
- To care for the employee's spouse, son or daughter, or parent, who has a serious health condition; or
- For a serious health condition that makes the employee unable to perform the employee's job.

Military Family Leave Entitlements

Eligible employees with a spouse, son, daughter, or parent on active duty or call to active duty status in the National Guard or Reserves in support of a contingency operation may use their 12-week leave entitlement to address certain qualifying exigencies. Qualifying exigencies may include attending certain military events, arranging for alternative childcare, addressing certain financial and legal arrangements, attending certain counseling sessions, and attending post-deployment reintegration briefings.

FMLA also includes a special leave entitlement that permits eligible employees to take up to 26 weeks of leave to care for a covered servicemember during a single 12-month period. A covered servicemember is a current member of the Armed Forces, including a member of the National Guard or Reserves, who has a serious injury or illness incurred in the line of duty on active duty that may render the servicemember medically unfit to perform his or her duties for which the servicemember is undergoing medical treatment, recuperation, or therapy; or is in outpatient status; or is on the temporary disability retired list.

Benefits and Protections

During FMLA leave, the employer must maintain the employee's health coverage under any "group health plan" on the same terms as if the employee had continued to work. Upon return from FMLA leave, most employees must be restored to their original or equivalent positions with equivalent pay, benefits, and other employment terms.

Use of FMLA leave cannot result in the loss of any employment benefit that accrued prior to the start of an employee's leave.

Eligibility Requirements

Employees are eligible if they have worked for a covered employer for at least one year, for 1,250 hours over the previous 12 months, and if at least 50 employees are employed by the employer within 75 miles.

Definition of Serious Health Condition

A serious health condition is an illness, injury, impairment, or physical or mental condition that involves either an overnight stay in a medical care facility, or continuing treatment by a health care provider for a condition that either prevents the employee from performing the functions of the employee's job, or prevents the qualified family member from participating in school or other daily activities.

Subject to certain conditions, the continuing treatment requirement may be met by a period of incapacity of more than 3 consecutive calendar days combined with at least two visits to a health care provider or one visit and a regimen of continuing treatment, or incapacity due to pregnancy, or incapacity due to a chronic condition. Other conditions may meet the definition of continuing treatment.

Use of Leave

An employee does not need to use this leave entitlement in one block. Leave can be taken intermittently or on a reduced leave schedule when medically necessary. Employees must make reasonable efforts to schedule leave for planned medical treatment so as not to unduly disrupt the employer's operations. Leave due to qualifying exigencies may also be taken on an intermittent basis.

Substitution of Paid Leave for Unpaid Leave

Employees may choose or employers may require use of accrued paid leave while taking FMLA leave. In order to use paid leave for FMLA leave, employees must comply with the employer's normal paid leave policies.

Employee Responsibilities

Employees must provide 30 days advance notice of the need to take FMLA leave when the need is foreseeable. When 30 days notice is not possible, the employee must provide notice as soon as practicable and generally must comply with an employer's normal call-in procedures.

Employees must provide sufficient information for the employer to determine if the leave may qualify for FMLA protection and the anticipated timing and duration of the leave. Sufficient information may include that the employee is unable to perform job functions, the family member is unable to perform daily activities, the need for hospitalization or continuing treatment by a health care provider, or circumstances supporting the need for military family leave. Employees also must inform the employer if the requested leave is for a reason for which FMLA leave was previously taken or certified. Employees also may be required to provide a certification and periodic recertification supporting the need for leave.

Employer Responsibilities

Covered employers must inform employees requesting leave whether they are eligible under FMLA. If they are, the notice must specify any additional information required as well as the employees' rights and responsibilities. If they are not eligible, the employer must provide a reason for the ineligibility.

Covered employers must inform employees if leave will be designated as FMLA-protected and the amount of leave counted against the employee's leave entitlement. If the employer determines that the leave is not FMLA-protected, the employer must notify the employee.

Unlawful Acts by Employers

FMLA makes it unlawful for any employer to:

- Interfere with, restrain, or deny the exercise of any right provided under FMLA;
- Discharge or discriminate against any person for opposing any practice made unlawful by FMLA or for involvement in any proceeding under or relating to FMLA.

Enforcement

An employee may file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Labor or may bring a private lawsuit against an employer.

FMLA does not affect any Federal or State law prohibiting discrimination, or supersede any State or local law or collective bargaining agreement which provides greater family or medical leave rights.

FMLA section 109 (29 U.S.C. § 2619) requires FMLA covered employers to post the text of this notice. Regulations 29 C.F.R. § 825.300(a) may require additional disclosures.



For additional information:
1-866-4US-WAGE (1-866-487-9243) TTY: 1-877-889-5627
WWW.WAGEHOUR.DOL.GOV



HEALTH, WELLNESS & YOU

*Live Well, Work Well***Women and Heart Health Awareness**

Despite increases in awareness over the past decade, only 56 percent of women recognize that heart disease is their No. 1 killer.

Heart disease symptoms in women

While some women have no symptoms of heart disease, others get dull, heavy to sharp chest pain or discomfort, pain in the neck/jaw/throat, or pain in the upper abdomen or back. These symptoms may occur during rest or physical activity, or be triggered by mental stress.

Women are more likely to describe chest pain that is sharp and burning and more often have pain in the neck, jaw, throat, abdomen, or back.

Sometimes heart disease may be silent and not diagnosed until a woman has signs or symptoms of a heart attack, heart failure, an arrhythmia (abnormal heart rhythm), or stroke.

Know your risk for heart disease and heart attack

- Diabetes, high cholesterol, and high blood pressure are risk factors for heart disease.
- Smoking, poor diet, obesity, excess alcohol, and being physically inactive are also risk factors for heart disease.
- Heredity can also be a risk factor because heart disease can run in families.

Take steps to learn more

- Know your risk factors, make healthy choices, and lower your chances for having a heart attack or stroke.
- See your health care provider for a checkup, especially if you have any risk factors or symptoms.
- Talk to your health care provider and ask questions to better understand your health.
- Know your family history. There may be factors that could increase your risk for heart disease and stroke.

Make healthy choices every day

You can lower your risk of heart disease and heart attack by taking simple steps every day.

- Eat a healthy diet.
- Maintain a healthy weight.
- Be active. Exercise regularly.
- Be tobacco-free. Get help if needed. Call 1-800-QUIT-NOW (1-800-784-8669).
- Limit alcohol use.
- Manage any medical condition you might have. Learn the ABCS of health. Keep them in mind every day and especially when you talk to your health provider:
 - Appropriate aspirin therapy for those who need it
 - Blood pressure control
 - Cholesterol management
 - Smoking cessation

See full article at: <http://www.cdc.gov/Features/WearRed/>

Special Achievements & Congratulations

Congratulations to Dr. Brett Sevilla, Medical Director of APCTC on making his personal best record of 3:21 at the St. George Marathon in Utah. It takes a great amount of skill, discipline, and determination to run a complete marathon.

Dr. Sevilla is now qualified to participate in the 2015 Boston Marathon a highly coveted honor among runners. Great job!

Flu Season Still Going Strong - Be Smart, Stay Healthy and Get Your Flu Shot



As reported by the LA Times on 1/27/14 the effects of the flu on the Southland appear to be worsening each day, with nearly 100 confirmed influenza-related deaths thus far, and dozens more expected by the end of the week. In comparison there were 9 flu deaths at

this same time last year. Major hospitals including Cedars Sinai Medical Center are handing out surgical masks to all visitors as part of its flu-prevention protocol.

According to Dr. Murthy, Cedars Sinai alone has seen 30 to 35 cases of the flu per week since December. Many of the patients being hospitalized are, surprisingly, reported to be young and middle-aged adults.

While doctors suggest that routine hygienic habits, such as washing your hands and using sanitizer are recommended steps to take in flu prevention, the best step you can take is a vaccination.

Dr. Murthy says it is still not too late to get your shot.

"It takes about two weeks for the immunity to build, and it looks like the flu is going to be around for a while."



Checking Your Vehicle to Insure Safety

According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), low tire pressure-related crashes are to blame for 660 fatalities and 33,000 injuries every year. NHTSA estimates that about one in four cars and one in three light trucks has at least one significantly under inflated tire. Further, about one out every five accidents is caused by faulty vehicle maintenance or vehicle defects.

According to the National Fire Protection Agency, an estimated 266,000 car fires take place each year and over 500 people die during car fires.

While most vehicle collisions are preventable, they continue for a number of reasons. Driver error due to distraction, impairment, frustration or aggression continues to top the list of causes for most crashes; however, roughly one in ten crashes are caused by equipment that was not operating properly.

The simple truth is that motor vehicles have fluids that need to be replaced and parts that wear out. If you own a motor vehicle, you have a duty to make sure that it in safe working order every time you take it on the road.

If you leave on a trip without checking that the vehicle is safe to operate, you may suffer wasted time due to a mechanical breakdown, or worse, an injury from a collision due to mechanical failure while driving.

Inspections often reveal issues that affect fuel consumption, brake wear and tire condition. Tires that are properly inflated (consistently), rotated and aligned extend their service life and reduce fuel consumption. Braking systems that are adjusted, cleaned and repaired before critical failures save time and money.

Most inspection checklists include the following items:

- Seat belts
- Head rests
- Tire tread / pressure - including spare tire
- Tire rotation / balancing
- Oil change / transmission fluid / tune-ups
- Brake adjustment / pads / fluid
- Windshield wipers / cleaner
- Cracked or chipped windshield
- Radiator fluid
- Battery charge /fluid level
- Lights exterior / interior
- Emergency equipment is ready for use

Words of Wisdom

"Twenty years from now you will be more disappointed by the things that you didn't do than by the ones you did do. So throw off the bowlines. Sail away from the safe harbor. Catch the trade winds in your sails. Explore. Dream. Discover."

- Mark Twain

Special Recognition



Jane Rosser, RDA, is the Director of the Children's Dental and Outreach Program. Jane has devoted over 33 years of service to the community. In 1981, the CDOP became an SSG project and Jane was the first employee hired; she had already been an active volunteer and dental assistant at the Clinic for several years. Jane's, commitment, love and caring for children is apparent in all aspects of the program.



Leo Pandac, Ph.D., is the Director of the Pacific Asian Alcohol and Drug Program. Leo started a PAADP as an Peer and Outreach Counselor and when the founding Director retired in 1994, he became the Director. Leo is committed to serving the community, families and individuals impacted by drugs, alcohol, addiction and dependence.



Colleen Devine, MA, OTR/L, is the Director of the Occupational Therapy Treatment Program-San Francisco. Prior to relocating to northern California, Colleen was the Director of OTTP-LA . Committed to continuing the work of providing services to high-risk youth, she successfully acquired funding to open the SF program in 1999, a program that continues to thrive under her direction.

Starting this year we will acknowledge in our *Special Recognition* section staff who have reached milestones of 20, 25, 30, etc. years of service. As you can see we will also be highlighting those who are in between milestones, and not previously recognized.