



WESTCARE EXPRESS

IN THIS ISSUE

<i>Cover Story</i>	.....	01
<i>Illinois</i>	.....	03
<i>Foundation</i>	.....	04
<i>Tennessee</i>	.....	07
<i>Georgia</i>	.....	08
<i>The Question Corner</i>	.....	09
<i>California</i>	.....	11
<i>Florida</i>	.....	13
<i>Iowa</i>	.....	14
<i>Wisconsin</i>	.....	15
<i>Kudos!</i>	.....	16
<i>Pacific Islands</i>	.....	17
<i>Snapshots</i>	.....	19
<i>Calendar of Events</i>	.....	20

THE WESTCARE EXPRESS NEWSLETTER

AUGUST 2016

Squared-Up For Real... An Employee Profile

By David Rosynsky, Director of Special Projects



Anthony “Tony” Ferrentino, 65, spent a total of 28 years in prison. He doesn’t mind if you know that, so long as you see him as more than an ex-con.

This year, Tony celebrates the fifth anniversary of his release from prison, his fourth anniversary with WestCare, and his 14th year in recovery. These milestones are all part of what Tony calls being “*squared*

up” and being out of “*the life*”.

Tony, who figured he’d spend the rest of his life in prison, organized recovery groups and mentored inmates to help achieve and sustain their recovery. Eventually, he was granted an early release in 2010. At 60, Tony was starting over.

Now, the former boss of an organized drug operation was going straight and running a small lawn mowing business. Offers from old friends to get back into “the life” complicated Tony’s reentry.

With help from WestCare’s **Bob Neri**, Tony got involved with vocational



COVER STORY: *Squared-Up For Real (Con't.)*

rehabilitation and began an internship at WestCare's *A Turning Point* shelter facility in St. Petersburg. Later, Tony accepted a part-time job as a Procurement Specialist in Florida.

Under the supervision of Area Director **James Dates**, Tony secures thousands of dollars in donated items such as food and furniture for states including Florida, Georgia and North Carolina.

"Tony's story is one of true redemption," remarks Bob Neri, *"He's literally turned every skill he used during his drug using days into a right way of living."*

Tony is known for wearing a pair of small solid gold boxing gloves around his neck. He says they're a symbol of the internal struggle between good and evil that he battles daily. Tony remarks that he doesn't care whether



people know he's been to prison or not, so long as he never forgets it.

"My freedom was a gift I gave up once," says Tony, *"As long as I remember the experience and emotions of being locked away for so long, I'll never make that mistake again."*



Family Feedback

"In my WestCare travels, nothing keeps folks more connected to each other than the Express."

Bob Neri, Foundation

"I get goose bumps every time I see all the people we work with and the diversity of our programs. I am so proud to be a WestCarian."

Lynn Pimentel, California

ILLINOIS: *Reunited and it Feels So Good*

By Larry Harvey, Assistant Director

One day our WestCare treatment clients, who are also inmates in the Illinois Department of Corrections at *Sheridan Correctional Center*, will be released from prison. WestCare strives to make their transition to mainstream society as smooth and successful as possible. Research shows that inmates returning to a supportive and nurturing environment are less likely to reoffend and return to prison. That is the objective of the WestCare treatment program and in particular our *Family Reunification Program* component.

Prior to discharge dates, selected clients, their families, and significant others are voluntarily enrolled into this ten-session, closed support/education group. The following topics are processed: The Treatment Experience; The Disease Concept; Family Roles; Healthy vs. Unhealthy Relationships; Codependency; Boundaries; Criminalization; Disappointments & Expectations; and Support System Development.

Since facilitating the Family Reunification Program, assistant directors **Joseph Green** and **Larry Harvey** have witnessed families in all stages of recovery. *“Doing time”* is not only a concept to describe the person who is incarcerated. There is much discussion of the time the family members and significant others experience as a result of the incarceration. Anger, abandonment, shame, and fears are among the feelings processed in those discussions. With this being true, preparation to successfully



Joseph Green and Larry Harvey

complete the treatment program and transition to a healthy home environment is most difficult. It is a period of stress, apprehension, and uncertainty for all involved.

Surveys completed by all participants indicate that the six year old program is highly successful. The most recurring comments relate to the clients' desire to lengthen the sessions. There are also numerous requests to return and repeat the ten sessions.

The Family Reunification Program. Together. It works.

FOUNDATION: *LGBT Council News - Well Suited*

By David Rosynsky, WestCare LGBT Awareness and Advisory Council

This was supposed to be an article about the prevalence of mental health conditions among LGBTQ populations. But recent national events and the current political climate had us longing for something more uplifting. So, instead of examining the fact that LGBTQ individuals are almost three times more likely than others to experience mental health conditions (an important topic that we'll explore in a future article), we turn our focus to *Suited*, an inspiring new film by HBO Documentary Films that premiered in June.



Produced by Lena Dunham of HBO's *Girls*, *Suited* is a profile of Bindle & Keep, a Brooklyn-based tailoring company that specializes in making bespoke suits for gender nonconforming, androgynous, and transgender clients.

Suited provides viewers with brief but candid glimpses into the lives of six individuals. Due to reasons connected to gender and identity, these members of the LGBTQ

community struggle to find off-the-rack clothes that fit their bodies and correspond to how they want to look and feel.

There's Derek, a transgender man who needs a suit for his wedding (something that will make him appear unquestionably masculine); and Jillian, a transgender attorney, searching for a power suit to wear when she argues an important discrimination case in federal court.

But perhaps the tenderest story is that of Aidan, a 12-year old transgender boy anxiously anticipating his upcoming Bar Mitzvah.

They each find themselves on the doorstep of Bindle & Keep, a safe space, where co-owners Rae Tutera and Daniel Friedman take a holistic approach to suit making. It's no spoiler that all six clients are eventually satisfied by the clothier. But *Suited* isn't simply about tailor-made suits. Rather, the film is an exploration of gender, identity, and the psychology of fashion (but not in a way that makes it a chore to watch).

If an individual's personal narrative can be woven into the fabric of what they wear, it's happening at Bindle & Keep. Ultimately, what *Suited* does best is highlight a universal truth: that every person wants to feel comfortable in their own skin.

Suited is currently playing on HBO.



FOUNDATION: *Human Resources News*



Please join us in welcoming **Shannon Alvarez** to the WestCare family as our new head of Human Resources. She fills the big shoes left by **Michael Shields**, following his recent retirement.

Shannon has an impressive and extensive background in the human services arena, as well as providing business consulting services for numerous major corporations.

Under Shannon's direction, the HR Division will begin to function in ways that will look vastly different than how it operates today.

Shannon has completed her transition and just like everyone else who joins WestCare, has hit the ground running and has not stopped!



FOUNDATION: *The 2016 Personnel Training Survey*

By Jennifer Hilton, Director of Training

WestCare's National Training Committee needs your input to help shape knowledge development opportunities across the organization.

All personnel are encouraged to complete the 2016 Personnel Training Survey. It will only take five minutes!

For one week only, from August 1st through August 7th, the online survey will be available at the following link:

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/WestCareTraining>

A paper copy of the survey also can be obtained from your supervisor. Completed paper surveys can be submitted to your supervisor, scanned and emailed to training@westcare.com, or mailed directly to the following address:

Jennifer Hilton, Director of Training

1711 Whitney Mesa Dr., Henderson, NV 89014-2080

Thank you. We value your input!

FOUNDATION: \$250...to Your Health!!



\$250. Please see the very important information below.

Here is what you need to do to earn the *additional \$250 towards your 2017 HRA Allocation*:

- Download a Physician Form prior to Sept 30, 2016
- Visit your doctor and complete the necessary blood work
- Your Doctor needs to submit the completed form to Maxim by October 15, 2016



To download a PHYSICIAN FAX FORM:

Step 1: Schedule an appointment with your personal physician for an Annual Well Visit (Note: Physician visits must have been completed in the last 6 months).

Step 2: Go to <https://maximumwellness.bioiq.com>

Step 3: Click the “Sign-up Now!” button

Step 4: When prompted with the question: “Do you already have an existing BioIQ account?”

New Users:

- Click “No, this is my first time.”
- Fill out demographic information. Then create username and password.

Returning Users:

- Click “Yes, I do!”
- Enter username and password from the previous year.

Step 5: When prompted, enter the invitation code: **WestcareWell2016**

Step 6: Select preferred screening option:
Physician Results Upload

Step 7: Download and print the Physician Form to take to your physician (Note: Your physician will submit the form directly to Maxim by following the instructions on the form).

Test results will be available online within ten to fifteen days after your Physician submits the form to Maxim. Maxim, powered by BioIQ, will send an email notification when your results are available with instructions to view your results online.

TENNESSEE: *Great New Partnership with Civic Group*

Leadership Roane class of 2016 chose WestCare Tennessee (Harriman) as their non-profit fundraising project. The goal was to raise the money to assist in providing outpatient treatment for individuals and families with substance abuse issues.

They went above and beyond and raised an amazing \$8,000! The check was presented to WestCare Tennessee staff on June 16th, at their graduation. WestCare Tennessee is quickly becoming a part of the community and is gaining more support each day.



*Pictured with Leadership Roane participants are WestCare Employees **Steve Hornsby** (Sr. Vice President - Appalachia/Mid-South), **Nancy Fowlkes** (Alcohol and Drug Addiction Counselor), **Janice Church** (Alcohol and Drug Addiction Counselor), **Stan Grubb** (Community Outreach Program Manager), and **Janiece Foust** (Program Director).*

GEORGIA: *Community Action Council Member Profile*

Debra DeBerry

DeKalb County Superior Court Clerk



My experience with WestCare began in 1999, first introduced by **Michael Langford**. He was working along with the Fulton County District Attorney to return a young lady to her family in Atlanta from Las Vegas. We first met this young lady during UYAC's Annual Youth Leadership Summit. Sometime after that, her mom informed Michael that her young daughter had been lured away, was involved in prostitution and had been taken to Las Vegas. Michael, the DA and others traveled to Las Vegas to retrieve the young girl with the aid of WestCare. She ended up in a WestCare youth shelter.

We were all so impressed with the dedication WestCare showed to this one life. As a result of the efforts of the group, she was returned home to her family, the persons involved were subsequently prosecuted and Michael Langford (now Regional Vice President) began working with WestCare.

Since that time, I heard Michael and **John Bascom** discuss different projects, programs and I even attended a few events. I introduced my former boss to WestCare, and she later became a board member. But she became ill and was not able to complete her term so I was asked to serve on the board in her stead and remain doing so to this present day.



Debra volunteers for Senior Connections delivering Meals on Wheels to seniors and shut-ins.



Debra reading to the students of a local elementary school

"Uplifting the Human Spirit" is truly what WestCare and WestCare Georgia accomplishes every day. I am honored to be part of this mission!

This Month's Question: *"What good advice would you give to a teenager growing up in today's world?"*



"There are so many pressures in the world today that you have to be strong, have lots of perseverance, tons of patience, and remember to love everyone. Lean on THE rock -God, Jesus- all the time. Have a strong work ethic that brings you to work 10 to 15 minutes before your shift begins, give 100% of your abilities to your job, and don't take it home with you."

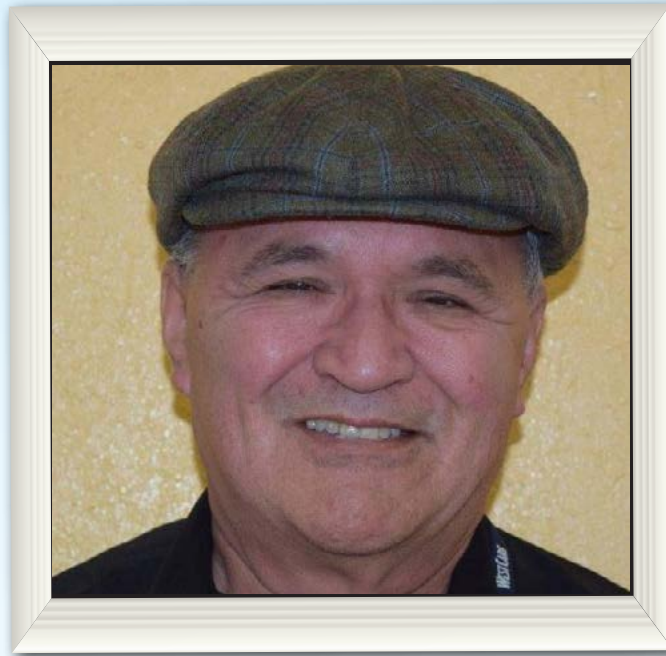
- Barbara Ruiter, Administrative Assitant - Iowa



"My advice to youth is: Get off the screen and get into nature! There is nothing like taking a hike, going for a swim in crystal blue water, or kayaking to a waterfall with friends and family. All of my best experiences in life involved laughing with friends, eating with family, and seeing the world with someone close to me--none of which ever involved technology. Don't ever forget that it is a big world out there and the best way to be a part of it, is to be in it."

**- Aja Cruz Ramos, LICSW, MSW
Program Coordinator - Guam**

THE QUESTION CORNER: August 2016 (Con't.)



"I would say, 'Keep your left up and jab.' This applies to everything that you may encounter when you're under attack from life's offenses. You keep your left up shielding what comes at you to give you time to assess, and then jab at the problem till it's solved; maybe with a knockout!"

– Richard Duron, Outpatient Counselor – California

THE QUESTION CORNER: Question for September 2016

For September: *"What item in your possession could you absolutely not do without?" Send your response with a photo by Wednesday, August 15th to john.wallace@westcare.com.*



CALIFORNIA: *Zoo Critters Entertain Moms and Kids*

(All WCCA stories submitted by Michael Mygind and Gaby McNiel)



The parents and children at the MLK Residential facility's Learning Center were recently surprised with a visit from the Fresno Chaffee Zoo's Zoomobile staff and their animal friends! This is the first of two visits that were generously donated by the Unitarian Universalist Church to our men, women and children. On behalf of all of those we serve, thank you!



CALIFORNIA: *Uplifting!!*

Men from our MLK Residential site participated in a 100, 200 and 300 pound bench-press competition. Each of them received medals and trophies based on their category and strength. This is an activity that clinicians will often say is a great way for many clients to stay healthy, and relieve stress.





CALIFORNIA: *Fresno's Got Talent!*

The men, women, children and staff at the MLK Residential facility held a talent show that was a tremendous success. The event featured singing, dancing, poetry, stand-up comedy, personal testimonies and more!



Crystal Matthews (Data Entry) with facility residents.

It is truly wonderful, yet not surprising, that those in behavioral health programs possess great talents that are expressed with pride.



CALIFORNIA: *Helping Spread the Message: Believe & Achieve*



Staff and clients took part in the **Big B.A.N.G. (Building A New Generation)** Believe and Achieve youth football clinic at Bulldog Stadium in Fresno. The event featured football lessons for 4th grade to 8th grade youth from past and present NFL players, including **Robert Golden** from the Pittsburgh Steelers, **Derron Smith** from the Cincinnati Bengals and **Cameron Worrell** from the Chicago Bears. Some of our men from our MLK Residential program were on hand to help set up and tear down the events and keep the event's participants hydrated. Great work, guys!

FLORIDA: *Successful Start for Re-entry Program*

Submitted by Michael J. Rogers, Lead SA Counselor - Key West



A graduation ceremony for a new work-release program marked a cooperative effort in Monroe County that included WestCare's Jail Incarceration Program (JIP), Florida Keys Community College (FKCC), and Workforce. Those who completed the program were awarded certificates from FKCC with the potential for college credit, and they have been offered employment through a local hospitality vendor in the city upon their

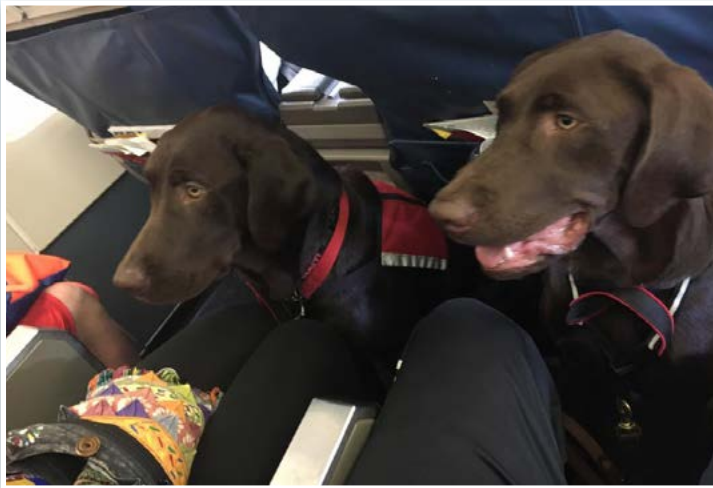
release.

This is the first graduating class. Of the 10 women in the course, seven were also JIP participants. Only six are pictured in the photo with counselors, but for good reason: The seventh was released from jail and is currently employed as a result of this program!



IOWA: *Keeping Up With the Battle Buddies*

Three puppies from the 2015 litter, **Campbell**, **Lejeune** and **Benning** went on their first airplane ride. They flew from Minneapolis to St. Louis for a weekend of training at Six Flags, then downtown St. Louis to the Arch and some museums before flying back.



Every month the 4H youth, families and FAVA Battle Buddy Coordinator, expose the dogs to different environments to help them become comfortable with any variety of sounds, smells, people, etc. that they could possibly experience as a service dog placed with a veteran. They even spent some time on a canoe trip, and they are popular attractions and parades and fairs throughout the year.



WISCONSIN: *A Busy Summer in the City*



At the Garfield Festival in Milwaukee, Regional Vice President Elizabeth Coggs (pictured) shares information about the WestCare Veterans Village Homeowners Program.

WestCare Wisconsin rolls into August with another full plate of activities ahead. During June and July, a *Leaders Making a Difference-Youth* workshop dealt with the trauma of violence, through writing and the spoken word, college readiness, and leadership development.

Other positive summer activities and projects included participation in Milwaukee gatherings aimed at building trust, collaboration and safe neighborhoods.

KUDOS! *Our Monthly Shout-Outs to Exceptional Individuals*



Rhonda Jordal, Director of *Family Alliance for Veterans of America, Inc. (FAVA)* has been re-appointed to the *Iowa Council on Homelessness*. The (ICH) is committed to ensuring that all Iowans have access to safe, decent and affordable housing. Ms. Jordal has also served five years with the Iowa Advisory Council for Brain Injuries, which is by Governor-appointment only.

Nevada's **alumni base** is large and active, and they did another great job this summer with their 4th of July fireworks fundraising efforts. The alums are a tight-knit group, committed to supporting each other in sobriety and to mentoring current WestCare clients.



And, **Barbara Varner**, Data Collection Specialist in California, deserves a standing ovation. The lovely and lively Miss Varner recently reached Level 75 on the birthday scale!!



PACIFIC ISLANDS: *Summer Camp Has Never Been More Fun!!*

Submitted by Troy Cruz, Youth Educator



The team from *Personal Responsibility Education Program (PREP)* kicked off the summer with not one, but two summer camps that spanned from Guam's island community to Palau's!

Guam's one week long day camp focused on building healthy relationships through four adulthood preparation subjects: Creative & Critical Thinking Skills; Personal & Interpersonal Leadership; Healthy Relationships & Communication; and Community Leadership & Diversity.

The camp allowed youth to use these skills through hands on activities and games; challenging them to think ahead, anticipate and plan for what comes next.

After Guam, we were on to Palau. A two week residential camp requiring tons of sunscreen, bug spray and a fearless passion for the great outdoors! We were one-with-nature; respecting, preserving and learning the cultural and traditional ways of the island through the teachings of many master instructors.

The hands-on activities included traditional rooster trapping (yes, you read that right), weaving, and kite making. Different fishing methods (line and rod "jigging"), and taro harvesting gave the youth the knowledge of how to be one with nature and survive with minimal materials, just

as their ancestors did before the advent of Western influence, the iPad and the Smart Phone.

I had the opportunity to see youth increase their knowledge, comprehension about life, and watch the extraordinary friendships they built. I truly believe that the camps were an asset, as these talented young people have access to a greater support system for the challenges they may face now and in the future.



PACIFIC ISLANDS: Behavioral Health: Treating “The Island People.”

Submitted by Joaquin Muna, Youth Educator



WestCare partner, Commonwealth Health Center Corporation (CHCC), sponsored a three (3) day summit and work session in Saipan, focusing on Behavioral Health and Substance Abuse. Government, private, and non-profit agencies from throughout Commonwealth of the Northern Marianas Islands gathered to attend the summit, as our Pacific Islands Vice President **Sarah Thomas Nededog**, discussed the current state of affairs throughout the region, and introduced national and international models which will assist in responding to the behavioral health and substance abuse problems plaguing our islands people.

Lead Veteran Advocate and licensed IMFT and Substance Abuse Counselor, **Daniel Duenas** notes the uniqueness of the islands. *“Never forget our culture...our culture is one of our biggest resources in helping our people struggling with substance abuse and behavioral health.”*

This important and first of its kind summit was the first step in moving toward culturally efficient, holistic, and successful behavioral health treatment models for the islands’ people.

Stuff You Didn't Know You Didn't Know!

- The first couple to be shown in bed together on prime time TV was Fred and Wilma Flintstone.
- The cost of raising a medium-size dog to the age of eleven: **\$16,400.**
- $111,111,111 \times 111,111,111 = 12,345,678,987,654,321!$



As the annual Guam Liberation Day parade celebrated the Island's freedom from the Japanese, this unique float captured everyone's attention. Especially the whole pig roasting on the upper deck!!



CALENDAR OF EVENTS: August 2016

August 03 (9am-11am PT / 12pm-2pm ET)
Florida - Guidance/Care Center CAC Meeting (*Marathon, FL*)

August 04 (6pm-8pm PT)
California - Art for Aids (*Fresno, CA*)
Notes: Fresno Historic Chinatown District

August 09 (9am-11am PT / 12pm-2pm ET)
Florida - GulfCoast CAC Meeting (*St. Petersburg, FL*)
Notes: City Center Office

August 16 (8am-9am PT / 11am-12pm ET)
Executive Committee Teleconference Meeting

August 16 (6:30pm-8:30pm PT)
California - Fresno Grizzlies Community Outreach Night
Notes: Fresno / Chuckchansi Park

August 18 (3pm-4pm PT / 5pm-6pm ET)
Iowa - FAVA CAC Meeting (*Forest City, IA*)

August 26 - 28
California - Macy's Shop for a Cause Event (*Fresno, CA*)

August 30 (11am-1pm PT)
California - Our Promise State Employee Giving Kickoff
Notes: Sacramento, CA

August 31 (4pm-5pm AZ Time)
Arizona - CAC Meeting (*Bullhead City, AZ*)

AUGUST

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

August Observances

- Children's Eye Health & Safety Month
- National Breastfeeding Month
- National Immunization Awareness Month
- Psoriasis Awareness Month
- National Highway Traffic Safety Administration Presents Drive Sober or Get Pulled Over (8/17-9/5)
- World Breastfeeding Week (first week of August)
- National Health Center Week (second full week of August)