THE LOOP

A COLLECTION OF STORIES FROM AROUND NEVADA

FEBRUARY 2022 ISSUE 11 VOLUME 1

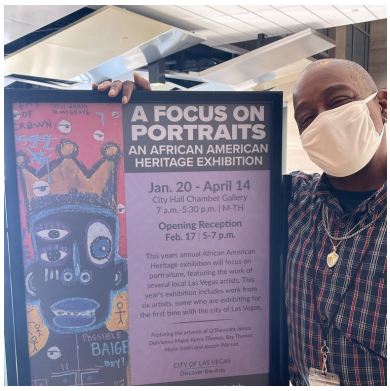
There is definitely love in the air. As we all know, Valentine's Day is universally acknowledged as the day of love. However, there is actually so much more to love during the month of February. Let's start by discussing the importance of our love for cultural celebrations. The entire month of February is **Black History Month**, intended as a way to celebrate our love of the Black community, the culture, the achievements, and contributions of Black people throughout American history. Love that fosters and celebrates our differences, as well as our common interests, and that is intended to unite and educate. Love that promotes compassion, kindness, perseverance, respect, and trust. Love that can be used as a means of inspiring hope in a time of fear, trauma, and for some - burn-out from a pandemic.

This month's issue of the Loop highlights the Partial Hospitalization Program at our Maryland Parkway facility. You will have the opportunity to read a perspective regarding that program from one of our team members, Ms. Elizabeth Kelly, who provides substance use disorder counseling services to this population. We are also introducing our newest Community Action Council member, Ms. Linda Falba McSweeney, and some exciting new updates from our development team!

Finally, in order to celebrate Black History Month, we had the opportunity to take several PHP clients and staff out to an art exhibit at Las Vegas City Hall. Those who attended, including Counselor, Candice Hill and Case Manager, Karen Cavazos, wrote about their experience. We also celebrated by *"breaking bread"* with one another by preparing and sharing a soul food meal with patients at Maryland Parkway. Case manager, Michelle Murphy, one of whom assisted in cooking this meal, has shared her experience.

Personally, I also learned something new. I learned about Black Love Day, which is now in its 19th year. It is celebrated on February 13 and was created as a day to end violence, end hatred, end racism, and increase peace. It is actually based on five tenets – love toward the Creator, love for self, love for the family, love within the Black community, and love for Black people. How appropriate that these beliefs/views are when aligned to our mission of Uplifting the Human Spirit. There is no doubt that society has a long way to go; however, today we at WestCare Nevada choose joy over fear and choose love over everything else. A love that is unconditional, one that loves our neighbor, and a love that never fails.

Leo Magrdichian, LCSW, LCADC, Vice President



The PHP Commemorates Black History Month Through the Arts

The Staff and Participants of the Partial Hospitalization Program

In celebration of **Black History Month**, our staff and participants at the WestCare Nevada's Las Vegas Community Involvement Center's **Partial Hospitalization Program (PHP)** took a field trip to the **"A Focus on Portraits: An African American Heritage Exhibition"** at Las Vegas City Hall. Staff and participants shared their personal takeaways from this trip.

"Growing up, Black History Month meant to me that I should be kind, understanding, and help others. It taught me to play my part in making a difference. All cultures are important to me because all cultures make up the world that exists. In my heart, there is something special about every life." **- Deleon Jones, *Admissions Specialist*, Community Involvement Center**

"The Black History art exhibit's '3rd Eye Opener' piece was somewhat of a spiritual awakening experience for me by seeing and enduring legendary moments through time. In the beginning, some were taught to believe glory and gore go hand in hand - however, I grew up to believe that love conquers." **- Marshan Martindale, *PHP Client***

"This exhibit meant the celebration of life and the love of art. The beauty, talent, and creativity are shown in these paintings. My favorite painting was, 'Lilith and Eve.' You could tell every painting had a story behind it." **- Brittney George, *PHP Client***

"Black History Month is the opportunity to honor the accomplishments of African Americans. It is a time to acknowledge the courage, determination, and strength they have all endured to overcome all the challenges placed before them. Black History Month represents love and equality for one another." **- Karen Cavazos, *Case Manager*, Community Involvement Center**

"My name is Niomi. I am a recovering addict. The art museum was priceless and so is being at WestCare. I am now hopeful of my future. Thank you, WestCare." **- Niomi Hooker Client, *PHP Client***

"The reason I came to the Black History Month art exhibit is because I think it is important to be diversified and know how to be familiar with people's background. Drugs do not discriminate against race, color, or creed. History is important so that we can learn from the past." **- Zachary McNeely, *PHP Client***

Program Spotlight: PHP Gives Participants Hope for Change

By Elizabeth Kelly, *Counselor*, Community Involvement Center

In the last three years, **Westcare Nevada's Las Vegas Community Involvement Center** has facilitated a **Partial Hospitalization Program (PHP)**. This program allows clients to be involved in a group setting five days a week to focus on areas of recovery such as coping skills, triggers, relapse prevention, healthy relationships, boundaries, and self-esteem. Rather than giving a clinical perspective of what the group is about, we asked our PHP group members to share what the program means to them, and how it has helped their recovery. Here are some of the responses we received:

- ***"I think PHP should really stand for People Helping People or People, Hope, and Persistence."***
- ***"PHP allows us to have a family, a connection, and somewhere where there is safety."***
- ***"PHP is all about getting different perspectives and sharing ideas."***
- ***"PHP and WestCare give me a place where I can participate and let things go with no judgment."***
- ***"PHP has helped me understand more about me and my addiction, and I have been able to start creating a new mindset."***
- ***"PHP has helped me build self-confidence and self-esteem while teaching me lessons in patience."***

One of the most common responses from participants was related to Uplifting the Human Spirit. Most group members said that the PHP has taught them that they are not defined by their past and that they deserve better than what their addiction gave them.

Hearing even one of our group members make that statement is proof that even on the toughest days, we can and do make a difference.

Stories from our Nevada programs

Celebrating Black History Month with Soul Food

By Michelle Murphy, *Case Manager*, Community Involvement Center

My name is Michelle Murphy and I am a case manager at WestCare Nevada's Community Involvement Center. I have worked with a few companies throughout the years, but never a company quite like WestCare. WestCare is a very diverse company with a lot of different cultures all working together. The month of February is a celebration for Black history. As an African American female growing up, we learned to celebrate with food. To recognize the diversity at WestCare, in the month of February, we were fortunate to share and celebrate this with our clients. Through the eyes of a multi-cultural staff, we shared how we in the Black community cook. I am happy that other cultures got a chance to celebrate this historic month with us.

Thank you to WestCare for allowing us to be celebrated!

A Personal Perspective of Black History Month

By Candice Hill, *Counselor*, Community Involvement Center

For many, **Black History Month** represents the celebration of African American achievements and a long lineage of resiliency, bravery, innovation, and dedication within the culture. To me, it is an extended celebration of being a young black child to a single mother, a young black mother at 13, and the first person in my family to graduate with a master's degree that can represent those in need. It is the ability to be more in a world that looks down on you, judges you, or belittles the confidence that you so strongly exude. It is being different and loving to those who feel indifferent towards you with open arms and acceptance. Black History Month means loving, embracing, and uplifting myself beyond measure and cultural circumstances.

Community Action Council (CAC) Member Spotlight: Linda Falba McSweeney

Linda Falba McSweeney was raised in Las Vegas and graduated from Bishop Gorman High School. She went to Northern California to attend San Jose State University where she majored in Speech Pathology. Linda worked in the school system for 33 years focusing on children with language delays, stuttering difficulties, articulation and autism. As the speech pathologist, she coordinated student study teams and brought together parents and school personnel to address children's individual needs. This led to an additional position as Coordinator of Integrated Children's Services. In this capacity, Linda developed community outreach programs. Seniors were brought into the schools to read with children, business members mentored middle school kids, homework clubs were started, and school sites were made available for family counseling in the evenings. The continuing goal was to make the school the focus of the community. Special outreach to Hispanic families brought computer lessons and multicultural literacy nights throughout the year. Much of the money to fund these programs came through grants written by Linda - a necessary part of building bridges between schools and the community. Now retired and living once again in Las Vegas, her interest in parents and children continues. She hopes to be a positive addition to WestCare's CAC!

Exciting Updates from the Development Team

By Andrew Moran, *Development Director*, WestCare Foundation

Our WestCare peers from across the country recently came together to discuss the progress that we have made and learn about the goals that we each hold for this amazing organization!

We were proud to update the group on the amazing progress that we have been making towards the proposed Village at the Women and Children's Campus transitional housing program including a $25k donation that we recently received from the James Stuart Haldan Charitable Foundation. In January, the Builders United construction group walked the proposed 5-acre site for the program with our FitzHouse team and discussed the possibility of breaking ground in the coming months! To date, we have already raised $2.3 million privately towards the project and have submitted several grant applications in support of it. In addition, we have met with locally elected officials including Nevada State Treasurer, Zach Conine and Nevada Congresswoman, Dina Titus to discuss the project and the positive impact that it will have on our community. With us currently in capital campaign mode in Nevada, we are beginning to capitalize on local interest and momentum in the project!

In addition to raising support for The Village at the Women & Children's Campus in Las Vegas, we have also continued our efforts to secure public and private sector funding for our other primary fundraising effort - The South Florida Center for Women and Children at The Village South in South Florida. We are also in the final stages of a feasibility analysis in Florida to determine the public and private sector support for an eventual capital campaign to raise funds for the Village South. Our public sector requests include local and state requests through the American Rescue Act and Federal Grant requests through the Economic Development Administration. Meanwhile, our private sector requests include individuals, families, and private foundations.

We have also been providing tours of our various facilities to decision makers and influencers to increase awareness and exposure in the community. In addition, we have also been actively pursuing funding for Puerto Rico, Florida, and Nevada through the state abatement process for the $26 billion National Opioid Settlement with the pharmaceutical industry!

In closing, I am thankful to be an advocate for the important work that we do and be able to serve alongside this talented team to further the support that we receive for our amazing programs from the communities in which we operate! Stay tuned for more exciting updates throughout 2022 for the benefit of our programs and those that we are so proud to serve!

Come join the family!

WE'RE HIRING IN NEVADA

Harris Springs Ranch - Las Vegas
- ***Cook***
- ***Behavioral Health Technician***
- ***Counselor I***

4th Street - Las Vegas
- ***Behavioral Health Technician***

Women & Children's Campus - Las Vegas
- ***Maintenance Technician***
- ***Cook***
- ***Behavioral Health Technician***
- ***Child Development Specialist***
- ***Peer Parent Partner***

Homefront - Reno
- ***Behavioral Health Technician***

Community Involvement Center - Las Vegas
- ***Behavioral Health Technician***
- ***Counselor II***

Community Triage Center - Las Vegas
- **Director of Community Behavioral Health Services**
- ***Registered Nurse***
- ***Behavioral Health Technician***
- ***LPN***
- ***Case Manager - MORE Team***

Apply online at careers.westcare.com

Connect with us in Nevada

Get in touch with our Marketing Department to learn more about what is happening in WestCare Nevada at marketing@westcare.com