



January 2013

Hopes, Dreams and Plans for the Brand New Year

"My hope for WestCare Arizona is that we get all or some of the funding for our Arizona Families FIRST program. If we get all the funding we applied for it means about \$10.5 million, which will turn our little corner of the world into something huge overnight! Our Regional Vice President, Amy Roukie, was quoted as saying "Go Big or Go Home," and I am taking that statement and running with it. If we even get part of the funding, it will mean big changes for us. An announcement is expected in mid January, so cross your fingers and toes along with us!"

Kim Mitchell

- Director of Administrative Services, Bullhead City, Arizona



Kim Mitchell

"As you know, being a counselor in this field we are always working with others to help them in their lives. It always seems that I never have time to work on things in my own personal life. My New Year's resolution is to work toward self-improvement. I will make a better effort toward personal goals and bettering myself so I can be of more service to my clients."

Valentin Ferrel - *Counselor, Hanford, California*

"2013 will be a New Year and a New Me! I look forward to getting fit and losing some weight, learning more Spanish and helping others by paying it forward more!"

Wendy Ramos

*- Asst. to the Senior VP
- Miami, Florida*



Wendy Ramos

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Valentin Ferrel



Hopes, Dreams and Plans for the Brand New Year *(continued from page one)*



Susan Babb

"Last year's resolution was to read the New Testament. I started Revelations last week so I feel good about my progress! This coming year I'm going to read the Old Testament. I'm also going to try to work no more than 45-50 hours a week!"

Susan Babb – Guidance/Care Center Therapist, Key Largo, Florida



Lynn Pimental

"To listen to my body and do all I can do to stay healthy . . . as I age I have found my body is using its outdoors voice. I need to listen."

Lynn Pimental – Deputy Administrator -WestCare California



Lenora Brooks-Phillips

"This is my hope and prayer for the WestCare families: So dear hearts, trust God to heal the sick, provide food for the hungry, clothes and shelter for those that don't have as we do, Amen.

Happy New Year, and I send love to all the WestCare staff."

Lenora Brooks-Phillips – Lead Data Specialist Supervisor WestCare California



Maryellen Pistalu

"My New Years Resolution comes from the last words my 85 year old mother spoke to me as she lay on her death bed: **To thine own self be true**

*I shall resolve to be true to myself-
And it must follow, as the night the day,
Thou canst not then be false to any man.*
Hugs, Merry Christmas and Happy New Year."

Maryellen Pistalu – MS, Contract Compliance Director WestCare California



Geri Ramirez

"My New Year Resolution is to bring a voice to the meaning of inner-self, being positive in my thinking and knowing that my words have meaning, which sets me apart from my other-self, an outlook that sees the beauty in life rather than false hope and despair; a pitfall we all get into."

Geri Ramirez – Contract Compliance Specialist WestCare California



Andrea Ferrebee

"My New Year's resolution is to go home, and stay sober. I want to start living a healthy and productive life, so I can finish school, better my relationships with my parents, and become a successful person. My parents' trust is something I shouldn't have taken for granted. They mean the world to me, and I don't want to hurt them anymore than I already have. Family is so important, especially around the Holidays. I am going to make a permanent change."

Andrea Ferrebee – Client, WestCare North Carolina Girls Program



Michael Mygind

"My goal for 2013 is to always have and maintain a positive outlook."

Michael Mygind – Admin. Assistant -WestCare California



Mark Leanhart

"My resolution is to curb my cussing!"

Mark Leanhart – Admissions Coordinator WestCare California



Service Veteran Well-received in Northwest

Submitted by WestCare Oregon staff

WestCare Oregon is proud to announce that AmeriCorps National Service Member Terry "Spike" McKinsey recently joined the WestCare staff at Columbia River Correctional Institution (CRCI) Recovery in Progress Program in Portland, OR. Mr. McKinsey was selected to fill the new AmeriCorps position assisting and mentoring military veterans currently enrolled in the AIP program at CRCI.

Having served in all four major military branches during his own military career, Spike brings a rich military background to the CRCI staff. Mr. McKinsey's military career began in 1965 by enlisting in the US Army. In 1966, he was accepted for appointment to the US Naval Academy, and served in the navy from 1966-70, including sea duty in the Pacific and Mediterranean theaters. Commissioned in the US Marine Corps in 1970, Mr. McKinsey served as a Marine fighter pilot with the Fleet Marine Force, Pacific. Seizing the opportunity for yet another challenge, Mr. McKinsey transferred to the Air Force and the Oregon ANG where he was assigned as a flying training instructor. Rising through numerous demanding flying and leadership positions, Mr. McKinsey

attained the rank of Colonel, culminating his colorful and varied military career as commanding officer of the 142nd Fighter Wing, Portland, OR. He retired from active military service in 1995.

Following his military career, Mr. McKinsey immediately began a second career as an airline pilot for a regional airline in the Pacific Northwest. He was soon promoted to Assistant Chief Pilot, serving in this management capacity until retiring again 2010. Spike and his wife, Anna, currently reside in Battle Ground, WA. They have two grown children and three grandchildren. WestCare Oregon is delighted to have Mr. McKinsey on board and the veterans in the program are excited to have him as a mentor.

The WestCare Oregon staff would like to wish the whole WestCare family a happy holiday season!

Oregon
AmeriCorps National Service Member
Terry "Spike" McKinsey



Arizona



Don't Forget Your Socks!

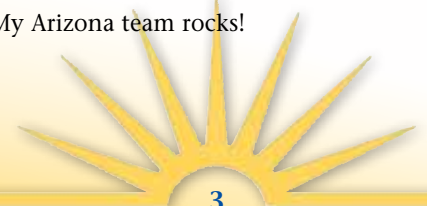
By Kim Mitchell – *Director of Administrative Services*

This year, WestCare Arizona staff celebrated the holidays at our local bowling center. Teams were formed by drawing names, handicaps were calculated, and team prizes were awarded to 1st, 2nd and 3rd place finishers. Staff enjoyed pizza and soda while bowling their 3 games. Some were observed dancing on the lanes, high-fiving each other and a true camaraderie was formed amongst us all.

In nature and my team came in last place so I was a little crabby when it was over! During the week prior, I kept saying to everyone, don't forget your socks! It was such a big hit, that we are forming a behavioral health league in January inviting all our collaborative partners to join us in good old fashion bowling competition. Amy Roukie, Regional Vice President and Maurice Lee, Senior Vice President came and joined us in the festivities and we were happy to have them there.

My Arizona team rocks!

For those who know me, I'm competitive



Village South Celebrates 20 years of Families in Transition Program

Submitted by WestCare Florida staff

On November 6, 2012 current and former staff, clients, alumni, and community members gathered at the City of Miami's historic American Legion Hall to celebrate 20 years of service to parents and their children. The Village South was the first federally-funded SAMHSA/CSAT residential program of its kind in Miami-Dade County and one of the first in Florida and the nation designed to meet the needs of parents and their children with comprehensive holistic services. Over the past 20 years, nearly 2,000 parents and children have benefited from the program.

The work of the FIT staff and the program have received national and state recognition for the use of evidence-based practices that include 2009 SAMSHA Science and Service Award for Seeking Safety and the 2010 Department of Children and Families and Florida Alcohol and Drug Abuse Associations Outstanding Program of the Year.

The Honorable Jeri B. Cohen, Circuit Court Judge who presides over Miami-Dade Dependency Drug Court, praised the graduates, alumni and staff on their accomplishments with recovery and the many successful family reunifications. The celebration also included a graduation ceremony for over 20 clients, face painting, bounce house, cotton candy, snow cones and a BBQ.



WestCare CEO Richard Steinberg, Judge Jeri B. Cohen, and WC Senior VP Frank Rabbito

Florida

Human Resources

Corner

By Michael Shields – *(the goofy guy pictured), Director, Human Resources, WestCare Foundation*

Happy New Year to all 1200+ WestCare family members . . . and YOUR families! I hope you took time to enjoy your families and friends, giving thanks for what we have, and to help all year round those of us who are less fortunate.

Just a few business related comments this month:

- It is Benefits Enrollment time again. Please make sure to open the email you received, and make your benefit selections for 2013. As the email states, we are extremely happy to have been able to absorb the increase in benefit premiums without passing on any increase to employees!
- For those of you with Flexible Spending Accounts (FSA), please remember that whatever you don't spend, you lose under IRS regulations. Unless you are comfortable giving more money to the government than is already required of you, I would advise doctor visits, glasses, prescription refills or something to use up those funds.
- Address info. Please make sure you give Human Resources any address changes that have taken place this year, so that your 2013 insurance ID cards, and your W2's make it to you in a timely manner, we need to have the correct info on file. If there are any changes, please contact your friendly neighborhood HR Department!
- There are ALWAYS jobs available across all of WestCareland. If you are looking for a change in geography, weather, or are looking for a career growth opportunity, make sure to visit www.westcare.com, and go to the Jobs link.

Have a glorious 2013!

Thanks, Mike

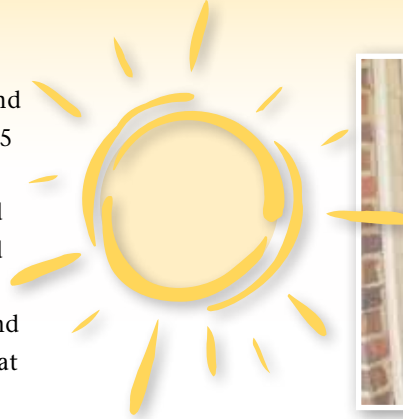


Community Outreach

By Jerome Knight

November and December continued a tradition for WestCare Georgia. We passed out turkeys to the sick and shut-in seniors here in the community. We delivered 35 Thanksgiving turkeys to elderly residents, and at each home we were greeted with smiles, warm welcome and hugs. Pictures were taken to preserve the moment, and the delivery was repeated around Christmas time.

WestCare Georgia has been doing this since 2003, and it always brings happiness and pleasure to our seniors at holiday times.



Georgia



Information Technology

IT Corner

(An occasional column of advice from our Information Technology team)

Happy New Year From Your WestCare IT Staff!

By Sean Harrigan – Systems Administrator

We worked hard to make some important improvements to the WestCare network in 2012. Some you see, like the new antivirus solution for laptops and the new email servers, and some you don't see, like improving network capacity and deploying automatic updates. We're all proud of the work we've done to help WestCare accomplish its goals while increasing security and efficiency, and we're looking forward to another productive year in 2013.

We know that network improvements can lead to new challenges and issues for our users, and we're glad to be here to help you when you need it.

How to Get Help

If you're having a technical problem, you should submit a help desk ticket. Any WestCare employee can submit a help desk ticket. This helps us to track issues, to identify trending problems, and to make sure the right person is assigned to help.

The first place you should go to submit a ticket is right on the WestCare Employee Portal. You'll see a link

on the left side of the page that says "Technical Support." If you can't access the employee portal, you can contact us via email at helpdesk@westcare.com.

If you have no network access, or can't get logged in, you can give us a call at 702-410-7595, or at extension 10200 from a Polycom phone. We can get pretty busy around here, so you may need to leave us a message.

No matter which method you use, be sure to include specific details about the problem you are having and current contact information including your phone number and extension so that we know how to reach you.

Helpful Hint

The standard HIPPA disclosure statement is automatically attached to every email leaving our organization, and is not required for internal email. If you include this disclosure in your personal email signature it will show two times in every email sent outside of our organization, and you should remove it from your signature.

WestCare IT Help Desk

E-mail: helpdesk@westcare.com

Phone: 702-410-7595 or Ext. 10200 from a Polycom phone

Intranet: <https://secure.westcare.com/intra/ctl/techsupport/request>



Cookie Monsters at Headquarters!

There are so many traditions to recognize and celebrate throughout the holiday season both at home with family as well as at work with our WestCare family. The Foundation office shared in a fun and very sweet cookie exchange where we exchanged dozens of amazing cookies! For many of us, it was a great kick start to get us into our holiday spirit and build on our memories and traditions. We continued our traditional

Foundation gift exchange luncheon full of fun and laughter as we all exchanged our fun gifts with one another and shared stories. We also displayed our Holiday tree which holds 20 little candy canes to represent 20 sweet little Connecticut angels.

From all of us at the Foundation to all of you, we wish your new year brings prosperity and happiness.



Cookies, cookies . . . and no 2 alike!

Party On, Silver State Staffers!

Submitted by WestCare Nevada staff

The WestCare Annual Christmas party was held for the staff in the three programs in Northern Nevada. The festivities were hosted by Amy Roukie, VP of Operations for Nevada and Arizona; Maurice Lee, Senior Vice President and Rhonda Shields, Coordinator.

A wonderful turn-out of the WestCare staff, their families and friends as fifty people were treated to a delicious menu of prime rib, lasagna, chicken pasta, salad, dinner rolls, iced tea and bread pudding with whipped cream for dessert. Following dinner, staff members'

names were drawn for door prizes and all received WestCare T-shirts.



AmeriCorps service member Laurretta

Nevada



-(Left to right) Kim Rogers, Denise Johnson-Williams, Didi Buono, Sean Harrigan, Cecily Moreland, Pat Gericke, Sarah Arrigo, and Kathy Schreiner. Not pictured: Chris Upton



Julie Pomi, Jarett Oroszi and Garry Reyna

A Mom's Gratitude

(Editor's note: WestCare in Reno received this note of thanks. We have paraphrased and shortened the names)

"Dear WestCare staff:

My son Travis overdosed on narcotics on October 11th, 2011. He took his last breath in my arms as he turned blue and I began CPR. Luckily, I'm a Respiratory Therapist and my training kicked in. I realized it is possible to scream and perform CPR at the same time. Thankfully, Travis woke up and was rushed to the hospital. After 4 days, you accepted him into your detox program and helped save his life.

We will always remember you and you are in our hearts forever.

Travis is now in a long-term work/recovery program, training in search and rescue where he remains happy, healthy, clean and sober. Hallelujah! We love you all. Merry Christmas!"

- Paula B.



Employee of the Year – Caren Lopez

By Christopher Nelson – Program Coordinator CTC Las Vegas

Caren is truly what WestCare is all about. She is very caring, non-judgmental and busy uplifting human spirits everyday, not only the clients and staff but in the everyday life of the community.

Caren and her husband of 13 years, William, have been a huge part of the NA/AA community since her sobriety date of May 25, 1999. They have traveled to various states and were part of the conventions sharing their strength, experience and hope with others.

Lately, Caren has been through a life-changing tragedy. For the past year she has been taking care of her husband, who was diagnosed with stage four Cancer, in addition to her twelve year old son, Willie. The disease spread quickly and William passed away, December 1.

Hard work and compassion truly pays off. Caren deserves the award more than anyone I know. No matter what was going on at home she never brought it too work. She always came in with a smile and said, "Good

Morning." She has a very calming and soft spoken way about her, an amazing God given gift. Caren implemented "Client Appreciation Day" once a month. She scheduled it on her days off, just so she can give 100% of her attention to our clients. The clients play bingo, eat nachos, candy, and ice cream and receive prizes. It really is so much fun and wonderful! The clients laugh and they get to pick a prize and that is uplifting to our clients spirits.

Caren is amazingly humble, never has a negative thing to say about anyone and is such an inspiration. In the years I have known Caren I have really seen her blossom into this confident, fashionable superwoman. Through her compassion, caring eyes, loving heart, and pure smile that is the meaning of life to help others. We are family at CTC and Caren is a huge part of us.

Thank you so much Caren Lopez for being such a vital part of the fight to help others regain their lives. We love you and are honored to call you our co-worker and friend.

Nevada



Caren Lopez and her late husband, William

Glenda's Angel

By Heather Frost – Deputy Director-Women and Children's Campus

I received a surprising call that turned out to be a true blessing and an early Christmas present for Glenda, a Marine veteran residing at the Las Vegas Women and Children's Campus. The vet, who has a severe foot infection and was unable to work, had been told that all her belongings and military memorabilia at a storage facility in North Carolina were going to be disposed of on Saturday for non-payment of storage fees.

The call I received was regarding Mr. Berry from Dallas, Texas, a veteran of the Gulf War. He and his wife operate a non-profit Homeless Shelter for Veterans and he is also the CEO of a small but expanding alcohol and drug rehabilitation facility. Excited about the variety of programs that WestCare provides, he wanted to know if it would be possible to tour the facility with his business partner.

During the tour of the veteran's wing, Glenda asked that I come into her room because she

was so distraught over losing her possessions. She told me about the storage fees and her futile efforts to pay it. I mentioned to the visitors about Glenda's situation and they asked how much was owed. The past amount due was over \$500 and the visitors said to tell Glenda not to worry because some friends of WestCare are going to pay it for her. They immediately gave me a credit card and within a few minutes Glenda's belongings were safe.

It was truly a blessing to see Glenda gratefully interacting with them as they thanked her for her service and dedication to our country. They told her that it was an honor that they could be of service and it did not take long before everyone in the room shared tears and embraced each other.

I often encouraged Glenda to believe that everything would be okay because an angel walks through the doors of WestCare every single day!



Glenda



AmeriCorps Spotlight

United by Service Expands

By Dan Bernal – *Team Leader*

WestCare successfully completed the first year of the United By Service mission this past November. The mission: Enlist veterans and military family members to serve as AmeriCorps Service Members within WestCare, to be the best possible S.A.G.E. to veteran and military family clients who are striving to make gains on their personal journeys of growth. The S.A.G.E. strives to Support, Assist, Guide and Encourage.

Organizationally, we experience growth as well in the 2nd year of United By Service. While the first year mission had 40 AmeriCorps National Direct Service Members serving in WestCare facilities throughout several states, Guam and the U.S. Virgin Islands, in Year 2 the mission has expanded. There are still 40 National Direct Service Members, several who have renewed for a 2nd year of service, but there are an additional 20 AmeriCorps State Service Members, 10 each in Florida and Nevada. During the month of November, as the Year 1 mission was winding down, the 2012-13 Members had to opportunity to attend training events in their respective states.

WestCare-NV State AmeriCorps Program Director Jim Wakeling travelled from Reno with AmeriCorps Service Member Frank Suber to Las Vegas for Nevada's United By Service pre-service orientation and training at the WestCare Foundation offices. There they joined Southern NV AmeriCorps Members Rick Denton, Tara Jainagerker, John Pawlak, Kevin Hall, Ronnie Johnson, and Marlene Barajas. Joining the mission after the training dates were Lauretta Nawojski (Reno), Greg Schreiner, and Joe Cataldi, both of whom will serve in Las Vegas.

WestCare Regional Vice-President for FL/Caribbean Frank Rabbito and WestCare-FL State AmeriCorps Program Director Michael Reynolds hosted United By Service pre-service orientation and training at the Village in Miami, FL. Florida service members include those serving in FL-Gulfcoast: Jim Schlemmel, Bob Canada, Mitch Pollack and Sandy Leger; and serving in Miami/Keys: Unique Lofton, Lamorne Chang-Bissett, and Cathy Leroux-Austin.

Thank you all for your commitment to national service and to serving veterans and military families!



Florida State
AmeriCorps Team



Nevada State AmeriCorps Team

Interesting New Year Facts

Courtesy of – <http://festivals.iloveindia.com/new-year/facts.html>

- New Year is the oldest of all holidays, as it was first observed in ancient Babylon as many as 4000 years ago.
- The tradition of making New Year resolution dates back to the early Babylonians.
- The Roman senate declared January 1 as the New Year in 153 BC. Though even this date saw major tampering, it was Julius Caesar who again declared January 1 in Julian calendar as the New Year, in 46 BC.
- The Romans began a tradition of exchanging gifts on New Year's Eve, by giving one another branches from sacred trees, for good fortune. The gift phenomenon is prevalent from those times.
- Many cultures believe that anything given or taken on New Year, in the shape of a ring is good luck, because it symbolizes "coming full circle."

Holiday Cards Help Raise Money for Local Charities

By Charlene Hamann – *Recreation Therapist*

Holiday greeting cards made by clients in the WestCare Sheridan program helped raise more than \$400 for local food pantries during the holiday season. Clients in the recreation therapy drawing group made more than 400 cards for clients in WestCare’s reentry program. These reentry clients were able to donate \$1 of their own money and receive two cards to send to family and friends. The money was given to the Sheridan and Ottawa food pantries, both local organizations where the money helped feed less-fortunate families during the holiday season.

Clients spent just over four weeks making the cards, which included themes such as familiar cartoon characters, candy canes, wreaths, and ornaments on the front, with traditional holiday greetings on the inside. This is yet another project aimed to help the clients in the reentry program give back to the communities and to feel the importance of helping others in need, especially during this time of the year. Approximately 30 clients helped make the cards while more than 200 participated by purchasing the cards and donating the money. Many of the clients stated they were happy to be part of this kind of activity and were looking forward to similar projects in the future.



Illinois

▼ WestCare Sheridan Clients

▼ MaryBeth O’Hara and Stephanie Wright.

WestCare Illinois Helps Local Food Pantries with Collecting Donations

Submitted by staff

WestCare Sheridan employees and Illinois Department of Corrections employees recently worked together to collect donations for two local food pantries. More than 325 items were collected and distributed to the organizations to help local families in need during this holiday season. Pictured collecting items are MaryBeth O’Hara and Stephanie Wright.



◀ Sheridan Director Stan Brooks (left) and Food Pantry representative Tom Huntley

Windy City Welcome

By Nicole Munoz – *Admin.Assistant*

On December 19th, WestCare Illinois conducted its first Holiday luncheon and orientation since opening our doors on December 3rd. We welcomed WestCare Wisconsin, as well as the staff from Sheridan and Cook County’s Impact Program. The gathering served many purposes as Mike Shields, Director of Human Resources, and Sr. Vice President Leslie Balonick conducted an overview of WestCare Foundation. Additional training was piloted by Kimberly Anthony and MaryBeth O’hara, who trained the administrative staff on business operations.



Orientation for WestCare Illinois and Wisconsin participants

January Calendar

January 1st
New Years Day

January 8th
8:00am -9:00am

Executive Committee Pre Board Meeting
8:00am/PT – 11:00am ET

January 8th
12:00pm - 1:00pm
NV-CAC Meeting
Las Vegas

January 8th
3:30pm - 4:30pm
FLGC-CAC Meeting
3:30pm/PT – 6:30pm/ET
City Center, 100 2nd Ave.

January 11th
1:30pm - 2:30pm
CA-CAC Meeting
MLK Facility, Fresno, CA.

January 20th
Inauguration Day

January 21st
Martin Luther King Jr.'s Birthday

January 22nd
5:00pm - 6:00pm
AZ CAC Meeting
6:00pm/MT – AZ Time – 5:00pm/PT
Bullhead City, AZ

January 25th – 27th
Foundation Annual Board Meeting
Weekend Retreat in Las Vegas



January

Health Awareness

Women's Self-Empowerment Week January 3-9

Courtesy of – <http://www.answers.com/topic/women-s-self-empowerment-week>

Women wear many hats these days, and this week is a time to stop, take stock of your life and recognize all that you have accomplished. It's an occasion to pat yourself on the back and feel good about your role in society and the opportunities that have come your way through hard work and dedication. Let it inspire you to establish new goals and reach for the sky.



Healthy Weight Week January 20-26

Courtesy of – <http://www.healthyweight.net>

The 20th annual Healthy Weight Week is a time to celebrate healthy diet-free living habits that last a lifetime and prevent eating and weight problems. Our bodies cannot be shaped at will. But we can all be accepting, healthy and happy at our natural weights.

Healthy Weight Week celebrates Normal Living. By the third week in January, New Year diets are dumped, the rebound binge is over and people are looking for balance to get their lives back on track. "Healthy Weight Week is a time to say 'I'm okay and so are you.' Let's get on with living in comfortably healthy ways and feeling good about it."

During Healthy Weight Week, people are encouraged to normalize their lives and improve health habits in lasting ways by eating well, living actively and feeling good about themselves and others. (For more information see www.healthyweight.net/hww.htm)

Salt Awareness Week is January 27-February 2 *Salt and Your Health*

Courtesy of – <http://www.actiononsalt.org.uk/salthealth/index.html>

There is strong evidence that links our current high salt intakes to high blood pressure. High blood pressure is the main cause of strokes and a major cause of heart attacks and heart failures, the most common causes of death and illness in the world. It is also widely recognized that a high salt diet is linked to other conditions, such as osteoporosis, cancer of the stomach, kidney disease, kidney stones, obesity and exacerbating the symptoms of asthma, Meniere's Disease, Alzheimer's Disease and Diabetes.

There is now evidence to show that a high salt intake in children also influences blood pressure and may predispose an individual to the development of a number of diseases including: high blood pressure, osteoporosis, stomach cancer and obesity. The older population and certain ethnic minorities

are also at a great risk of health-related problems due to salt intake.



Star-Spangled Ball

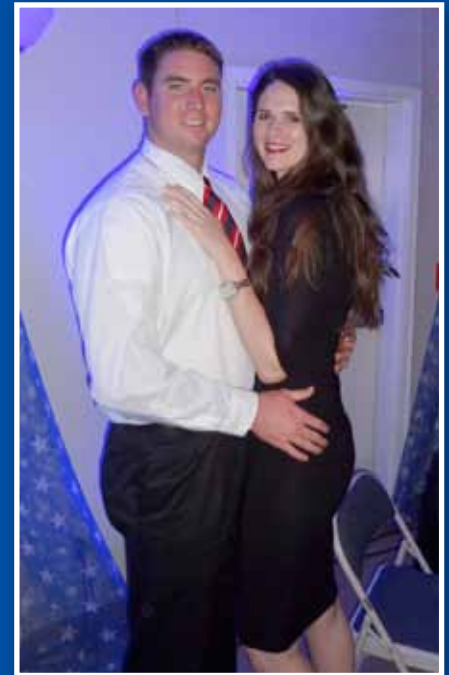
Over 200 people came together for a night of dinner, music and most of all: Support for valley veterans. Central Valley Veterans, responsible for the Stand Down and Honor a Hero/ Hire a Vet Job Fair events, organized the Star Spangled Ball. All proceeds went directly to helping veterans in need. The night also included silent auctions as well as presentations by three residents from SJVV's grant per-diem

Submitted By Michael Mygind

homes. WestCare was acknowledged by kind words in speeches in addition to the show of support by veterans in attendance of the event. SJVV has worked closely with CVV in the past to provide for veterans in ways that grants won't allow, such as the provision of furniture and household supplies. Overall, it was an enjoyable night and a success for local veterans in need!

Families in Need Receive Holiday Cheer

Through a partnership between WestCare California and The United Way, two families in need were given some cheer this holiday season. WestCare staff stepped up gave items to both the Pipkins family and Pearl Byrd. These items included clothes, food and household items. The Pipkins were given a couch and Pearl was given a bedroom set. Shavonna and Jesse Pipkins and their three children were overjoyed by the generous support. "God bless the staff at WestCare for making our Christmas a wonderful one," said Jesse. Pearl said on behalf of herself and her dog, "Thank you WestCare, for bringing the Christmas spirit into our home." Both families have seen hard times, but with the help of generous donations, they got a much needed pick-me-up for the holidays.



Lead Veterans Advocate **Brittney Beer** and her husband, **Nickolas**

The grateful **Pipkins** family enjoy their Christmas



Victor Palacios rocks a '70s Santa



83rd Annual Downtown Fresno Christmas Parade

WestCare California's various branches took part in the 83rd Annual Downtown Fresno Christmas Parade with this year's theme being, "Father Christmas." Our nostalgic float featured variations of Santa Claus from decades past and present. The parade was complemented by sunny weather and an estimated 30,000 spectators who lined the parade route.



WestCare Foundation

WestCare's Leadership Management Academy

By Carol Renard – *Director of Program and Staff Development, WestCare Foundation, Inc.*

Beginning in June, 2012, WestCare Foundation, Inc. created our inaugural Leadership Management Academy. The primary goal was to cultivate new, emerging leaders through the enhancement of knowledge and development of competencies. Each Sr. VP, the Foundation and Affiliates had slots available to suggest nominees. The following employees, from all regions and the Foundation Office were our participants: Elyse Dermer, Maureen Grynewicz, James Holland, Maureen Kempa, Erin Kinard, Yolanda Laurent, Cherri Lester, Jeannie Lewis, Audrey Mack, Kevin Morss, Adriana Ramirez, David Rosynsky, Dawn Ruzich, Heather Shoop, Jerod Thomas and Chris Upton. Please join us and offer them your "Congratulations" for their enthusiastic participation.

To kick off the first activity, an external entity, The Center of Creative Leadership, facilitated the "Leadership Effectiveness Inventory" surveys for each Academy

employee, covering 94 research grounded competencies (also known as a 360° evaluation). The surveys were based on individual analysis as well as completed by several other employees at every level of the organization. This provided a comprehensive perspective of how the individual perceived their functions and character and how they were recognized by their peers, supervisees and supervisors in their current role. We asked them to summarize what they learned, and as you can imagine, this was eye-opening for some!

In collaboration with the Southern Coast Addiction Technology Transfer Center (SCATTC) Bob Neri, Sr. VP/Chief Clinical Officer and I offered a series of virtual on-line learning experiences, using instructors to facilitate and self-paced courses, plus special topic webinars. A few of the topics were: "Supervision/Corrective Counseling," "Budget Development and Management," "Data-based



Decision Making," and a seven modules on-line course titled, "Foundations of Leadership." All coursework and homework assignments were completed by September 30, 2012. Each participant received credit for 27 hours of coursework, and dedicated approximately 40 hours of their time over the 4 months.

We plan to begin our second nominations for the Leadership Management Academy in the spring and look forward to working with the new team of trailblazers!



WestCare Express Feedback

"The December Express was such a welcome reading! Full of happy stories and victories as well as encouragement! It is good to end the year with such positive messages from the WestCare Community. I am so happy to be part of this great organization. I am reminded that ours is more of a mission than work. I want to also thank our wonderful President/CEO for his message of love and good tidings."

Francis Wakhisi

Family Therapist-Village South, Miami FL

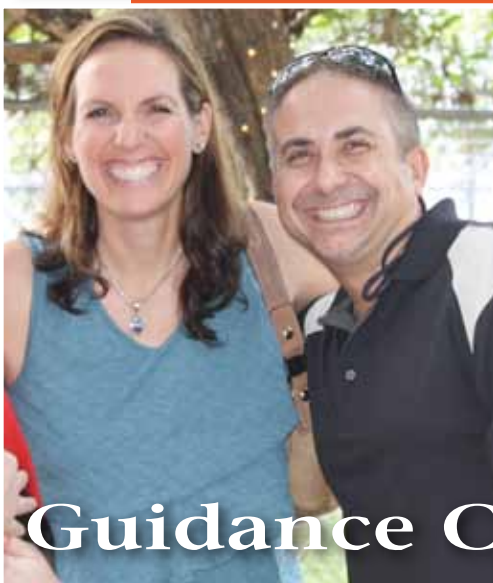


Happy Holiday Faces in Florida and Offshore

Submitted by WestCare Florida staff members



Village South



Guidance Care/Center Marathon



Happy Holiday Faces in Florida and Offshore (con't)

Submitted by WestCare Florida staff members



Key West



Virgin Islands



Gulf Coast



Guidance Care/Center Key Largo



Scout's Honor

My name is Zachary Blake Geiger and I am a Life Scout in Troop 1008 from the Richmond Police Department. To earn my Eagle Rank, I have to lead at least 2 other scouts in a community service project. Kentucky River Foothills needed coats for their Heating Assistance program and other valuable programs. I chose to do a coat drive to help as many people as possible stay warm this winter. I set out collection boxes, posted flyers, informed the media, and collected in neighborhoods. As of today, I have collected 830 coats. Together with my family, the Scouts in our troop, and adult leaders, we have done 101 hours of community service. My troop has decided to make the coat drive an annual event. I would like to thank WestCare for the 34 coats donated to help with the Coat Drive for Estill and surrounding counties.

Kentucky



Scout Zach loads up his Christmas donations

Education Domination By Eric Cox – SAP Resident

The S.A.P program here at The Boyle County Detention Center prides itself on preparing its residents to live a drug & criminal-free life. They are taught, not only to abstain from drug use, but to live a productive life in society. Being productive can derive many things, but for two individuals here in the SAP program, that one thing was an education.

Senior Mentor, Jeremy West, and Senior Phase Resident, Charles Smith, both went the extra mile and gained an education during their treatment.

Jeremy West achieved an Associate in Arts Degree from Ashland Community & Technical College. Being a mentor in the program is a very active position which demands not only knowledge of the program, but a close, personal relationship with all 40 residents. During

Jeremy's time aiding in class work, mentoring on an individual basis, and assisting the staff with daily operations; he managed to complete his Associates Degree with an astonishing 3.72 GPA. Jeremy plans to continue at Morehead State University studying in Social Work.

Charles Smith earned his G.E.D Certification. Learning to live a drug-free life can be strenuous and require lots of work. Attending classes, group sessions, and individual treatment sessions are just some of the things that a resident has to do. On top of these things, Charles has studied for several months working toward gaining a G.E.D. During his last month in the program Charles went and tested for this exam. Not only did he pass the test, but he scored in the top percent in all areas. His will and determination to become a better person has sure shined through during



Charles Smith (left) and Jeremy West

his stay. Charles is now on the road to enrolling in college and furthering his education.

Treatment works! Being sober doesn't just mean staying off drugs. Being sober means leading a life worth living and becoming someone great. These two residents have shown that when you apply yourself and do the next right thing, good things will follow. We are so proud of you, Jeremy and Charles!

Office "Face Lift"

By Eric Cox – Resident and Office Coordinator

Lexmark Offices in Lexington recently downsized and were left with an abundance of office furniture. They graciously decided to allow non-profit organizations, such as WestCare, to acquire the furniture free of charge! The furniture consisted of solid cherry filing cabinets, several types of executive desks, hutches, credenzas, and bookshelves. Office chairs, and greenery were also available. Having this furniture here at the Boyle County Detention Center's SAP program has changed the ambience and overall "mood" of the office. Uniform furniture provides professionalism for the office and allows a broad space to work in. All of this allows the staff to

complete their work in a setting that allows such things to be possible. On behalf of the staff, we would like to thank Lexmark, Josh Moore, and the rest of Denham-Blythe for their donation and hard work!



Laura Schwarz, Boyle County Detention Center counselor



New staffer Liz Cook enjoys her surroundings



Jerod Thomas, Program Director, thanks LexMark for their great donation

Kudos!

WestCare Honors It's Employees and Clients

Our monthly shout-out to members of the WestCare family, who stand tall and 'uplift' others in their care and peers around them. Please submit your nominees by the 15th of each month.

WestCare employees have earned special recognition from their supervisors:

Employee of the Month in Sacramento

Lisa Dudley has been with WestCare for a little over a year; she started with us in May of 2011 and unfortunately was laid off that June. When WestCare reopened the Sacramento office, Lisa returned to work for us on November 1st, 2011! She goes above to complete her assignments and when asked to implement something she does it with enthusiasm, she will ask questions when not sure about something to get the right answer, she is very organized and has even done a training for the staff on ways she has found to make her job duties flow and be completed within the time frames that have been put in place. In the short time Lisa has been with the WestCare SASCA Sacramento office she has been an inspiration to us all! Yay, Lisa!



And, Lisa's Colleague is Also Honored

Rashid Frye has been employed with WestCare since 1/7/2007 and transferred to SASCA 3/1/2012; since his transfer he has worked very hard to learn all aspects of his job and continues to be teachable. Says Melodie Estle: "Rashid has really stepped up to the plate and not only can I depend on him to meet the every day demands of his job duties, but he has a positive effect on his team mates in the office as well. His care and concern for the participants he serves is evident in his dealings with them as well as the Community Based Provider he is assigned. Rashid has learned a lot in a short period of time and I am very proud he is November's employee of the month!"



AIDS Awareness Events

Several states coordinated AIDS Awareness walks in November, and as a follow up to one in California, Toni Harrison, Program Coordinator for The Living Room, reports: "A collective team effort of friends, family, community members and organizations, raised over \$19,000! Awesome is the only word to describe it! Many thanks to everyone who made it happen!"



Help for Vet Families

Gill Ranch Storage, LLC gave a total of \$5,000 to eight Central California veteran families to help ensure they have a happy holiday. Working with San Joaquin Valley

Veterans, a project of WestCare, Gill Ranch presented each family with \$600 for food, clothing and gifts.

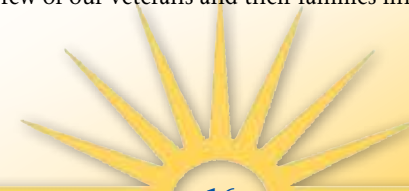
Each of the families has at least two children ranging in age from six months to 14 years and can't afford to enjoy the bounty of the season. Most are younger military veterans who have served in Iraq or Afghanistan, and two of which served in Desert Storm.

Said Dave Weber, President and CEO of Gill Ranch Storage, which is headquartered in Portland, Oregon: "We hope this gift will help a few of our veterans and their families find joy in the season and hope for the future."

Thank you, GRS! And congrats to SJVV for cultivating a new friend!



GILL RANCH STORAGE®



Kudos!

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Happy Babies, Happy Moms

In recognition of the great work that WestCare/The Village is doing to support breastfeeding employees, the Breastfeeding Task Force of Miami-Dade, an initiative of the Healthy Start Coalition of Miami-Dade (HSCMD) honored **WestCare/The Village** with the Florida Breastfeeding Friendly Workplace Award and The Breastfeeding Gold Standard Award. This program is sponsored by the Florida Breastfeeding Coalition, Inc. and funded by a grant from the Federal Dept. of Health and Human Services. Both were given at the Annual Healthy Start luncheon in December.

Picture – Left to Right: Frank C. Rabbito, Sr. VP, Raquel de Cardenas, HR Coordinator and Heather Baker, Program Director



3.1 Miles? Nice!

The Guidance/Care Center of the Upper Keys joined the community in helping to raise funds by participating in the Gordon Present 5k hosted by Mariners Hospital. The annual event is to raise money for scholarships and continuing education for the nurses of our community, as well as to promote wellness and healthy living. WestCare staff and their families arrived bright and early to support the local community event, and to get a good workout! Great job, WestCare!



New Wheels!!!!

In Reno, they're all giddy about a new ride. This cool van was donated by the **Reno Emergency Medical Services Agency** to the WestCare Community Triage Center for use as secured transport of our shared clients between the state hospital and the CTC. Thank you REMSA!



The Month of January



January Birthstone: The Garnet.
 The traditional properties closely associated with the Garnet birthstone are awareness, commitment, regeneration, insight and removing negativity.

January Birth Flower:
 The January Birth Flower is the Carnation. The meaning of the Carnation is love, fascination, and distinction.

Sign of the Zodiac and Dates:
 Capricorn – December 22 - January 20

Characteristics of Capricorn:
 Stable, Trustworthy, Persistent, Ambitious and Patient



Martin Luther King Jr. Day

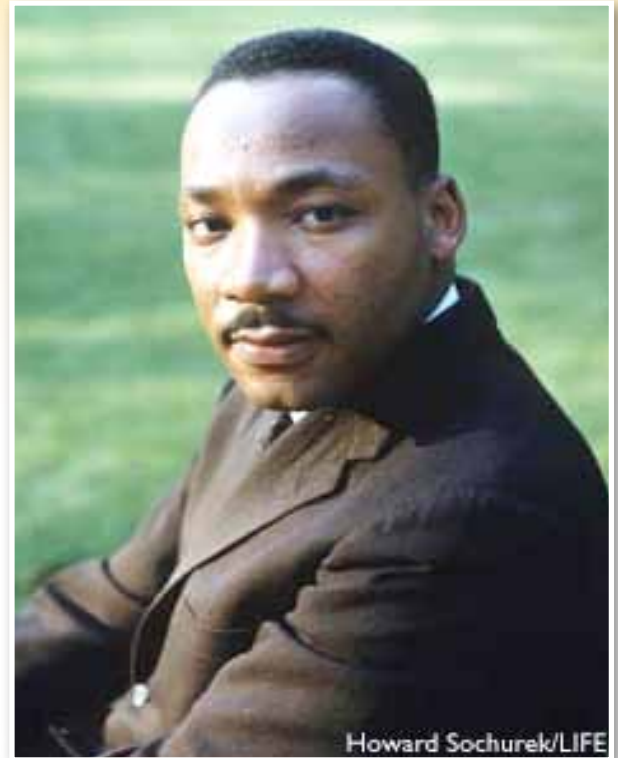
Courtesy of – <http://www.holiday-times.com/mlk-2013/>

Martin Luther King, Jr. Day is a United States federal holiday marking the birthday of Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. It is observed on the third Monday of January each year, which is around the time of King's birthday, January 15. The floating holiday is similar to holidays set under the Uniform Monday Holiday Act, though the act predated the establishment of Martin Luther King, Jr. Day by fifteen years.

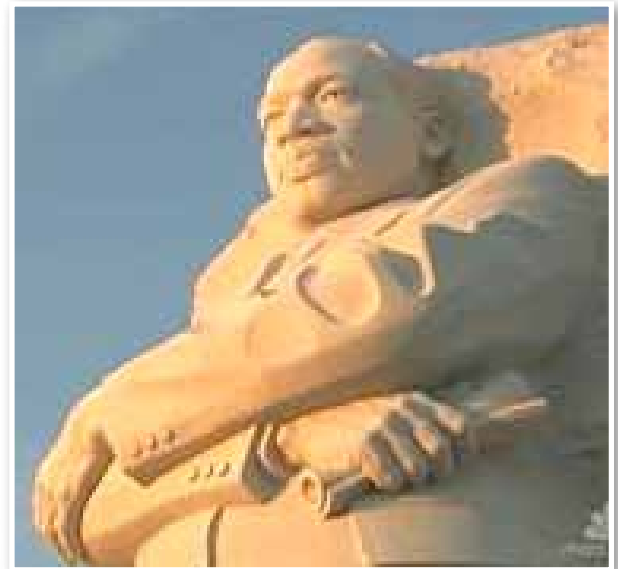
King was the chief spokesman for nonviolent activism in the civil rights movement, which successfully protested racial discrimination in federal and state law. The campaign for a federal holiday in King's honor began soon after his assassination in 1968. Ronald Reagan signed the holiday into law in 1983, and it was first observed on January 20, 1986. At first, some states resisted observing the holiday as such, giving it alternative names or combining it with other holidays. It was officially observed in all 50 states for the first time in 2000.

What is the MLK Day of Service?

After a long struggle, legislation was signed in 1983 creating a federal holiday marking the birthday of Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. In 1994, Congress designated the Martin Luther King Jr. Federal Holiday as a national day of service and charged the Corporation for National and Community Service with leading this effort. Taking place each year on the third Monday in January, the MLK Day of Service is the only federal holiday observed as a national day of service – a “day on, not a day off.” The MLK Day of Service is a part of United We Serve, the President's national call to service initiative. It calls for Americans from all walks of life to work together to provide solutions to our most pressing national problems. The MLK Day of Service empowers individuals, strengthens communities, bridges barriers, creates solutions to social problems, and moves us closer to Dr. King's vision of a “Beloved Community.”



Howard Sochurek/LIFE



Plan

MLK Day is a chance to start the year off right by making an impact in your community. Use the Action Guides and Tips and Tools to plan for the Day of Service: <http://mlkday.gov/plan/actionguides/index.php>

Serve

Join the hundreds of thousands of people who serve on MLK Day and throughout the year. Find a project in your community or register your own project so that volunteers can find it: <http://mlkday.gov/serve/register.php>

Impact

What are your plans for MLK Day? Share your plans and share your project's impact after MLK Day:

<http://mlkday.gov/share/index.php>



Ooops, Don't Want to Forget Santa's Stop in Kentucky!

Kentucky



Breakfast with Santa was a fun Saturday morning at WestCare-Estill County, KY.



Deb Hamilton, AmeriCorps member, and Director Renee Alexander with Santa!

A Nice Post-Christmas 'Give-Back' idea to Support St. Jude's Hospital: Recycle Cards

(Note: The Village in Miami is taking part in this program. If interested, contact: stjudesranch.org/recycled-card-program)

Over thirty years ago, wishing to show our donors appreciation for making St. Jude's Ranch for Children possible, the idea was conceived for turning the previous year's Christmas cards into "new" cards for the coming season. The recipients were so delighted with their unique "thank you," they requested the children sell them the special cards. And so, the St. Jude's Ranch Recycled Card Program was born.

Since then, the Program expanded to include all occasion greeting cards . . . just about anything that starts with a used greeting card front. People from all over the world have sent us their used card fronts!

The children participate in making the new cards by removing the front and attaching a new back. The result is a beautiful new card made by the children and volunteers. The

Florida

benefits are two-fold: customers receive "green" holiday cards for use and the children receive payment for their work and learn the benefits and importance of "going green".

The ongoing support for the Recycled Card Program has been overwhelming! The Program grew and soon we were receiving over one million cards.

Pacific Islands

Somber Observance at WestCare-Guam

Photo courtesy Pacific Daily News



Commemorating lives: Participants pray prior to a candle-light vigil at the nonprofit group WestCare's office to mark World AIDS Day on Dec. 1. The vigil was held to commemorate those who have lost their lives to AIDS, and to show support for their families and loved ones.



WestCare Words to Live By

Find Strength and Healing for Yourself as You Work to Strengthen and Heal Others

By Rev. Dr. James G. White – *Regional VP WestCare Wisconsin*

There have been many casualties of the recent economic crisis. The loss of material wealth, peace of mind, and the joyful feelings that added to folks' sense of security have evaporated. Home equity, savings accounts, stock portfolios, credit, and secure family-supporting jobs have for many, vanished into thin air, leaving them anxious about the present and fearful of the future. Alcoholism, drug abuse, domestic violence, and mental health crises are at an all time high.

To the gifted, committed, and selfless soldiers of service, the counselors, ministers, volunteers, caregivers and caretakers in



our midst, my prayer is for your renewed strength. As the suffering of those around us reaches unparalleled heights, so should the intensity of our service to them. My wish for us as givers is that in the coming year, we find the strength to press through the challenges we face personally so that we may be that bridge over troubled waters for some returning veteran, reentering prisoner, or a family devastated by substance abuse and mental health related calamities. Know that you have the power to be light and life to someone else, even though you yourself are struggling. Give and it shall be given unto you.

It Is Up To Us

By Susana Vieira – *Counselor/Substance Abuse Specialist-WestCare California*

I am still kind of new at WestCare. I have been an Outpatient Counselor since May 2012. I have a lot to learn still, and I do so every day. My position here now, and before as an intern, has given me the opportunity to work with people directly and to be a part of providing services and solutions our community needs, as well as to participate directly in healing our society's needs. I am so grateful for that. I feel my work has a purpose, and nothing is more important to me professionally than working with such an honorable purpose.

My hope for the next year, and in fact for all future time, is that we as human beings, as the human race, come together to help one another in order to heal our world. There is so much pain and loneliness, so much sickness, so much destruction at every level. The darkness starts inside all of us, but the healing also starts inside us. I hope for all our sakes, for



the sake of the innocents, for the sake of the children that we start to value what truly is important: Each other.

Our children are more important than

careers. That is where our energy needs to go first. We need to re-connect with our own children and with other human beings and the sacredness of all life. One on one, providing for each other's needs and supporting one another. We need to take the time to heal ourselves, to incorporate nature into our lives as much as possible. We need to take time to smell the roses.

No more callousness, no more saying "there is only so much I can do". Instead, we need to say "what more can I do?" when and where it matters.

Healing. Compassion. Kindness. Respect. Encouragement. Real solutions. Altruism. That's my wish and my hope, from my heart and soul.

