



WESTCARE EXPRESS



The WestCare Foundation Employee Newsletter

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June 2011

San Diego's 'Garden of Life and Hope'

By Deborah Freeman – Program Director-Family Foundations, San Diego

This is the story of a WestCare correctional facility growing LIFE, not LIFERS. And the 'seeds were planted' at a community advisory committee meeting, as members shared ideas on how best to utilize adjacent property while enhancing the lives of clients.

In this garden, the pregnant and parenting women who are serving time at a local correctional institution, till the soil, pull weeds and plant vegetables. The unique project is seen as assisting the clients with their self-esteem, teaching them appreciation for nature, giving them a feeling of pride, all while teaching them skills.

The garden, which was dedicated on April 29th, will allow the program to lower their produce costs,



It's hard work, but the clients were excited about the challenge'

while supplying the program with healthy vegetables.

In addition, the plan is to provide their bounty to other area charities.



"FFP clients 'Go Green' and create a Garden of Life and Hope"

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San Diego's 'Garden of Life and Hope' *Continued from page 1*

Community Gardens have been shown to reduce crime, foster relationships, provide low-cost food and benefit psychological health. They also set-aside green space and encourage physical activity. And when you grow your own food it empowers you and builds self-dignity.

WestCare is very proud of what the employees and clients have created at Family Foundations Program in San Diego. Indeed, it is an idea that can be replicated at any location. All it takes is planting the seeds that help 'Uplift the Human Spirit.'

(Editor's note: See related story in this issue from WC Georgia)

'The first crop of delicious radishes and two kinds of lettuce!!'



▲ Clients and dignitaries gather for garden dedication.

▼ Advisory Committee member Reggie Smith (middle) is thanked by Program Director Deborah Freeman (L) and FFP Counselor Miriam Diaz (R)



Flower of the Month: The Rose



- Definition of the Rose: A flower and shrub of any species of the genus {Rosa}, of which there are many species, mostly found in the Northern hemisphere
- The scientific name of a flower species is formed by the combination of two terms: the genus name and the species descriptor. In the case of the Rose there are many different species including Rosa canina - Dog Rose, Briar Bush, Rosa gallica - Gallic Rose, French Rose and Rosa virginiana - Virginia Rose
- Roses are indigenous to Syria. The famed rose of Damascus is white, but there are also red and yellow roses
- There are more than a hundred species of wild roses
- The name "Rose" is derived from the Latin rosa, an Etruscan form of Greek Rhodia meaning "Rhodian, originating from Rhodes."



Boggs Residents Plant Organic Garden

By Audrey Mack – Program Director

A local couple, Sam and Loretta Adderson, decided to move back to the Augusta area after retiring to manage their family owned farm located in Keysville, GA. One day they decided to stop at the Boggs facility to ask about the land, and after a conversation with Sr. Vice President, Leslie Balonick a connection was made. Mrs. Adderson said, "It would be an honor to work with the young men. We want to give back to the community and there are so many opportunities for young people in agriculture."

The residents have been introduced to farming and organic gardening. They have toured Stevens Farm, harvested collard greens and strawberries, and weeded the garden on several occasions.

A representative from the University of GA College and Environmental Sciences Cooperative Extension came to the Boggs campus and facilitated an agricultural presentation and conducted a soil sample prior to planting season. Earlier this month the Boggs residents planted tomatoes, peppers, lettuce, radish, squash, and beans in their garden on campus.

Georgia



Blanket Atlanta Welcomes Harolyn Davis!!

Harolyn has received a Bachelors of Science in Psychology and just on May 14th she received her Masters of Science in Clinical Mental Health Counseling! We are grateful to have such an enthusiastic and energetic young woman as a part of this dynamitic team. Harolyn, we truly welcome you to the WestCare Georgia Family!! Woo-hoo!!!



A.A. Not So Anonymous Anymore?

Anonymous isn't as big a part of Alcoholics Anonymous (A.A.) as it used to be, according to The New York Times. Whether or not this is a good thing is a matter of debate, particularly in the professional recovery world, the article says.

The newspaper points out that when A.A. got its start in the Great Depression, alcoholism was seen as both a weakness and a disgrace. But with so many memoirs about recovery being penned by celebrities, that image is changing.

Last year A.A. issued an expanded statement on anonymity that explained the importance of being



discrete on social networking sites. Some people have posted pictures taken at A.A. meetings and accidentally outed others in the photos.

Courtesy: jointogether@drugfree.org

Maer Roshan, the Editor of The Fix, a web magazine for those in recovery, said the recovery world is at a stage where the gay world was in the early 1990s. "Back then, there was still a stigma to saying you were gay," he said. "There was a community, but it was mired in self-doubt and self-hatred, and it's changed considerably."



Believe it – There is “Fun in Recovery”!

By Tim Scott and Robin Rowland

The Turning Point C.H.O.I.C.E.S. program has implemented “Fun in Recovery”. This event occurs the 2nd & 4th Saturdays of each month. The clients in the program plan, oversee, and are in charge of those days. This is done with the supervision of 2 staff members, Tim Scott and Robin Rowland.

Recently at their Council meeting it was decided a scavenger hunt would be planned. A committee

was formed from both the C.H.O.I.C.E.S. Program and the general community of Turning Point.

The clients took to the internet to see how they could implement a scavenger hunt without leaving the property. They also, came up with the idea to have team building activities so that each team could form a bond and learn to work together.

What a wonderful day for all!!!

Florida



Clients enjoying their team building activities.

Guidance/Care Center in South Florida Celebrate Nurses Day



Celebrating Nurses Day in South Florida

Administrative Professionals Day



Arizona



13th Annual Volunteer Dinner Another Huge Success

By Kim Mitchell – *Office Manager*

I'm just reminiscing about our Annual Volunteer Dinner held at Laughlin Ranch, in Bullhead City, AZ. Every year we hold this event and every year it seems to be more rewarding. This year's theme was "THANKS FOR ALL YOU DO." With 55 people in attendance, we recognized over 25 volunteers and the work they do for WestCare Arizona. Although it was a small group, the uplifting stories and warmth was felt throughout the Arizona staff, Council members and Board members in attendance.

Our volunteers and their guests enjoyed a delicious dinner and then they were called up individually to receive a certificate and gift bag. The amazing thing is that while we were pointing out all that they do for us, several volunteers spoke and thanked us for all we do in the community. Even though this was their night, they turned the tables around and uplifted us right back! From canned food drives to ride-alongs with our drivers, stories were told about each volunteer touching many of our programs.

The highlight of the evening has always been

when we hand out the Volunteer of the Year award and this year's dinner was no exception and included a standing ovation. The award went to Carol Romant, a woman who dedicates herself to the women at Blossom House taking care of their spiritual needs, driving them to church every Sunday, coming to the house whenever called upon, and making sure every woman has an opportunity to find a higher power they can call their own. Several Community Council and Arizona Board members were in attendance including Bill Porter, Bill Ekstrom, Pat Otto and Corky Cornell. Mike Shields from WestCare Foundation was also in attendance and gave the closing remarks.

At the end of the evening, several people came up to me and thanked me for the inspirational night. I really didn't have anything to do with the inspirational part just the planning part. Everything else just fell into place exactly as it was supposed to. As I was driving home after what was a very long day, I thought to myself, this is what I love about my job, 13 years and still counting.

Employee Spotlight, Darlene Terrill – *In Her Own Words*

By Darlene Terrill – *Director, Rancho Facility*

I moved from Minnesota to Las Vegas, Nevada with my husband in 1991 due to his health needs. This decision was a major life change for both of us. Searching for employment was a very interesting process for me as I had been self-employed successfully for 10 years as a Resort Owner in Minnesota. Our business was very family orientated and I knew that securing employment in the City of Las Vegas was going to be a different challenge.

I applied at WestCare on Martin Luther King Boulevard as they had an opening working with adolescent boys in their residential substance abuse program. In my earlier years, I had worked as a Social Worker for 9 years in St. Paul, Minnesota with children in need of crisis and treatment. I absolutely loved working in this arena.

I was given a tour of the program and to my amazement, the CEO Mr. Richard Steinberg was playing ping pong with the adolescent boys in treatment. The Vice President Ms. Willie Smith was on her hands and knees cleaning. I instantly felt the 'family feel' I hoped I would find in a job and looked no further.

It has now been 20 years plus and I still know I made the right decision to join WestCare. The family feel continues to be present today and has been reproduced across the nation in all programs we offer. I am very proud to have been a part of the original staff that was able to watch Mr. Steinberg take the best of Nevada Operations to other States and Territories. Most important is that we are still promoting the sense of family values in all that we do.

Nevada



Editor's note: The humble and modest Darlene has been responsible for hundreds of thousands of dollars in donations. No one turns her down, as this anecdote shows:

Darlene's cat once stepped on her cell phone and speed-dialed an old contact number. The elderly man said he didn't believe in accidents, so after hearing Darlene's explanation of WestCare, the gentleman started a series of gifts to our Endowment. Nice, Darlene. And nice kitty.

Community Triage Center Services Expanded in Reno, Nevada

By Amy Roukie – Director

The Community Triage Center (CTC) in Reno has recently taken on an expanded role in their community. In an effort to begin the integration of medical services with behavioral health services, (an initiative that is gaining national attention), they have been performing Medical Clearances.

Since December 2010, the Advanced Nurse Practitioners have been providing the required clearances for those individuals in the community who are entering a residential facility or group home. Although a limited examination, this provides the receiving facility with medical information to feel confident that the person is medically-stable and able to enter their program.

In the past this has been a function of the local emergency rooms, at a large cost to the community; the majority of these clients are indigent and without insurance benefits to pay for this examination. In collaboration with the local ER's, and the County Social Services agency, WestCare Reno, CTC has decreased the large volume of these clients who are otherwise non-acute and therefore crowd the ER waiting rooms and for several hours to complete this process.

As a *Triage Center*, this process allows for the APN's to determine the clinical needs of the clients referred and provide them access to either services for Detoxification and/or Crisis Stabilization at the CTC, or just the clearance and documentation indicated for admission to the other providers in the community. This concept is one where there are clear opportunities to expand in the future as the federal funding will likely link the behavioral health (SAMHSA) and medical services (HRSA) activities in grant opportunities.



Nevada

Good Things Happen to Those Who Work Hard

Editor's note: Dee Wirth, Program Coordinator for WC Nevada's Women's Treatment Services, sends along this beautiful message from one of two clients who recently received their GED.

"I'm 25 years old, a single mom and my whole life I've never accomplished or completed anything. Getting my GED is a big accomplishment for me. It feels really good to set goals. I'm so proud of myself and it's unbelievable. I can do anything when I set my mind to it."

– Jonette B. – WestCare Nevada Client



Introducing OPTIONS!

By Frank Torrez – Program Director

We thought it was about time we introduced ourselves to the rest of the WestCare Family, so here goes . . .

We are OPTIONS, WestCare’s first venture into the mental health arena in Fresno County. As such, we provide mental health services for persons with Serious Mental Illnesses (SMIs). We signed on to help significantly decrease the number of Fresno County consumers using the Emergency Departments (EDs) of area hospitals as primary care providers. A high number of consumers use the EDs as their first choice for care, instead of using them

for what they were designed – true emergencies. Many times consumers with mental health concerns need only to speak with a mental health professional to address their current conditions. Consumers who have a history of repeatedly using EDs for their mental health needs can be better served with a lower impact on limited EDs resources by using a different approach to care. That’s where OPTIONS comes in.

Once a consumer with a history of repeated EDs use for mental health needs is identified, the hospitals can write a referral to OPTIONS where our initial task is to try and get that individual to come into OPTIONS. Once at OPTIONS, the individual is given a full assessment to discover why he or she is using the EDs instead of obtaining needed services at a mental health clinic or program. This assessment process may not be as clear-cut as it appears, since during this time, the individual’s mental health needs may continue to escalate which complicates the process.

The OPTIONS staff is equipped to handle the situation described above as well as other situations most mental health programs deal with. The consumers served at OPTIONS have been diagnosed

with severe mental illnesses (SMIs). On a scale from 1 to 10, with 10 being the neediest and most problematic consumers with whom to deal, most of OPTIONS consumers are at 10! This produces considerable challenges for the staff, but so far, we’ve been able to meet most of those challenges in-house.

We credit much of our success to having an excellent in-house psychiatrist by the name of Dr. Cruz, who heads up our clinical program. The rest of the clinical program is comprised of our soon-to-licensed therapist, Yelena Debenedetto, our nurse, Promila “Pam” Mahtab, our Substance Abuse Counselor/Data Collection Specialist, Adriana Verdusco, OPTIONS Medical Billing Specialist, Kasandra Gonzalez, and three Mental Health Rehabilitation Specialists (MHRS), Joe Guberman, Deann Bunting and Anna Champ. Several other staff members are lined up to join this outstanding team. Oh, yes, then there’s the director—that would be me, Frank Torrez. I head up this crew of fine folks with whom I’ve been fortunate to work. We invite you all to call and set up a short tour and get a personal introduction to the OPTIONS program.

California



OPTIONS staff members



▲ Left to right: Shawn Jenkins-Regional VP, John Wallace-WC Foundation, Dr. Toussaint Streat-CA Community Council Chair”



Left to right: Lynn Pimentel-Deputy Administrator, along with Community Council members Mary Jordan-Church, Cynthia Sterling and Melissa Knight.

Community Council Corner

By John Wallace – *WestCare Express Editor*

WestCare California’s citizen servants have been busy working with staff on a number of issues, not the least of which has been dealing with a state funding pipeline that has been reduced to droplets.

As of press time, state lawmakers were still in a seemingly partisan tug-o-war over Governor Jerry Brown’s multi-billion dollar cuts in education and ‘non-essential services.’ Of course, those categories often turn critically-needed human services into collateral damage.

WestCare has been making drastic operations and facilities reductions in an effort to maintain existing programs. And administrators are working to keep any personnel cuts to a minimum. The Community Council has been helping to open doors to local and state legislators, and to join management representatives in warning of the consequences of further social services budget reductions.



May Graduation Dedicated to Beloved WestCare Counselor

By John Wallace – *WestCare Express Editor*

California



May, 2011 WestCare California graduates nervously wait to make their appearance. ▲

The Fresno Westside Seventh Day Adventist Church, adjacent to WestCare's main residential facility, hosted the latest commencement ceremony for eligible clients. The evening event drew hundreds of family members, clients and staff to the sanctuary, where the entire proceedings were dedicated to Ralph Genovese, one of the program's most popular counselors and a friend to all. Mr. Genovese passed away earlier this year. Prior to the graduation, several generations of Mr. Genovese's family, from the Mid west and California, gathered in the new

'Ralph Genovese Conference Room' with WestCare staff for a special tribute. Glowing words were shared by his colleagues, including poignant remarks by Program Director Gary Knepper, perhaps Ralph's closest friend.

Later, at the graduation, former All-Pro fullback Lorenzo Neal, a local hero, dazzled the audience with his brilliant message and compassion for those struggling through the throes of substance abuse. Neal, who spent 17 years in the NFL, praised the graduates for 'setting yourselves up for greatness' by taking this significant step in their lives.

Program Director Gary Knepper addresses staff and members of the late Ralph Genovese's family. ▼



Regional Vice President Shawn Jenkins and keynote speaker Lorenzo Neal enjoy the clients sing "My Wish." ▼



Three hard-workers who helped make the Graduation a success. Left to right-guest singer Jamina Hackett, and WC employees Yadira Renteria and Jenny Gonzalez. ▲



Father's Day is Sunday, June 19th, 2011

Holiday Establishment

Father's Day in the United States is on the third Sunday of June. It celebrates the contribution that fathers and father figures make for their children's lives. Its origins may lie in a memorial service held for a large group of men, many of them fathers, who were killed in a mining accident in Monongah, West Virginia in 1907.

Background and Symbols

There are a range of events, which may have inspired the idea of Father's Day. One of these was the start of the Mother's Day tradition in the first decade of the 20th century. Another was a memorial service held in 1908 for a large group of men, many of them fathers, who were killed in a mining accident in Monongah, West Virginia in December 1907.

A woman called Sonora Smart Dodd was an influential figure in the establishment of Father's Day. Her father raised six children by himself after the death of their mother. This was uncommon at that time, as many widowers placed their children in the care of others or quickly married again.

Sonora was inspired by the work of Anna Jarvis, who had pushed for Mother's Day celebrations. Sonora felt that her father deserved recognition for what he had done. The first time Father's Day was held in June was in 1910. Father's Day was officially recognized as a holiday in 1972 by President Nixon.



The Echo Effect of Giving

By Jordan Robbins – WestCare Kentucky

Residents from West Care's Substance Abuse Program at the Boyle County Detention Center donated their free time this May in conjunction with Danville 4-H community service to help children from the Sunrise Children's Services. Sunrise Children's Services is a non-profit agency that cares for children and youth who have fallen victim to abuse or neglect. Residents pulled out their markers, glue sticks, and glitter to put their own creative touch to boxes that will be used by the children at Sunrise to keep personal belongings in. "I realize that donating my time to helping other people will play a huge role in my recovery. Helping these kids made my day!" said Andrew K, a resident at BCDC SAP Program. The boxes were displayed during the graduation of 15 residents from the Boyle County SAP Program on the 17th of May. West Care began operations at Boyle County Detention Center in September of 2010 and now has 40 residents in the program.



Kentucky



International Day Against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking

Courtesy: timeanddate.com

The United Nations' (UN) International Day Against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking falls on June 26 each year to raise awareness of the major problem that illicit drugs represent to society. This day is supported by individuals, communities and various organizations all over the world.

Background

According to the UNODC, nearly 200 million people are using illicit drugs such as cocaine, cannabis, hallucinogens, opiates and sedative hypnotics worldwide. In December 1987 the UN General Assembly decided to observe June 26 as the International Day against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking. The UN was determined to help create an international society free of drug abuse. This resolution recommended further action with regard to the report and conclusions of the 1987 International Conference on Drug

Abuse and Illicit Trafficking

Following the resolution, the years 1991 to 2000 were heralded as the "United Nations Decade Against Drug Abuse." In 1998 the UN General Assembly adopted a political declaration to address the global drug problem. The declaration expresses UN members' commitment to fighting the problem.

Symbols

The United Nations' logo is often associated with marketing and promotional material for this event. It features a projection of a world map (less Antarctica) centered on the North Pole, enclosed by olive branches. The olive branches are a symbol for peace, and the world map represents all the people of the world. It has been featured in colors such as white against a blue background or gold against a light purple background.



2nd Annual UNLV Combat Trauma Conference



Audience is treated to exceptional panel discussions.



Focusing on Returning Women Warrior and Veteran Issues May 25-26, 2011

“She’s Back ...But She’s Not the Same”

By John Wallace – *Express Editor*

The theme selected for the 2nd annual Conference on Combat Trauma and Addiction turned out to be the perfect wrapping for and outstanding package of information.

Nearly 200 veterans, professionals and experts attended the event at UNLV, and came away singing the praises of WestCare and its partners. The unique conference focused on issues and challenges befalling women veterans and those on active duty. For a day and a half, attendees heard panels and keynote speakers. Topics included, Post Traumatic Stress Disorder and mental health, substance abuse, homelessness, military sexual trauma, and family dynamics.

Highlights included addiction specialist and professor Larry Ashley, who reminded the audience that not too long ago, PTSD was considered just a bad headache; Jessica Goodell, assigned to the Marine Corps’ mortuary unit, spoke softly yet dramatically about her stressful occupational specialty; And luncheon speaker Colonel Kim Olsen (USAF ret) said: “We have to get our women warriors well again and return them to their families who need them. Women can’t be decompressed like group therapy for men. Women veterans need your time, patience and a box of Kleenix.”

A gala dinner affair gave the Conference attendees a chance to relax and share information. And they were treated to a rare appearance by Wajdid Salim, former Minister of Human Rights in the Iraqi government. She mesmerized the audience with her vivid recounting of life before and after the war as a Christian woman. She offered hope of a full democracy in her homeland, but not soon. In her words “Today’s younger generation knows what’s needed, and they will make sure the change is in place,” especially for women and female soldiers in a male-dominated culture.

Las Vegas style entertainment was provided by WestCare’s favorite Kristy Love, and by an incredibly talented Amanda Mason, a candidate in the Miss New York Pageant.

Numerous organizations contributed to the success of the conference, including the National Federation of Women Legislators, Grace After Fire and Family Alliance for Veterans in America. But the ‘Medal of Honor’ is unanimously awarded to WestCare’s Judi Kosterman, the driving force behind the remarkable event. You are loved and respected by all, Judi!

Support organizations were represented at the conference. ▶



WestCare CEO Dick Steinberg visits with attendees. ▼



Guest speaker Wajdid Salim (center) former Iraqi Minister of Human Rightsm ▶



Judi Kosterman and Ted Sullivan during a break. ▼



Flag Day is June 14th

People across the United States celebrate Flag Day on June 14 each year to honor the United States flag and to commemorate the flag's adoption.



What do people do?

Flag Day falls within National Flag Week, a time when Americans reflect on the foundations of the nation's freedom. The flag of the United States represents freedom and has been an enduring symbol of the country's ideals since its early days. During both events, Americans also remember their loyalty to the nation, reaffirm their belief in liberty and justice, and observe the nation's unity.

Many people in the United States honor this day by displaying the American flag at homes and public buildings. Other popular ways of observing this holiday include: flag-raising ceremonies; Flag Day services; school quizzes and essay competitions about the American flag; musical salutes; street parades; and awards for special recognition.

2011 Exemplary Awards Call for Applications

Courtesy: jointogether@drugfree.org

The National Association of State Alcohol and Drug Abuse Directors (NASADAD) and its subsidiary organization, the National Prevention Network (NPN), present a call for applications for the 2011 National Exemplary Awards for Innovative Substance Abuse Prevention Programs, Practices and Policies (2011 Exemplary Awards).

The 2011 Exemplary Awards identify and recognize quality substance abuse prevention efforts from around the country. The awards honor policies, practices and traditional prevention programs. Programs that bring about specific changes in communities – such as responsible retailing practices, smoke-free workplace ordinances and other environmental approaches – are invited to participate.

The program is supported by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration's (SAMHSA) Center for Substance Abuse Prevention (CSAP).

Applications for the award are due June 20, 2011. Visit the NASADAD website for more information.

Public Service Day – June 23rd, 2011

Courtesy: timeanddate.com

The United Nations' Public Service Day is held on June 23 each year. It recognizes that democracy and successful governance are built on the foundation of a competent civil service. The day aims to celebrate the value and virtue of service to the community.



What do people do?

The United Nations (UN) holds a Public Service Awards ceremony each year. It rewards the creative achievements and contributions of public service institutions worldwide. This event promotes the role, professionalism and visibility of public service. At the same time, Africa Public Service Day is celebrated in Africa to coincide with the United Nations Public Service Day.

Many public service organizations and departments around the world celebrate this day by holding various events to recognize the valuable role that public servants play in making improvements in society. Activities include: information days featuring stalls and booths about the public service; organized lunches with guest speakers; internal awards ceremonies within public service agencies or departments; and special announcements to honor public servants.



Background

On December 20, 2002, the United Nations General Assembly designated June 23 of each year as United Nations Public Service Day (resolution 57/277). It encouraged member states to organize special events on that day to highlight the contribution of public service in the development process.

This day was created to: celebrate the value and virtue of public service to the community; highlight the contribution of public service in the development process; recognize the work of public servants; and encourage young people to pursue careers in the public sector.



WestCare Wellness Watch



The High Cost of Poor Sleep

Employers are paying a high price for their employees' lack of or poor sleep. Sleep deprivation costs businesses in the U.S. an estimated \$150 billion annually in absenteeism and lost productivity. Poor quality sleep reveals itself in the workplace as irritability and decreased productivity, including lessened attention to detail and poor communication. A recent study in the *Journal of Occupational and Environmental Medicine* outlined the impact of sleep disturbances on work performance and productivity. Employees at four corporations were surveyed about their sleep patterns and completed the Work Limitations Questionnaire. Participants were classified into four groups: insomnia, insufficient sleep syndrome, at risk and good sleep. Results showed that the insomnia and sleep syndrome groups had significantly worse productivity, performance and safety outcomes. The group with the highest use of sleep medication use was the insomnia group. Fatigue-related productivity losses in this study were estimated to cost nearly \$2,000 per employee annually.

According to the American Journal of Respiratory and Critical Care Medicine, the economic costs of poor sleep will continue to rise. For example:

- Fatigue and sleep disordered breathing are associated with a 10-20% increase in health care utilization.
- Employees diagnosed with insomnia were twice as likely to seek treatment for emotional problems, have double the number of physician visits and twice as many hospitalizations.
- 80-90% of obstructive sleep apnea (OSA) cases remain undiagnosed. Testing and treatment costs for every American with OSA would be more than \$20 billion.

What can employers do?

Promote better sleep through an employee communication campaign focused on healthy sleep habits. Consider dedicated space for a quiet room.



June Calendar



June 1st

CAC Monthly Report Due
Executive Committee

June 7th

Minnesota CAC Meeting
8:30am PT/10:30am CT
Victri, Minneapolis, Minnesota

June 7th

Florida GulfCoast CAC Meeting
9:00am PT/12:00pm ET
Bradley Davis Building

June 11th

Road to Recovery Car Show
7:00am PT/10:00am ET
Pikeville, Kentucky

June 14th

Florida GulfCoast CAC Meeting
3:30pm PT/6:30pm ET
Bradley Davis Building

June 21st

CAC Minnesota
8:30am PT/10:30am CT
VICTRI, Minneapolis, Minnesota



New Veterans Drug Court in Miami-Dade County Part of a Nationwide Movement

Courtesy: *The Partnership at drugfree.org – jointogether.org*



Miami-Dade County, which has started a new court program designed for veterans with drug problems, joins a growing nationwide movement of courts for veterans.

The courts are meant to allow veterans to avoid jail or prison. Instead, they enter intense drug rehabilitation that is monitored by the court, the Miami Herald reports. According to the article, Miami Veterans Court is the 69th such court in the United States. They are currently running in 24 states. The first one was started in Buffalo, NY, three years ago in response to the growing number of service men and women with substance abuse problems who ran into trouble with the law after serving in the Middle East.

In Miami-Dade County, Veterans Court candidates have been arrested for minor drug buying or possession offenses and do not have violent or extensive criminal histories. As with the county's regular Drug Court, defendants are enrolled in treatment programs, face random drug testing and report monthly to the judge. If they fail repeated drug tests, they will be jailed.

They will also meet with a psychologist and outreach coordinator with the Miami Veteran's Affairs office, who will connect them with VA-sponsored substance abuse treatment, vocational training and housing programs. The veterans will also be assigned mentors.

Fewer School Drug and Alcohol Counselors in Minnesota As Funding Dries Up

Courtesy: *jointogether.drugfree.org*

The ranks of school drug and alcohol counselors are thinning as grant funding to pay for these positions declines, The St. Paul Pioneer Press reports. Some school administrators view drug and alcohol programs as luxuries that they can no longer afford.

But Martha Harding of the Hazelden Foundation told the newspaper that alcohol and drug counselors hired by Minnesota schools in the mid-1990s played a big part in driving down rates of teen alcohol and drug use. She says she is concerned that as school programs disappear, some of these gains will be lost. Chris Otto, head of the Minnesota School Counselors Association, said that drug counselors who remain in schools are doing everything from administering tests to monitoring lunchrooms, in addition to their counseling duties.

While positions for school drug and alcohol counselors are disappearing, they are growing in the private sector, according to the article. The Minnesota Board of Behavioral Health and Therapy says there are about 2,280 licensed alcohol and drug counselors in the state, an increase of more than 50 percent from five years ago. Roy Kammer, Coordinator of Alcohol and Drug Studies at Minnesota State University-Mankato, told the newspaper that treatment centers are a more appealing option than schools, which offer less pay and stability.

Minnesota



Veterans' Program Integrating Smoking Cessation With PTSD Treatment Expands

Courtesy: at jointogether@drugfree.org

A program for veterans with post-traumatic stress syndrome (PTSD) that integrates smoking cessation into mental health care, which was found effective in a study published last year, is now being used in six Veterans Affairs (VA) medical centers around the country.

Until now, many veteran smokers with PTSD have not been receiving help in quitting smoking, says one of the study's authors, Andrew J. Saxon, M.D., Director of the Addiction Psychiatry Residency Program at the University of Washington and Director of the Addiction Patient Care Line at the VA Puget Sound Health Care System in Seattle. Those veterans who do receive help are often referred to VA smoking cessation clinics, where many fail to attend or drop out of the program early, he says.

He cites a study noting that of the more than 1.5 million veterans with mental illness, including more than 400,000 with PTSD, the majority of smokers report not receiving tobacco cessation treatment during the previous year.

"Smoking is not addressed much throughout mental health care," Dr. Saxon said. "When I was first practicing psychiatry in the mid-1980s, smoking was almost encouraged among veterans we were treating. Today, it's still largely tolerated because many mental health providers are concerned that quitting smoking may destabilize their patients."

Quitting Smoking Doesn't Make PTSD Worse

The study conducted by Miles McFall, Ph.D., Dr. Saxon, and other colleagues, published in the Journal of the American Medical Association in December 2010, found that was not the case. The authors looked at 943 smokers with military-related PTSD who were followed for 18 to 48 months. They were randomly assigned to either receive smoking cessation services as part of their mental health treatment (known as integrated care) or were referred to a VA smoking cessation clinic.

The integrated care group received five weekly core tobacco cessation sessions focusing on issues including behavioral skills for quitting, setting a quit date and relapse prevention. Participants were offered cessation medications. The veterans also had follow-up visits. All of these sessions were typically incorporated into their regularly scheduled PTSD visits.

While quit rates for both groups were low, the veterans in the integrated care group were almost twice as likely to quit as those receiving stand-alone smoking cessation treatment (8.9 percent vs. 4.5 percent). Symptoms of PTSD improved for both groups and were similar at the end of the study. "This shows that quitting smoking didn't harm them in terms of their mental health status," Dr. Saxon said.



He notes that quit rates from the study were lower than those typically found for non-mentally ill smokers, because smokers with mood and anxiety disorders often are more nicotine-dependent and more likely to relapse following treatment.

(Editor's note: full article available at jointogether@drugfree.org)

Let's Celebrate Summer with a Non-Alcoholic Punch!

Rainbow Punch



Ingredients:

32 oz. Orange Juice
 32 oz. Pineapple juice
 4 oz. Lime Juice
 3 oz. Simple Syrup
 8 dashes Angostura Bitters
 2 oz. Grenadine

Directions:

Top with half lemon lime soda and half club soda. Garnish with fresh fruits and dust with nutmeg.

