



Peers Linking Peers

Your Bridge to Self Advocacy

Volume 3, Issue 5 — May 2011

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This and previous issues can be found on the Network of Care WEB site at:
<http://sandiego.networkofcare.org/mh/countycontent/san-diego/peer-liaison.cfm>

County Peer Liaison Program



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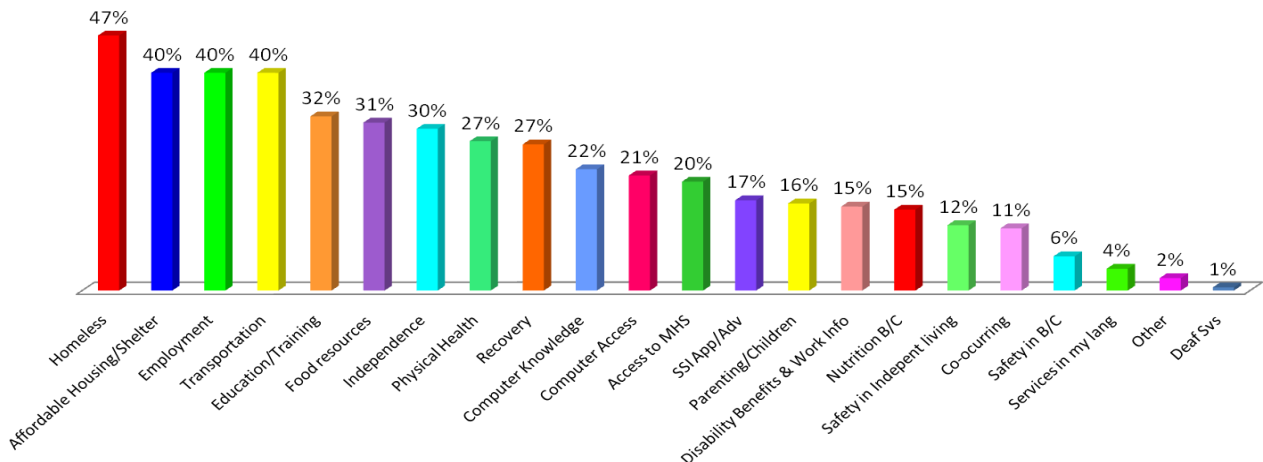
The Power of Healing Spaces

By Jeffery Najarian CMT and Lisa St. George MSW, CPRP

Gene Johnson, President and CEO of Recovery Innovations presented at the March Wellness and Recovery Summit. This year's theme was "Squashing Stigma" and Mr. Johnson's presentation on the power of healing spaces not only fit the summit perfectly, but inspired an even greater sense of possibility within his listeners. At Recovery Innovations we are guided by the five Recovery Pathways: Hope, Choice, Empowerment, Recovery Environment and Spirituality. Knowing that a recovery environment is an important pathway to recovery we can imagine the progress that might occur for both systems and individuals if they were surrounded by a comfortable space that demonstrated kindness, respect, and beauty. Beautiful warm surroundings inspire great outcomes. There is evidence that environments, which are warm, welcoming and pleasant to be in support healing at all levels for all illnesses. For most of the 20th century, hospitals and mental health facilities were cold, sterile, institutional and rather unpleasant for everyone. Walls were white or pale green, without art, and barriers were present all over the facilities that made it clear where staff and patient lines were.

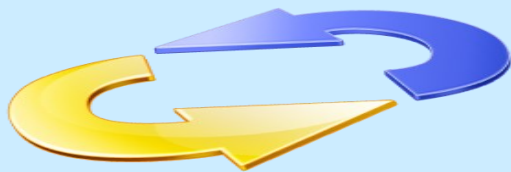
It is possible to create spaces that are warm, inviting and welcoming for all people receiving help in their wellness. By choosing a peaceful and attractive, setting for people who receive services they feel valued and respected. Institutionalized surroundings can be replaced by "welcoming and friendly surroundings," that invoke the spirit of hospitality. We can use lots of light and open spaces. We can take down the barriers between staff and people receiving services and create a balance between privacy and community. Decorate rooms that use warm colors with bright accents. Put up cheerful and inspiring art. Label rooms with recovery language: Living Room, Retreat, Hope Room, Celebration Suite, Learning Studio. Practice no-force-first. Replace restraint rooms with comfort rooms. Practice risk sharing, not risk management. The physical environment, as well as the way it is used, can turn a person's visit to a mental health center from one that reminds them of their challenges, to one that reminds them of their value and demonstrates respect. Let's create some healing spaces in our mental health system; it can start with a can of paint, and some elbow grease!

Peer Liaisons Feedback Concerns by % of 175 Forms Recieved for the Month of March 2011





Peer Liaisons assist people to advocate for their needs and rights. We act as a two way conduit to gather and disseminate information between the San Diego County Mental Health System of Care and people receiving services and their families. We provide hope, encouragement, and connection to the community through county-wide forums, focus groups, county meeting attendance, resources and our monthly newsletter.



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Wellness and Recovery Summit Success

By Susan Gates, Elisa Barnett and Trang Do

The annual San Diego Wellness and Recovery Summit, hosted by Recovery Innovations, continues to grow bigger and better every year. This year's theme was "Squashing Stigma", and there was a great show of community support as professionals, clinicians, providers and the people they provide services to were participants in an event as equals, all hoping to squash stigma together. There was a great turnout of 460 people; 88% of whom receive services.

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Above: Escondido Clubhouse shares their Recovery Web with the 2011 Summit.

Over the of the very full day, were present that touched ferent as-reducing Pharaoh Dewas the key-speaker, his moving recovery hope. Vi-Clubhouse, Friend to Friend, and Escondido Clubhouse each presented on their unique culture, how they overcame stigma, and the amazing power of recovery in their members. Involving members and staff, their presentations were inspiring examples of the impact programs such as theirs can have in the lives of many individuals. A play titled *Stigma* performed by the Transformation Players from Recovery Innovations' Transformational Advocacy Training displayed how mental illness affects everyone. Piedad Garcia from County BHS, Jon Schmid from Cook & Schmid, and Stacey Smith from AdEase talked about the major stigma reduction media campaigns launched last year, "It's Up to Us", "Housing Matters", and "Fotonovela". Dr. Marshall Lewis, County Clinical Director, presented on the positive effects in reducing stigma by integrating behavioral and physical health as a way to maintain a person's holistic wellness.

One of the most exciting highlights of the day was the "This Person" Awards ceremony. The "This Person" award is given out to people who have been a big support and have made a difference in a person's life. Nomination forms were sent out along with the summit's registration form to give people the opportunity to nominate who they believed to be their "This Person". Many nominations were submitted and accepted. A summit committee reviewed and selected the nominations that were most inspiring, held the greatest hope, and most importantly made the greatest change. Here are the 2011 San Diego Wellness and Recovery Summit awardees:

This Person Award:

Bettie Cain, nominated by a close friend who gave her heroism the credit for literally saving her life.
Louise Fyre, nominated by her daughter for holding the hope for her and encouraging her along her path of recovery.

(Summit Success, continued from page 2)

Ayele Melkie, Clubhouse Director, Friendship Clubhouse, nominated for his exceptional support and ability to teach clubhouse members something new every day.

Tonya Jenkins, Program Director, Oasis Clubhouse, nominated for her ability to empower everyone by leading by example and the balance of professionalism and empathy she models for everyone she serves.

Alma Porley, East County Mental Health, nominated for her ability to help people learn to step out and reclaim their lives.

National This Person Award:

Richard Conklin, San Diego Sheriff's Department, was instrumental in establishing the Behavioral Health Court and instituting WRAP classes at Las Colinas and Downtown Central Jails in San Diego County, which has made a positive impact on many lives.

Jeffrey Christopher Memorial

Carol LeBeau, long time news anchor for ABC 10 here in San Diego, has spoken with openness and honesty about her own mental health challenges, and given voice to many who might not otherwise have been heard and changed the way that those facing mental health challenges are perceived by their communities. This award is given every year to commemorate Jeffrey Christopher and the need for reduction in seclusion and restraint. It has become a symbol of hope, as we salute organizations and individuals who create positive change in the mental health arena.

The summit's closing ceremony and "surprise" of the afternoon was the beautiful voice of Sarah Outwater performing three songs full of inspiration and hope. In addition to Sarah's performance, people were given a gift. People left feeling inspired, hopeful and most importantly ready to "Squash Stigma" together

Famous People with Mental Illness: John Nash

By David Jurgensen

John Nash, the subject of the Hollywood film *A Beautiful Mind*, provides an excellent example of someone who fought to recover from mental illness and succeeded. Nash, a brilliant mathematician, suffered an extended period of severe mental illness (paranoid schizophrenia) and was hospitalized in 1959. Nash was in 1970. His recovery was due in large part to the support of his friends and the "communitarian" environment in which he worked, ties were tolerated. It wasn't until 1995, a year after winning the Nobel Prize, that he reported he was "thinking rationally again." From his autobiography and various interviews, some interesting insights regarding mental illness. An article in Wikipedia suggested hypothesis. He has expressed an acceptable manner, or being 'insane' and not fitting into a usual social function, to be an economic point of view. He has advanced 'evolutionary psychology' views about the value of human diversity and the potential benefits of apparently nonstandard behaviors or roles." See also: "John Nash and a Beautiful Mind on Strike", by David Neubauer, Yahoo Health. Archived April 21, 2008 at the Wayback Machine. For more on evolutionary psychology see Wikipedia at: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Evolutionary_psychology/.

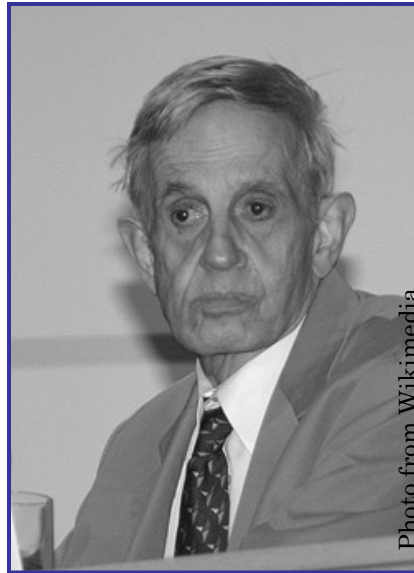


Photo from Wikimedia

Three Consumer Seats Open on MH Board

By David Jurgensen

As we mentioned in our March newsletter, there are open seats on the County Mental Health Advisory Board. Each County Supervisor is allowed to appoint three members, one from each of the following categories: Mental Health Consumer, Family Member and Mental Health Professional. There have consistently been a shortage of Consumers filling seats on the board and consequently we consumers (the very people meant to benefit from mental health services) are underrepresented on the Advisory Board.

The situation was made more acute by the recent resignation of long-time member and dedicated peer advocate Michael McPherson. The current consumer vacancies are in Districts 1, 2 and 3 – South County, East County and Coastal/Central Inland. To be viable, the candidate should live, work or have other strong ties to one of these regions. Exceptions might be made for candidates who also are members of underrepresented demographics such as Transitional-Age Youth, African-American, Latino, Asian or other ethnic minority. If you are interested and would like to be considered for board membership, you can obtain a copy of the application form from the Network of Care website at: <http://www.sandiego.networkofcare.org/mhb/pdf/mental-health-board-application.pdf> or contact any of the Peer Liaisons. Our contact information is on the facing page.

Peer Liaison's Community Events Calendar for May 2011

Funding provided through the County of San Diego Health & Human Services Agency Adult and Older Adult Mental Health Services

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<p>May 1 Free Organ Concert: Balboa Park Organ Pavilion 2-3pm Every Sunday</p>	<p>May 2 RICA: WRAP Class: 9-11am WELL Class: 1:30-3:30pm</p>	<p>May 3 RICA: WRAP Class: 9-11am</p>	<p>May 4 RICA: WRAP Class: 9-11am</p>	<p>May 5</p>	<p>May 6 RICA: WRAP Class: 9-11am Self Expression Through Art* 3-4:30pm War Memorial Bldg. 619-525-8247</p>	<p>May 7</p>
MAY IS MENTAL HEALTH MONTH						
<p>May 8 Free Summer Concerts: La Jolla Cove 2-4pm Every Sunday</p>	<p>May 9 RICA: WRAP Class: 9-11am WELL Class: 1:30-3:30pm</p>	<p>May 10 RICA: WRAP Class: 9-11am PL Area Mtg: North Coastal 10-12pm 560 Greenbrier C-E Oceanside 92054 NAMI North Inland 7 pm Escondido 760-745-8381</p>	<p>May 11 RICA: WRAP Class: 9-11am</p>	<p>May 12 Mental Health Board Meeting Rm 302 4-6pm 1600 Pacific Hwy SD 92101 NAMI Educ. & Advocacy 6:30-9pm 3900 Cleveland, SD 92103</p>	<p>May 13 RICA: WRAP Class: 9-11am Self Expression Through Art* 3-4:30pm War Memorial Bldg. 619-525-8247</p>	<p>May 14 Drumming/Flash Mob World Beat Ctr. Balboa Park 1-3pm Mental Health Month TAY Event</p>
<p>May 15</p>	<p>May 16 RICA: WRAP Class: 9-11am WELL Class: 1:30-3:30pm PL Area Mtg: North Inland 9:45-11:45am 474 W Vermont Escondido 92025</p>	<p>May 17 RICA: WRAP Class: 9-11am PL Area Mtg: East County 2:30-4pm 215 W. Madison Ave El Cajon 92020</p>	<p>May 18 RICA: WRAP Class: 9-11am</p>	<p>May 19 Casa del Sol: 6th Annual Chili Cook-off 1157 30th St., SD 92154 (Near Iris Trolley Station) 619-429-1937</p>	<p>May 20 RICA: WRAP Class: 9-11am Self Expression Through Art* 3-4:30pm War Memorial Bldg. 619-525-8247</p>	<p>May 21</p>
<p>May 22</p>	<p>May 23 RICA: WRAP Class: 9-11am WELL Class: 1:30-3:30pm</p>	<p>May 24 RICA: WRAP Class: 9-11am</p>	<p>May 25 RICA: WRAP Class: 9-11am</p>	<p>May 26 Visions Clubhouse: Talent Show, 2pm 226 Church St., SD 91910 619-420-8603 NAMI Education North Coastal 7 pm Carlsbad 760-722-3754</p>	<p>May 27 RICA: WRAP Class: 9-11am Self Expression Through Art* 3-4:30pm War Memorial Bldg. 619-525-8247</p>	<p>May 28</p>
<p>May 29</p>	<p>May 30 RICA: WRAP Class: 9-11am WELL Class: 1:30-3:30pm</p>	<p>Jun 1 RICA: WRAP Class: 9-11am PL County-Wide Mtg. Medi-Cal & Managed Care Health Svc. Complex 3851 Rosecrans SD 92110</p>	<p>Jun 2 RICA: WRAP Class: 9-11am</p>	<p>Jun 3</p>	<p>Jun 4 RICA: WRAP Class: 9-11am Self Expression Through Art* 3-4:30pm War Memorial Bldg. 619-525-8247</p>	<p>Jun 5</p>

*Free activity sponsored by the San Diego Park & Recreation Board, Therapeutic Recreation Services