

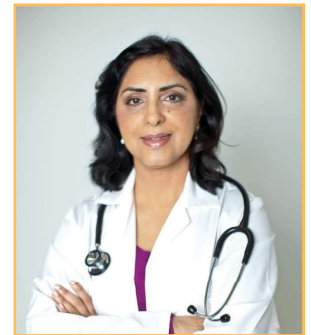
SSG NEWS & HIGHLIGHTS

LET'S GET VACCINATED



A Message from Herb Hatanaka and Dr. Parveen Kaur

To our SSG team members, thank you for everything you do to keep clients and your coworkers safe and healthy. Getting a COVID-19 vaccine is an important step to prevent getting sick with COVID-19 disease. We care deeply about your health; many of you are on the front lines and risk being exposed to COVID-19 each day on the job. As an essential healthcare and social service agency, we are fortunate to have the ability to book and receive COVID-19 vaccination shots.



Getting vaccinated now will help protect everyone around you who may be at risk for severe illness from COVID-19. This is also an opportunity for you to serve as a role model in our community. By stepping forward, you can positively influence vaccination decisions of coworkers, residents, friends, and family.

SSG is committed to the health of our team members and all of the community members we serve daily. We are pro-actively developing working linkages with Public Health Departments, testing centers, health facilities and more to provide you with the resources you deserve.

To offer convenient access to the vaccine, we have allowed staff to utilize work-time for vaccination shots as well as up to 8 hours of paid recovery time as needed. We will continue to provide updated educational materials to staff as well as weekly raffles for those who have completed their vaccination shots.

Stay strong everyone. Let's work together to reach that brighter future we all yearn for.

Herbert Hatanaka, DSW
Executive Director, SSG

Dr. Parveen Kaur
SSG COVID-19 Medical Director



SSG NEWS & HIGHLIGHTS

SSG

Each year various SSG Divisions accept student interns from various schools, colleges and universities. These students come from various disciplines including mental health, public health, occupational therapy and more. SSG Divisions gladly accept, train and utilize student interns for client services. These interns provide a valuable resource and are highly valued and appreciated. The following are the interns FY 2020-21. Much thanks to all!

OTTP-LA

Michelle Chavez, U. St. Augustine
Michelle De La Cruz, Santa Ana College
Kady Dunn, CSUDH
Jacqueline Leeder, CSUDH
Patrice Marshall, West Coast U.
Erin Schillaci, San Jose State
Scott Zimmerman, Santa Ana College



Development Team

Joseph Burton, UCLA



APCTC

Vincent Garcia, Mt. St. Mary's U.
Heidi Kim, USC
Minyu Liao, USC
Deanna Lin, UCLA
Kaidi Liu, USC
Anna Tri, UCLA
Tiffany Wang, UCLA
Jessica Weisbach, Pepperdine U.

SILVER

Diana Ake, CSULB
Jessica Bendit, UCLA
Haoran Li, UCLA
Zige Ren, UCLA
Amber Turner, CSULB
Meagan Willis, CSULA



APIFM

Jacqueline Cao, Occidental College
Eloise Chan, U of Rochester
Julie Chung, Harvard U.
Zheng Dong, UCLA
Matthew Lioe, Brown U.
David Phung, UC Riverside
Christina Ta, UCLA
Nathan Tam, Occidental College
Bryce Tan, CSULA
Angus Tsui, UCLA
Curtis Wong, UCLA



APAIT

Hector Villa Nieves, CSUF
Jordann Stewart, Simmons U.
Patricia Sticks, CSUF
Derek Tran, UCI

OTTP-SF

Stephanie Geneza, San Jose State
Holli Henderson, UCSF
Giovanna Lopez, Samuel Merritt U.
Raquel Medina, San Jose State
Lena Ringstrom, CSUEB
Donna Tubig, Dominican University



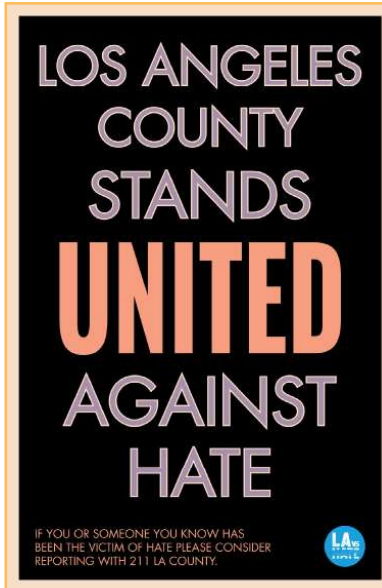
Riverside Counseling Ctr

Miriam Galindo, San Jose State
Zenyu Zhang, Cal Baptist U.

SSG NEWS & HIGHLIGHTS

SSG

LA vs HATE Initiative



Special Service for Groups, Inc. Joins the Fight Against Hate through LA vs. Hate. In response to the widespread increase of hate violence in Los Angeles, the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors established the LA vs. Hate program. Four entities, including the LA County Commission on Human Relations, 211 LA, Taskforce P.R., and SSG, were tasked with coordinating the program.

Rick Eng joined SSG last June of 2020 as program manager for the LA vs. Hate program. His responsibilities include managing the Rapid Response Provider Network of a dozen service agencies and community organizations that offer programs and services assisting and supporting victims of hate. Mr. Eng has extensive non-profit management experience in civil rights, public advocacy, and community history & education organizations.

The Rapid Response Provider Network partners include the Antelope Valley Partners for Health; Asian Pacific Planning and Policy Council (A3PCON); Coalition for Humane Immigrant Rights of LA; Hate Violence Prevention Partnership of LA, which is led by Bienestar Health Services and includes Brotherhood Crusade, California Conference for Equality and Justice, and Muslim Public Affairs Council; Not in Our Town/The Working Group; San Fernando Valley Community Mental Health Center; and Western Justice Center.

LA vs. Hate has a community-centered approach to combating hate. It has an artist-driven campaign to support all residents of Los Angeles County. Themes of unity, tolerance, and understanding have been visualized through various forms of artistic expressions, including downloadable animated GIFs with anti-hate messages, illustrated fingernails, custom jewelry, posters including an exhibit of student artwork on confronting hate, environmentally-friendly wall murals including a “Yarn Bomb” created by a renown fiber artist. The LA County Board of Supervisors recently renewed the funding for the LA vs. Hate program for the 2021-22 fiscal year.

If you as an SSG employee need more information about witnessing or experiencing a hate incident, you can contact Rick Eng at reng@ssg.org.



Pictured clockwise from top left: Fredrick Sykes, LA County Human Relations Commission | Robin Toma, LA County Human Relations Commission LA County | Supervisor Holly J. Mitchell | Bishop Noriaki Ito, Higashi Honganji Buddhist Temple



LA vs Hate wall mural display at the Los Angeles County Library System located in the City of Carson.

SSG NEWS & HIGHLIGHTS

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SSG Leadership Shines LA County's Alternatives to Incarceration



SSG continues to be actively involved in the LA County Board of Supervisors directive to transform the justice system in Los Angeles by developing the community based system of mental health care as the alternative to incarceration (ATI).

On February 12, 2019, the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors (Board) passed a motion which brought together community advocates, service

providers, community members and staff from multiple County departments to develop a roadmap for diverting people from jail into care. The resulting Alternatives to Incarceration (ATI) Work Group, chaired by Dr. Robert K. Ross, released the Final Report 'Care First, Jails Last' at https://ceo.lacounty.gov/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/1077045_AlternativestoIncarcerationWorkGroupFinalReport.pdf (lacounty.gov) which was adopted by the LA County Board of Supervisors on March 10, 2020 with the creation of the LA County ATI Unit with the first appointed Executive Director Judge Songhai Armstead.

SSG Leaders including Executive Director Herbert Hatanaka, Project 180 Division Director Emily Bell, SSG Administration and Clinical Director Hayley Levy and HOPICS Division Director Veronica Lewis have been actively involved in this process and the current committees that are shaping the implementation plan that will be considered in late March by the Board of Supervisors. SSG is recognized as the largest provider of behavioral health services to the justice involved population in Los Angeles County and thus our expertise in identifying programs, services and funding for the new system is highly regarded. SSG Project 180 will support a pilot test of two major rapid diversion projects that will become the cornerstones of the future ATI system of care. This is quite an honor for SSG to lead this initiative for LA County.

Noteworthy too is HOPICS Division Director Veronica Lewis was appointed by the 4th District County Supervisor Janice Hahn as the Chair for the Measure J Re-Imagine; LA Advisory Committee for a 2-year term. See HOPICS section for more details. For more information on the L.A. County Alternatives to Incarceration Initiative visit <https://ceo.lacounty.gov/ati/>.

Fond Farewell & Best Wishes to Angela Kang, LCSW Former Division Director for AP Recovery



As of 1/22/21 Angela Kang, LCSW stepped down from her position as Division Director of AP Recovery. Angela leaves a strong legacy of dedication, impact and leadership in her almost 22 years with SSG. She was initially hired as a Psychiatric Social Worker for SSG Alliance, under the direction of Dr. Trang Hoang. She was steadily promoted within Alliance eventually becoming Program Director in 2013. Her experience with forensic

services and ACT/FSP programming was critical when selected as the Division Director for SSG AP RECOVERY on 2/1/17. Angela's leadership was essential when Haven House, an all-female 18-bed residential facility was opened under AP Recovery in early 2019.

When asked about her memorable times at SSG, Angela said *"My almost 22 years have seriously felt like a blink of an eye. I have always been so proud of our organization, the work we do and the heart and mission of SSG"*.

Angela is well-known for her commitment, understanding, sense of humor and compassion. Her care for staff and clients are evident to all. Executive Director Herb Hatanaka noted "Angela's heart will always lead the way and her abilities will create success wherever she goes". Angela will remain available as needed for SSG's AP Recovery. Her many contributions will be remembered.

The new AP Recovery Division Director Natalie Fong, LMFT will be profiled in a future edition of Connecting the Dots. She can be reached at natalie@aprt.org.

SSG Holiday Gift Drive

We are excited to announce that both Steve Lee and Gallagher insurance agency generously donated to the holiday gift drive in 2020! Their donations allowed SSG divisions to provide hundreds of gifts to children and families that we serve. This past year in particular these gifts meant so much to these families and sparked so much holiday cheer!



SSG NEWS & HIGHLIGHTS

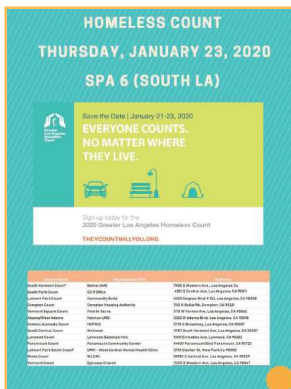
HOPICS

Grand Opening of CD 8 Navigation Center

On January 4th, 2021, SSG/HOPICS celebrated the grand opening of the Council District 8 (CD8) Navigation Center. The Navigation Center offers a safe and dignified place for unhoused individuals in the South Los Angeles region to safely store their belongings, access hygiene services, and receive case management and housing navigation support. The Center is now open Monday through Friday 7:30am to 5pm, and 10am to 2pm on Saturdays. This Center provides storage through 250 individually allocated storage bins, private showers, laundry facilities equipped with washers and dryers, and classroom space to provide job trainings and case management services for unhoused individuals in the community. The Navigation Center will also serve as an access point for the Coordinated Entry System to help ensure individuals can be connected to permanent, stable housing. To watch a video tour of the new center with Director, Veronica Lewis, LA Mayor Garcetti and Councilman Marqueece Harris-Dawson visit <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UoUFK8QD8JI>.



2021 Homeless Count Cancelled



Every year, HOPICS along with other SSG divisions participates in the homeless count, which is an essential effort that funds so many initiatives throughout Los Angeles (LA). Due to COVID-19, the LA County 2021 Homeless Count has been cancelled by the Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority (LAHSA) after receiving permission from the Department of Housing and Urban Development. Thousands of volunteers throughout LA would typically undergo a multi-day effort to count the number of individuals experiencing homelessness in the county. The annual count provides point-in-time data that aims to capture the state of homelessness in the community, including crucial demographical information that illustrates disparities in race, ethnicity, age, and gender among unhoused individuals. The count also collects data pertaining to the various social and economic factors of homelessness; and aims to shed light on the effectiveness of existing strategies to address homelessness. The annual count is required by the federal

Housing and Urban Development agency to set funding allocations for various cities and communities. Many cities across the country that have cancelled the 2021 count due concerns related to the coronavirus will wait to see the outcome of this disruption in the coming year.

SSG NEWS & HIGHLIGHTS

HOPICS

Congratulations Veronica Lewis



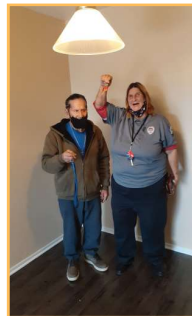
On January 22nd, the HOPICS team hosted a surprise virtual celebration for Veronica Lewis, Division Director in honor of her 10th anniversary as Director. The team presented Ms. Lewis with video messages and gifts and shared their appreciation for her leadership and support, as well

as how brave she has been in the face of so many new challenges over the past year.

Measure J Committee Appointment

Another reason to celebrate - Veronica Lewis, was recently appointed by LA County Supervisor Janice Hahn to the Advisory Committee of LA County's Measure J - Alternatives to Incarceration Initiative. Veronica will serve a two-year term ending on September 30, 2022, with a possibility of extensions. The voters of LA County approved Measure J on November 3, 2020. The measure allocates at least 10% of the County's locally generated, unrestricted funding to address racial injustice through community investments such as youth development, job training, small business development, supportive housing services, and incarceration alternatives. Advisory committee members are meeting regularly on spending recommendations. Congratulations Veronica!

HOPICS Rapid Rehousing Program Success with Holistic Approach to Team Collaboration



HOPICS Rapid Rehousing Program (RRH) began the Street to Home (STH) Project in September 2020. STH is designed to help individuals that reside in SPA 6 encampments quickly exit homelessness by providing permanent



housing and wraparound services. These services help stabilize individuals to support prevention of homelessness in the future and STH was tasked with the goal of permanently housing 90 participants by October 31st, 2020. The team superseded that goal by housing 108 participants before the provided deadline.

Additionally, the RRH team was tasked with the demobilization of Project RoomKey motel sites, which provided motel housing for vulnerable persons experiencing homelessness to decrease the spread of COVID-19. Thus far, the RRH team has permanently housed 51 participants and counting. When asked why the STH and the demobilization of Project RoomKey have been so successful, Program Manager Cassandra Bonney states "the wraparound services are essential." These efforts consist of Rapid Rehousing case managers, outreach team members, the housing department, interim housing team members, employment services, and behavioral health programs. Together the teams have motivated our most vulnerable to address housing barriers and provided a holistic approach to homeless prevention.

-By Ericka Battaglia, MSW | Manager, Community Engagement & Social Impact

Girls in STEM

HOPICS has received many amazing donations over the last year, experiencing so much generosity in times of need. They were recently able to uplift and engage resilient young leaders in STEM. HOPICS is lowering barriers to education thanks to Girls, Inc. LA & Compudopt. HOPICS looks forward to the continued partnership for many girls to come.



HOPICS celebrates First Annual Friendsgiving



In November 2020, HOPICS staff served 2,330 individuals with prepackaged meals and provided 517 households with turkeys in celebration of the holiday. HOPICS decided to bring gratitude to the front door of clients, working through barriers caused by COVID-19. With an abundance of staff volunteerism and donations from our partners, HOPICS was



able to bring a smile to so many with a warm meal.

"This is my first Thanksgiving meal in my new home" clients exclaimed as HOPICS employees knocked at their doors. A new tradition was created indeed, as HOPICS continues expressing gratitude and remains a hand of support to the community.

SSG NEWS & HIGHLIGHTS

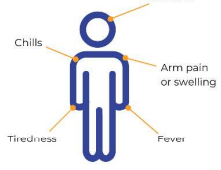
APIFM

Vaccine Educational Material

COVID-19 VACCINE SIDE EFFECTS  

Side effects after receiving the COVID-19 vaccine are normal! They are a sign that your body is building up protection against this virus.

SIDE EFFECTS



WHEN TO CALL THE DOCTOR!

If redness or tenderness where you got the shot increases after 24 hours.

If your side effects are worrying you and do not seem to be going away after a few days.

TO REDUCE PAIN/DISCOMFORT

Where you got the shot:

- Apply a clean, cool, wet washcloth over the area
- Use or exercise your arm

From fever:

- Drink plenty of fluids
- Dress lightly

REMINDERS

You need **2 shots** to be fully protected by the vaccine!



- Even if you have side effects are the first shot, you should get the second shot **UNLESS** otherwise told by the vaccine provider.

You may not be fully protected by the vaccine until a week or two **AFTER** your second shot.

- It takes time for your body to create antibodies and build up immunity.

For more information, visit www.cdc.gov/coronavirus or contact education@apifm.org

In November and December of 2020, APIFM began working with a group of AANHPI organizations to outreach to community members with information about COVID-19 prevention. APIFM had previously been providing community members with educational flyers as well as PPE as part of the Emergency CSA food distribution efforts. The goal of this project was to develop culturally and linguistically relevant education and plain language materials for our diverse communities. The intent was to simplify accurate information so that our community members would not be overwhelmed by all of the information that is available, as well as to provide it in many languages. Vaccine related infographics were also recently developed for the same purpose.

BENEFITS OF GETTING VACCINATED  

There are many benefits to getting vaccinated against COVID-19! Read through to learn more.

COVID-19 PREVENTION

Getting vaccinated will reduce severe symptoms if you get COVID-19.

It is important to continue to wear face coverings, wash your hands and physically distance.

SAFER PROTECTION BUILDING

Contracting COVID-19 also creates an immune response in your body to protect against this virus.

- BUT, this immunity will not last longer than a few months and you remain at risk of severe illness or death with each COVID-19 infection.

The vaccine creates an immune response **WITHOUT** having to experience the sickness!

HELP STOP THE SPREAD

Wearing masks and socially distancing helps reduce the chance of virus exposure or spread.

The vaccine works with the immune system so it's ready to fight the virus if exposed!

For more information, visit www.cdc.gov/coronavirus or contact education@apifm.org

For more information on COVID-19 vaccination, we encourage you to visit <https://www.apifm.org/covid-19/>.

A Victory for Clean Air



The Clean Air SGV Campaign recently scored a victory this past month. Our stakeholder working group pushed forward with passing the Permit Streamlining Ordinance for electric vehicle charging stations (EVCS) in Alhambra. Twelve APIFM staff and stakeholder group members who live in the community offered written and public comments when the ordinance was introduced at the December 14 meeting.

"My family, in fact, purchased a plug-in hybrid recently. We don't have many places to charge it. We currently must charge it at home. Having easier access to charging stations would make it easier for me and my neighbors" - Connie Ho, Stakeholder

This Ordinance expedites the process to install EVCS within the City. Permit streamlining for EVCS provides Alhambra with the potential for cleaner air by decreasing the cost of charging stations. As of March 9th, 2020, only 15.5% of California has fully streamlined its EVCS permitting. Within the Southern California Association of Governments, only 12.2% of its local jurisdictions have fully streamlined their EVCS permitting process. Ordinances like this prepare us for Governor Newsom's Executive Order N-79-20. This Executive Order requires 100 percent of in-state sales of new passenger vehicles to be zero-emission by 2035.

Alhambra is now part of the jurisdictions that comply with AB 1236 (2015), the state law for permit streamlining on EVCS, and is now among the few streamlined local jurisdictions in the Zero Emission Vehicle Streamlining Olympics.

Permit streamlining is only part of the solution to decreasing emissions for toxic air pollutants. The Bobcat and El Dorado Fires indicated the increased need for our local jurisdictions to put environmental justice as their top priority. But with improved air quality during the COVID-19 lockdown, we have seen a glimpse of cleaner air if we were to drive more zero-emission vehicles and utilize alternative modes of transportation. Our work could not have been possible without our community leaders from our stakeholder working group. Their dedication to providing feedback on potential policies and willingness to provide public comment at City Hall led to our success. We look forward to continuing our work with the City's residents, council members, and City staff to enact environmental justice initiatives. -By Jeshow Yang | Policy Coordinator, Clean Air SGV

SSG NEWS & HIGHLIGHTS

OTTP

OTTP Leads Afterschool Enrichment Program

For the months of November and December 2020, OTTP was awarded a Community Services Block Grant through the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act from the Department of Public Social Services. Using these funds, OTTP provided an after school recreational enrichment program for school-aged youth designed to increase academic, athletic, or social skills for school success. OTTP also utilized donations received through their AmazonSmile Wish List to support the program, which operated Monday through Friday from 3pm - 6pm and provided an array of services such as tutoring, arts and crafts, social skills, sports, music, and recreation. Led by several support staff and Occupational Therapy interns, the program helped all participants to increase their academic, athletic, and/or social skills and served as a particularly important opportunity to grow these skills for families facing challenges as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

OTTP Receives Generous Donation from the Nan Washington Global Wellness Foundation



The Nan Washington Global Wellness Foundation responded to the COVID-19 Shelter in Place restrictions by donating supplies to clients at OTTP. Due to the "Safer at Home" order, clients were unable to go out into the community and OTTP staff saw a tremendous need for activities for clients to use at home with their families. In response, the Nan Washington Global Wellness Foundation purchased sports equipment, art supplies, board games, and writing materials for OTTP's clients. This generous donation was greatly appreciated by all staff, clients, and families as it helped to put so many smiles on clients' faces during these difficult times.

Local Girl Scout Troop Support

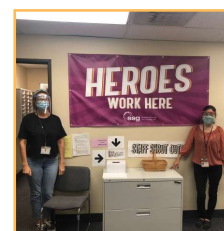


OTTP was the grateful recipient of 150 care packages made by Katie R. for an Eagle Scout Project. Katie, who is a member of a Scouts BSA



Girl Troop located in the South Bay, chose OTTP to be the recipient of her Eagle Scout project. To find out what clients needed, Katie met with OTTP managers and learned that our clients needed care packages with items they can use during the pandemic. When asked what inspired Katie to do her Eagle Scout Project, she said, "I wanted to find a way to help people and give back to my community. A lot of people are going unnoticed because of COVID, which is exactly why I decided to make these care packages. I thought it would be really helpful to give those less fortunate some necessary items, so care packages were the best option for my Eagle project. I just find a lot of reward in helping people, and this project turned out amazing!" OTTP is so thankful for such generosity.

Eagle Scout Donates 3D Printed Face Shields



Max Steins is a junior at Culver City High School and has been a Boy Scout for over 4 years. Last year, as the COVID-19 pandemic began, he started working on earning his Eagle Scout rank. As part of the requirements, Scouts must complete a project that better their community. Max recognized that during the pandemic there was a great need for personal protective equipment and offered to provide OTTP hundreds of face shields that he would make using a 3D printer and assemble for us. With the support of his brother Aidan's 3D printing business, Max completed this service project in Fall 2020, and is now completing the final requirements to officially become an Eagle Scout. Thank you, Max!



SSG NEWS & HIGHLIGHTS

OTTP



NSWM



The Network for Social Work Management welcomes Briana De La Rocha, the new Administrative Coordinator. If you are interested in joining NSWM, or getting in contact about our events and initiatives please feel free to reach out to briana@socialworkmanager.org. Learn more at www.socialworkmanager.org.

SILVER

SILVER Supports Older Angelenos Through the COVID-19 Crisis

Since October 2020, SILVER has initiated several new projects designed to assist older adults to access information, financial support, and vaccination. In November 2020 SSG SILVER received CARES ACT funding from the LA County Department of Mental health to provide in language COVID related education to API Older adults. SILVER worked in collaboration with community partners Chinatown Service Center, Cambodian Association of America, and Heart Keepers Inc to disseminate information to Chinese, Korean, and Cambodian older adults. SILVER also received CARES ACT funding to expand case management services to older adults and family caregivers in parts of LA City and County. With the funding, SILVER has increased production of our SSG SILVER COVID Newsletter to reach homebound older adults and caregivers who may have limited access to technology. In addition, emergency cash aid and respite funds have been made available to those that have increased needs for homecare and housekeeping needs as a result of COVID 19. Once older adults 65+ become eligible for COVID 19 vaccines, the division has also been working aggressively to assist older adults in securing vaccination appointments, transportation, and PPEs so that they can safely and successfully complete their vaccination appointments. For more information and access to our newsletter, check out the SSG SILVER Facebook at www.facebook.com/SpecialServiceForGroupsSilver.

P180

New Residential Site Openings

P180, with support from the Office of Diversion and Reentry (ODR), has been busy establishing permanent supportive housing for individuals who are homeless, have mental health and/or substance use disorder, and who are incarcerated in the Los Angeles County Jail. The Office of Diversion and Reentry (ODR) Housing Court program is a collaborative effort with the Office of Diversion and Reentry, the Superior Courts of Los Angeles County, Housing for Health, and community-based mental health and housing providers. Over the last two years, P180 opened South Park (March 2019), Williams House (December 2019), and Waterhouse Residence (March 2020) as part of the ODR program.

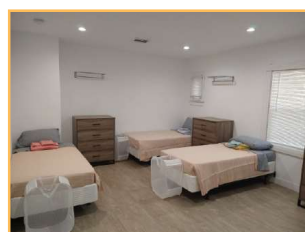


SSG NEWS & HIGHLIGHTS

APAIT

Auntie Mele's House

Since opening in October 2020, Auntie Mele's House has provided housing to 16 LGBTQ+ individuals with mental health conditions whom are also experiencing homelessness. APAIT has been following the integrated care model by providing holistic services to assist residents with achieving long-term stability, both economically and mentally. Clients housed at Auntie Mele's House have received case management, including other supplemental services such as resume writing and transportation to interviews. This has helped clients to obtain and maintain jobs with stable income. Case Managers have also assisted clients with public benefit programs enrollment such as General Relief and linkage to long-term affordable housing resources. With the impact of COVID-19, APAIT staff have been providing transportation services to testing and medical appointments. Moreover, regular mental health services which include both individual psychotherapy and medication services are available to the residents.



The More You Know



Did you know... your program(s) can be more inclusive and accessible for your community members who might be living with a disability? If your program implemented cost-effective solutions to accessibility, the services you provide would have fewer barriers. Due to the nature of the services provided by social services programs and the populations served, the likelihood of at least one of your clients having either a visible or non-visible disability is high.

As gatekeepers to critical services, it is our responsibility to make sure to adhere to federal requirements and laws against discrimination due to America with Disabilities Act (ADA) in order to ensure our programs are as accessible as possible to anyone who is eligible, including those with living with disabilities. Here are some simple steps to strengthening the inclusion and access of your organization's programs:

Did you know you can...

- Add easy-to-use handles that make opening doors easier for people of all ages and abilities?

- Make the physical environment more usable and convenient by as many people as possible using power doors with sensors at entrances. A program might also consider using bells or sensors at entrances to help consumers with visual impairments identify front entrances to your program(s).
- Make floor spaces and hallways free of barriers so that people in wheelchairs or individuals using white canes or service animals can navigate safely in your facilities?
- You can routinely make closed captioning available in all television or video presentations that you offer to your clients? Some folks may have auditory disabilities and closed captions can be an easy, quick and effective way to be more inclusive.
- Ask for input from people living with disabilities within your program(s) to discover how your organization can be more inclusive?

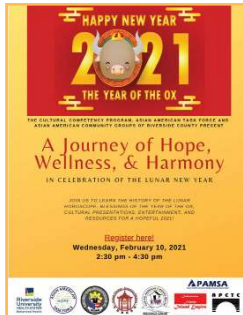
-Written by Joseph Burton, DT MSW Intern

Accessibility and inclusion are when the needs of people living with disabilities are specifically considered, and products, services, and facilities are built or modified so that they can be used by people of all abilities. Consider implementing the above suggestions and your program will be on its way to being a provider that is in support of people living with disabilities.

SSG NEWS & HIGHLIGHTS

APCTC

Happy Lunar New Year from APCTC



APCTC celebrated the Lunar New Year - Year of the Ox, with a virtual event called “A Journey of Hope, Wellness, and Harmony” on Wednesday, February 10, 2021. This free event was open to community members from 2:30pm-4:30pm, creating a safe way for people to gather in celebration of new beginnings. This fun event was the result of a special collaboration between community partners and was sponsored by RUHS-BH, AATF, PVFAA, ICAA, FAMHRC, IFIC, APAMSA, and APCTC.

Eagle Scout Creates Outside Benches for APCTC - WILSHIRE

Eagle Scout is the highest achievement attainable in Boy Scouts of America. Those who achieve this status must undergo rigorous review process the Boy Scout Local Council together with strong cooperation with community partners. Ryuichiro Nonomura, a boy scout from BSA Troop 738 based in downtown Los Angeles, accomplished his Eagle project by leading his fellow troop members to create six (6) hand crafted, all-weather benches for community partner Asian Pacific Counseling and Treatment Centers/Wilshire Center. His APCTC Advisors included Al Choi and Noriko Kajiwar.



Girl Scout Project Creates Kid-friendly Space for APCTC Client Families



The Girl Scout Gold Award represents the highest honor a Girl Scout can earn. Each year, enterprising and creative Girl Scouts create projects to help communities, effect change and

make the world a bit better for all!

Samantha Hayashi, a 12th grader at San Pedro High School, is an Ambassador level Girl Scout for Girl Scout Troop 12135. For her Gold Award Project entitled “Happy Spaces”, Samantha worked with Community Partner Asian Pacific Counseling & Treatment Centers (APCTC); Advisor Noriko Kajiwar, to redecorate the children’s waiting room. Unfortunately, there is still a high rate of stigma in API communities regarding mental health which galvanized Samantha to do her best to create a waiting room that is welcoming and kid-friendly. As Samantha explained “I’m very happy with how it turned out. I painted the walls a nice, calm, light blue color and drew a cute, carnival-themed mural that will put a smile on your face”. Samantha also created fun activities like word searches and origami instructions with paper. She also built a bookcase filled with donations of children’s books to expand APCTC’s collection. The result is a fresh, positive and welcoming space for children and youth to relax, play and heal. Great job Samantha!

Eagle Scout Story Continued...

Ryuichiro currently attends Eagle Rock High School and has been in scouting since he was a Cub Scout. He was proud to work on his hand crafted bench project especially after learning the importance of socialization for those battling mental illness. After review of the building aesthetics, including color and layout, he proposed a set of 6 different-sized benches, painted in neutral matte black to blend with APCTC/Wilshire’s outdoor space. Real wood benches provide a naturalness and comfort for those using them and the all-weather proofing allows maximum flexibility. Great job on Ryuichiro’s successful Eagle Project!

SSG NEWS & HIGHLIGHTS

OTTP-SF

OTTP-SF Fundraising Success



OTTP-SF has had an amazing fundraising year. On August 25th, they launched their Emergency Healing Fundraiser crowdfunding campaign. The goal was to make up for a potential loss of funding due to the COVID-19 pandemic, with hopes of raising \$50,000. With the help of more than 100 donors, and a generous matching

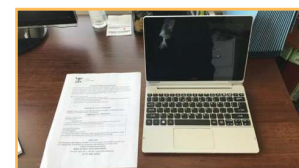
gift from the San Francisco-based software company Webflow, OTTP-SF is thrilled to share that they nearly doubled their fundraising goal!

Just a few short months after this fundraiser's success, OTTP-SF's donor base rallied again to support the division's first-ever Holiday Gift Campaign. Clinicians asked the youth they work with to choose a special gift they hoped to receive for the holiday season. With the help of the donors and the annual donations to SSG for holiday gifts, more than two hundred gifts and wrapping supplies were purchased.

OTTP-SF will be rounding out their fundraising efforts for the fiscal year with their annual Youth Empowerment Fundraiser. This year they will be holding it virtually, so even if you are not located in the Bay Area, you will be able to attend. Mark your calendars for June 3rd, and help OTTP-SF end the fiscal year with a bang!

Tech Exchange Grant

In February, OTTP-SF partnered with the nonprofit Tech Exchange to bring computers to youth. Tech Exchange is a Bay Area organization with a mission to ensure that all families have a computer, internet access, and the technical skills necessary to improve and enhance their lives. Because of this inspiring mission statement, OTTP-SF staff member, Claire Mueller, reached out to the organization, and one of their staff members took up the cause. She wrote OTTP-SF into a grant for personal computers and secured 30 to be donated to K-12 youth. The computers came with a limited one-year warranty, and Tech Exchange also offers free virtual technical support in English and Spanish and free virtual trainings. Thanks to this generous donation, one youth was able to download the software they required to participate in an internship. OTTP-SF looks forward to continuing to work with Tech Exchange to support Bay Area youth.



Youth Art Contest

In December and January, the first annual Youth Art Contest was held at OTTP-SF. The goal of the contest was to showcase the talent of the youth the division works with and feature the art on thank you gifts for donors. Here are a few favorites from the submissions.

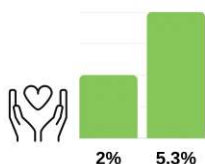


Youth Employment Success Story

OTTP-SF's Youth Employment Program has faced great challenges since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The team had to get creative on connecting with youth and employers, but the employment specialists, youth, and community have risen to the occasion. Since November, five youth have found employment that matched their interests. Another five youth have maintained employment for three months and plan to continue. An employment specialist on the team shared this inspiring story about a youth's employment journey:

"When *A started working with the Employment Program, she stated that she wanted to get a job to build skills and give back to her community. Luckily, we found a paid internship for A that combined her passion for being involved in her community and her desire to build skills. Now she is learning how to use technology like Adobe Suite and Reasons and More, as well as how those skills can support her community. She was proud to report that she was able to purchase gifts for her family with her own money for the first time. Through her work experience and support from her employment specialist, she continues to gain confidence and motivation to balance work, school, and getting ready for college!" *Name changed for privacy

SSG NEWS & HIGHLIGHTS

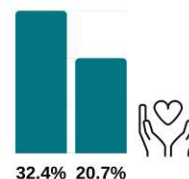


The exceptional new challenges of 2020 triggered an unexpected but wonderful increase in donations to SSG! Donors really showed up, especially to support emergency relief efforts across the agency. We are excited to share that donations in 2020 topped \$500,000 - a massive increase over prior years – thanks to the efforts of division management, volunteers, and the Development team.

GROWING SSG

CONNECTING YOUR VISION TO FUNDRAISING

DRAMATIC GROWTH IN DONATIONS TO SSG



This growing generosity follows a national trend reported in the 2020 Blackbaud Charitable Giving Report. In 2020, charitable giving in the United States grew by 2% based on a careful analysis of \$40.7 billion in donations by the Blackbaud Institute. Additionally, an analysis of \$3.2 billion in online donations tells us that online giving grew by 20.7% compared to 2019.

Congratulations and thank you to everyone at SSG who used these donations to deliver desperately needed assistance for the individuals and families we serve!

Email devteam@ssg.org to learn more

OTTP-SF

OTTP and OTTP-SF Collaboration

In January 2021, OTTP-SF and OTTP (LA) were awarded a grant from Cigna to fund a three-tier program. The FIT Program (Fostering Social/Emotional learning by Increasing Mental Health Awareness and Utilizing Trauma-Informed Approaches) to be offered to students in middle schools in San Francisco and Los Angeles county. The FIT program focuses on increasing mental health awareness to stakeholders such as school staff, teachers, and families; fostering social-emotional learning skills to youth identified by school staff; and connecting identified youth to community resources and/or outpatient mental health needs.

OTTP LA & SF launched this program on Tuesday, February 16th, with 19 participants from Buena Vista Horace Mann Elementary School in San Francisco and Jane Addams Elementary School, and Will Rogers Elementary School in Los Angeles. They are currently working with Martin Luther King Jr Elementary School in San Francisco to identify 5-7 more youth that may benefit from the program. The youth in this program have expressed gratitude for learning new skills, learning about themselves, working in groups, and having facilitators that speak Spanish.

Anti-Racism Work in OTTP-SF and POTAC

On January 23, 2021, the Psychiatric Occupational Therapy Action Coalition (POTAC) engaged over 60 occupational therapists and students virtually to initiate the process of dismantling racism and white supremacy in occupational therapy education and practice. POTAC's Equity, Diversity, Inclusion Collaborative Team (EDICT), including members of OTTP-SF board and clinical team Dr. Rose Marie Borillo, Jacqueline Cantrell, Dr. Jessalyn Gagui, Sheela Ivlev, Colleen McNeil, Ray Nubla, Claire Mueller, and Emily Tunnat, created and co-facilitated this event, titled Anti-Racism in OT: Uprooting White Supremacy and Steps for Combating Racism in Your Practice.

In the session, participants explored the impact of white supremacy and racism in occupational therapy. They identified ways to prevent harm or re-traumatization of people we serve, colleagues, and OT students. In response to findings and recommendations from Dr. Elsa Contreras's capstone research project at OTTP-SF, Exploring Dynamics of Power, Oppression, and Equity in Occupational Therapy, OTTP-SF created anti-racism working groups that have been meeting regularly since July 2020. OTTP-SF recognizes that white supremacy and racism are an inherent part of some organizations, industries, and communities. OTTP-SF realizes working towards anti-racist policies is a journey. In that regard, they offer both racial affinity and collective groups to staff and interns to provide brave spaces to lean into discomfort and grow in their work to uproot white supremacy, recognize and dismantle systemic racism, and support the youth and families they serve.

SSG NEWS & HIGHLIGHTS

ACTIVISM THROUGH THE AGES: FIGHTING FOR JUSTICE AND EQUITY

In honor of National Latinx Heritage Month, National Disability Employment Awareness Month, Indigenous Peoples' Heritage Month, and Black History Month, we highlight and celebrate the work of four activists who tirelessly fought and continue to fight for a more just and equitable society.

National Latinx Heritage Month (Sept. 15 – Oct. 15)



Sylvia Rivera (1951 – 2002) was a Puerto Rican- and Venezuelan-American activist best known for her role in the New York City Stonewall Riots in 1969, which helped to launch the LGBTQIA liberation movement. As a trans woman of color and sex worker, Rivera fought for the inclusion of marginalized communities in the mainstream LGBTQIA rights movement. In 1970, alongside friend and activist Marsha P. Johnson, Rivera founded STAR, an organization that provided support to sex workers and trans youth impacted by homelessness. She was also an advocate for incarcerated members of the LGBTQIA community, raising her voice at the Christopher Street Liberation Day Rally in 1973 as the crowd tried to curse her off the stage. The Sylvia Rivera Law Project – a New York-based organization that works to improve access to health, social, and legal services for "low-income people and people of color who are transgender, intersex, or gender non-conforming" — was named after Rivera and honors the lasting impact of her work.

National Disability Employment Awareness Month (October)

Alice Wong (1974– present) is a disability rights activist based in San Francisco. She is the Founder and Director of the Disability Visibility Project, an online community dedicated to amplifying the voices of people with disabilities through media. Wong co-organizes the #CripTheVote movement, a nonpartisan campaign led by the disability community that engages with voters and politicians on disability issues. Affordable and accessible healthcare and housing and income supplement programs for people with disabilities are just a few policy issues that Wong and other activists have advocated for. Wong has also spoken out about the disproportionate impact of COVID-19 on people with disabilities and the failure of the healthcare system to adequately serve them, even before the pandemic. In all areas of her work, Wong aims to uplift the range of diverse voices within the disability community, particularly underrepresented groups such as immigrants, people of color, veterans, and LGBTQIA people with disabilities.



SSG NEWS & HIGHLIGHTS

ACTIVISM THROUGH THE AGES: FIGHTING FOR JUSTICE AND EQUITY

"You do not have to be me in order for us to fight alongside each other. I do not have to be you to recognize that our wars are the same. What we must do is commit ourselves to some future that can include each other and to work toward that future with the particular strengths of our individual identities."—Audre Lorde

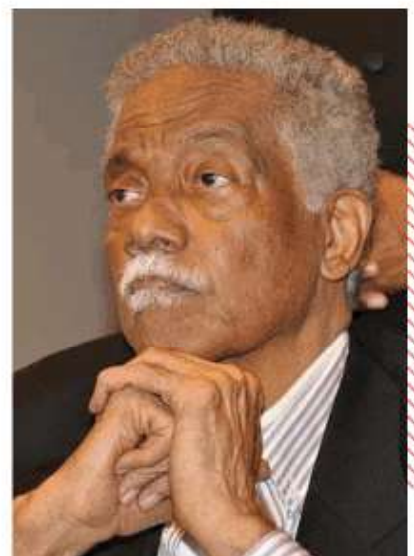
Indigenous Peoples' Heritage Month (November)



Madonna Thunder Hawk (1940 – present) has been a lifelong advocate for Indigenous communities. Over the last several decades, Thunder Hawk has participated in numerous demonstrations that laid the foundation for ongoing Indigenous activism today, including the 1969 – 1971 occupation of Alcatraz Island, the 1973 siege at Wounded Knee, and the 2016 Dakota Access Pipeline protests at Standing Rock. In 1974, she established the We Will Remember Survival School as an act of cultural reclamation for Native youth who had been pushed out of public schools. Since 2004, Thunder Hawk has worked to reform Indian Child Welfare Act policy and is working to build local resources in her Cheyenne River homelands to help stop the practice of child removal. Over 80 years old, she continues to play a prominent role in the fight for social and environmental justice for Indigenous communities around the world.

Black History Month (February)

Dr. Carlos Russell (1934 – 2018) was a Panamanian-born Brooklyn civil rights activist, ambassador, and professor. Throughout his lifetime and through his various roles, Dr. Russell collaborated with other prominent civil rights activists, including Malcolm X and Shirley Chisholm, to advance his vision for self-determination and economic empowerment for Black communities. Inspired by Douglas Turner Ward's play called "Day of Absence," in which a fictional Southern town is immobilized by the sudden disappearance of its Black residents, Dr. Russell created Black Solidarity Day in 1969. Held annually on the Monday before Election Day in November, Black participants are asked to stay home from school and work and avoid shopping and other commercial activities. Rooted in Dr. Russell's call to "protest against the intensifying repression that threatens the very existence of Black people in America", Black Solidarity Day is meant not only to call attention to the injustices and inequities that Black communities continue to face, but also to highlight how Black voices are integral to all facets of American life.



SSG NEWS & HIGHLIGHTS

SAFETY

COVID 19 -- DRIVING BASICS AND VEHICLE HYGIENE PRACTICES

As more employees are driving back to their workplaces, it is vital to maintain good driving basics and hygiene practices to defend against COVID-19.

Good driving basics

- Even though fewer vehicles are on the roads currently, there has been a rise in certain driver infractions.
- We should all go back to the basics of not speeding and not using phones while driving.
- Limit the number of places you drive during this pandemic. If you do have to go and meet people, use masks and maintain social distancing.
- If you have a van, try to carry a limited number of passengers. Passengers should sit in the back seat.
- Try to avoid rideshares like Uber and Lyft. If inevitable, use hand sanitizer and avoid touching surfaces. Follow the guidelines from WHO, CDC, and your local authorities.

Keep your vehicle sanitized and other tips

- Wash your hands for 20 seconds with soap and water before entering your vehicle. Wipe down the key fob, steering wheel, dashboard, and any other high touch surfaces.
- Sneeze or cough in the corner of your arm.
- If using hand sanitizer, make sure it contains greater than 60% alcohol.
- Anytime you bring foreign, germ-prone objects into your car — such as laundry or groceries — there is a chance that you are bringing the novel coronavirus in with them. Make sure to wipe everything before taking into your house or workplace properly.
- Slamming a car door or a breeze could send virus-causing particles airborne, so people should disinfect high-impact zones, like the dashboard, accordingly.
- Take extreme precautions while using public bathrooms.
- If possible, bring food from home; otherwise, go with takeout or curbside pickup. Still wipe the packaging for the food. Sanitize phones regularly.

Be extra cautious when filling gas

- Studies have shown that fuel pumps may carry up to 11,835 times the germs of the average public toilet seat. It is recommended to wear gloves when touching fuel pumps, keypads, and other high-touch areas. If possible, try to use a contactless method of payment.

Steps to take after a collision

- Always keep a pair of gloves, hand sanitizer, and wipes in your vehicle. Remember to maintain Social Distancing from all parties.
- Remain calm, just as you should in any vehicle collision.
- Exit your vehicle to inspect the damage and check for injuries. Call 911 if necessary.
- Ask the other party to put their Driver's license, insurance card, registration on the hood of their car so that you can take pictures with your smartphones.
- If possible, avoid riding in the tow truck by contacting a co-worker/family member to pick you up. If your insurance company provides you with a rental vehicle, plan to sanitize all touchpoints vigorously.



SSG NEWS & HIGHLIGHTS

ANNOUNCEMENTS



SAVE THESE DATES!

2021 OPEN ENROLLMENT STARTS SOON!



APRIL 5–16

[action will be required]

Change, add, drop... It's your choice!

This is the one time each year that you can elect to make changes to your health insurance elections through SSG.

Look forward to easy online enrollment with  **paycom**®

Questions about your current insurance plans?

Contact the Employee Support Center for dedicated support and advocacy year-round.

Email: LosAngeles.ESC@ajg.com | Phone: (855) 670-2222



SSG NEWS & HIGHLIGHTS

ANNOUNCEMENTS

SSG Vaccination Raffle Winners

A big CONGRATULATIONS to our first eight vaccine raffle winners.

Each week, we will continue raffling off four \$50 Amazon gift cards at a time. All SSG employees are eligible to enter the raffle after completing both of your vaccination doses for COVID-19. Your name will continue to stay in the raffle-box each week, unless you become a raffle winner. Maximum of 1 raffle prize per person.

Here is the link to the raffle entry form <https://forms.gle/BjPj81Wgs5x1ApuCA>

Current Raffle Winners

Julian E Juarez | Project 180-ICMS

Tonia Latrice Johnson | HOPICS

Jose De Jesus Franco | Weber Community Center

Claire Mueller | OTTP-SF

Chauncey Jamal Faulks | Project 180

Ludwig Bryce Estacio | APAIT

Kimie Cho | APCTC Wilshire

Khiana Thomas | OTTP

SSG Employee Assistance Program (EAP) offered through Life Assistance Program



How to Access:

- By Phone: (800) 538-3543
- Online: www.cignalap.com

Benefits:

- Face-to-Face Assistance for you and your household member (3 sessions per situation)
 - Support & Referral Services
- Discounts on Health & Wellness Services
- Confidential (information not shared with SSG)
 - Available 24/7

YOUR NAME OR PICTURE MAY APPEAR IN SSG'S NEWSLETTER AND WEBSITE

If you participate in an agency event and an article or picture from that event is submitted for publication, your name and/or picture may be included. If you do not approve of this, then please refrain from being photographed at events and let your supervisor know not to include your name in articles. You may also contact Tonie Diaz in the HR Dept. at adiaz@ssg.org or Leah McGowan for newsletter publishing inquiries at lmcgowan@ssg.org.