Mental Health Program for DACA Recipients

SSG recently joined nine other mental health service providers from the Asian Pacific Policy & Planning Council (A3PCON) consortium to provide free counseling, case management, and other mental health services through the Deferred Actions for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) Mental Health Project. Approximately 800,000 young unauthorized immigrants have received work permits and protection from deportation through DACA. A total of 223,000 (28%) are DACA recipients in California. After the White House announced that it was ending the DACA program, a group of Asian-American and Pacific Islander-serving organizations announced the creation of a mental health program for DACA recipients and their families.

Services will be provided in 12 languages: Bangla, Cantonese, Hindi, Japanese, Khmer, Korean, Mandarin, Tagalog, Thai, Urdu, Vietnamese, and English. Connie Chung Joe, co-chair of A3PCON, said it was important for the groups to say they would continue to provide services during a time of uncertainty that has seen some clients shy away from seeking help. Joe said A3PCON’s DACA Mental Health Project is also designed to provide more flexible services and help those who might not have a diagnosed medical health condition but want to speak to a professional due to stress and anxiety. Herb Hatanaka, said “uncertainty can increase the levels of stress, anxiety and depression. We will remain vigilant to protect vulnerable populations and seek innovative ways to maximize all opportunities to support the communities we serve.”

This initiative was recently featured in an NBC News article that can be viewed here: https://www.nbcnews.com/news/asian-america/asian-american-groups-start-mental-health-program-daca-recipientsn809441?mc_cid=551c7002a7&mc_eid=1ac4f34a58

Please also visit http://www.asianpacificpolicyandplanningcouncil.org/a3pcon-daca-mental-health-project/?mc_cid=52c311371d&mc_eid=3587d07136 for more info about participating service partners.
On Oct. 5, the SSG Board of Directors held their monthly board meeting at the HOPICS/Crocker homeless housing service site (located at 5849 Crocker St., Unit X). There was a presentation by HOPICS Director Veronica Lewis regarding HOPICS’ $14M homeless expansion initiative targeting South Los Angeles. It is noted that $10M comes from the historic passage of Measure H. SSG/HOPICS is a long-time contractor with the LA Homeless Services Authority (LAHSA), a joint powers authority formed between the LA County Board of Supervisors and the LA City Mayor and City Council.

The SSG Board meeting also included reports from each member of the HOPICS management team including John Helyar, Marion Sanders, Cristina Nieto, Chauntee Coleman and Jennifer Young. Board members also received a tour of the impressive new facility that specializes in providing housing placement with accompanying services to truly address all needs of homeless individuals and families.

On October 11th, Supervisor Mark Ridley Thomas of the 2nd District hosted a press conference at SSG HOPICS-Broadway to celebrate “Measure H at Work”, highlighting 4 multi-disciplinary street engagement teams from HOPICS working to expand community outreach. Leaders from the Department of Health Services (DHS), Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority (LAHSA), Department of Mental Health (DMH), Corporation for Supportive Housing (CSH), and Southern California Health and Rehabilitation Program (SCHARP) were present to acknowledge the growth of services in SPA 6. HOPICS has divided SPA 6 into unique communities to establish priorities for outreach teams, and be able to measure the impact of their work over time. HOPICS Division Director Veronica Lewis stated “these teams allow service providers like HOPICS to be flexible and creative to do whatever it takes to meet the long term and unique needs of men and women experience complex periods of homelessness”. A participant of HOPICS also spoke about their journey to end homelessness, reminding us all of how these services will impact the lives of those who are homeless throughout the area.
API Forward Movement recently celebrated our 2nd annual Farm to Chopsticks event on August 10th. We brought together 150 APIFM staff, supporters, and socially-conscious Angelenos who are inspired by culinary innovation and local produce. This night was about reconnecting with our roots and eating how our ancestors ate. This year’s FTC featured local Chef Minh Phan of Porridge and Puffs and she ROCKED it. We are deeply appreciative of Chef Minh sharing her time, experience, and delicious food with us this year. We also recognized three AMAZING people who help make our work possible: Community Supporter Awardee Carol Lee, Community Partner Awardee Jessica Wang, and Community Leader Awardee Kevin Liao. Attendees also enjoyed delicious beer tastings from our premier beer sponsor Brewjeria. It was a wonderful night of food, celebration and fundraising with our most loyal supporters!

Through a combination of ticket sales, sponsorships and donations, we raised a total of $15,970.00 this year! What does this mean? It means we have more funds to do healthy cooking workshops, continue subsidized pop-up markets for low-income communities, build community gardens, and support the local food movement in L.A. and beyond!

Cheers to another successful Farm to Chopsticks!
AP Recovery
Staff Training

Mark Ragins, MD is a leading psychiatrist in the recovery movement in mental health care. He is a founding member of the Village ISA, where his work with people with severe mental illness led him to become one of the leading voices in recovery-based treatment theory. He is the author of numerous writings on recovery-based mental health care and reforming mental health systems to provide recovery-based care. He is a highly recognized lecturer and consultant. Dr. Ragins recently met with the team at AP Recovery to provide a unique training opportunity to explore recovery and expanding program services.

OTTP-SF
Staff Retreat

OTTP-SF conducted their annual retreat on Thursday, October 5th at the EcoCenter at Heron’s Head Park in Potrero Hill, San Francisco. The EcoCenter is an environmental education center sponsored by youth empowerment organization Literacy for Environmental Justice. The EcoCenter uses sustainable on-site power, water and wastewater systems and is operated by the Bay Area Aquarium Foundation. Prior to the retreat, EcoCenter staff gave a tour of the facility and shared ways that youth can get involved through on-site educational activities and internships.

OTTP-SF staff engaged in a stimulating morning of teamwork activities, brainstorming, and strategic planning. The team also participated in soothing activities that included a therapeutic yoga session led by our own Yoga Instructor Alicia Maness, MS, OTR/L. After a hearty lunch, Gina Castro Rodrigues, Chief of Victim Services and Parallel Justice Programs at the Office of District Attorney George Gaston, presented to our team. She shared her expertise on vicarious trauma and ways which we, as mental health professionals, can best take care of ourselves to enhance well-being and prevent burn-out, especially in this current political culture.

OTTP-SF left the retreat energized and refreshed!
How To Make Pumpkin Spice Lattes (Even Better than Starbucks!)

Trader Joe’s Ingredients:
- 2 tablespoons pumpkin purée
- 1/2 teaspoon pumpkin pie spice, plus more to garnish
- Freshly ground black pepper
- 2 tablespoons granulated sugar
- 2 tablespoons vanilla extract
- 2 cups whole milk
- 1 to 2 shots espresso (about 1/4 cup), or 1/3 to 1/2 cup strong coffee
- 1/4 cup heavy cream, whipped into firm peaks

Equipment:
- Mixer, whisk, or hand blender, to whip cream
- Saucepan
- Wooden spoon
- Whisk
- Blender
- Espresso maker or coffee maker

Instructions:
- Heat the pumpkin and spices. Heat the pumpkin, pumpkin pie spice, and a generous helping of black pepper in a small saucepan over medium heat, stirring constantly, until it’s hot and smells cooked, about 2 minutes. Stir in the sugar until the mixture looks thick & bubbly.
- Warm and whisk the milk & vanilla, watching carefully to make sure it doesn’t boil over.
- Blend the milk & process the mixture with a hand blender or traditional blender (hold lid down tightly w/ a thick set of towels!) until frothy.
- Mix the drinks. Make the espresso or coffee and divide between 2 mugs. Add the frothed milk and pumpkin mixture. Top with the whipped cream and a sprinkle of pumpkin pie spice or cinnamon if desired. Now it’s time for the taste test. Delish!

“My therapist gave me a list of support groups and places to go for recovery and I chose BACUP Art Corner because I have always loved art. I first arrived about 5 years ago and met Juan Burgueno, the art instructor, and he is the most enthusiastic, friendliest person ever. He gave me a tour of the place, and I was met with a lot of great people I can relate to with mental illness. There’s always good music playing, snacks, it’s always filled with positivity. I kept going because the environment is so relaxing that it’s unreal. I always felt welcomed and accepted and all of this helped tremendously with my recovery knowing there was this awesome place to go to.

All of the paintings here are done mainly with acrylic paint. The gold painting has glitter and sequins glued to it and the one next to it is a set. I got the idea from a tile mosaic I saw on the walk home from work which I thought was beautiful. I like to take pictures wherever I go of things that are interesting that I can later incorporate into my art. The tree painting is painted on the frame as well to create a 3D effect. It represents the light at the end of the road to recovery. The colorful patches are a relief painting of a desert terrain made with crumpled paper, dried twigs, rocks, and sand. It is spiritual in that I believe that God created nature and I think it is a work of art. The silver painting idea I got from a metal wall sculpture in a coffee house. I really like abstract art because I feel that it is more free in expression.

I went from being in a really bad place, suffering from schizoaffective disorder depression type, to become an actual artist and part of the community, and BACUP Art Corner was a huge stepping stone. I am truly grateful to all the wonderful people that make it a reality.”

-Interview with Grace Kim, BACUP Art Corner featured artist

Connecting the Dots
SSG NEWS & HIGHLIGHTS

BACUP

BACUP Art Corner

Art Photography by Juan Burgueno
WEBER

Staff Retreat

On September 18, 2017 Weber had their bowling staff retreat. There were team building activities and lots of friendly competition happening on this day of fun, appreciation and reflection.
On November 7, 2017, APCTC Wilshire Center clients, family members and staff participated in the annual NAMI Walk to raise awareness about mental health.

The Never Stop Rock Band was born in November 2008 with current consumers of Asian Pacific Counseling & Treatment Centers. The members were united to battle mental illness for themselves and others, providing hope and inspirations through their music. The band has performed in many local and national conferences and the members’ passion grew to reach out to more people in recovery. On October 20th, 2017, the band performed at one of our collaborative community partners at Central Adult Day Health Care Center (ADHC), sharing our recovery stories and music to fight shame and stigma in mental health. About 80 audience members cheered and supported our philosophy of “Never stop learning, loving, working and living.” The 45-minute session was extended to 90-minute none-stop singing and dancing with the audience. The band will continue to jam and inspire everyone who hears us!

It’s that time again to prepare for the rigorous accreditation survey process via the Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities (CARF). We are ready to assemble the SSG 2018 CARF Committee. The kickoff meeting will be on November 14, 2017 from 9:30 am to 11:00 am at the SSG core office. In 2015, SSG and its 9 behavioral health divisions and 17 service sites received a 3-year Accreditation – the highest level of success. Our success was only possible through the hard work and dedication of the directors and staff. Our staff’s effort and dedication did not go unnoticed by the CARF surveyors. In the 2015 report, they wrote:

“SSG has caring, dedicated, and enthusiastic staff members who represent the diversity of the community served. Staff demonstrates obvious pride in both it’s program and the progress of the persons served and embodies the values of the organization. There is a keen sense of commitment and creative approach to providing services, and the persons served feel this passion and respond positively.”

We’re proud to have since built upon our accreditation through 2017. With everyone’s continued participation, we are confident that we will have a successful re-accreditation in 2018. For questions about CARF renewal, please contact Peter Wong at pwong@ssg.org.
Safety in the Field

PHONE SAFETY

#1
Carry your cell phone at all times with a fully charged battery

#2
Program your cell phone's speed dial with emergency numbers

#3
Calling 9-1-1 on your cell phone; know the address or cross streets

#4
If there is a crime or suspicious situation, don't use your cell phone where you can be seen

#5
Only make calls when it is safe to do so