



IMPACT! newsletter



July
2019

How your investment is changing the future for individuals and leading the way to life in recovery!

July is Minority Mental Health Awareness Month



Mental health conditions do not discriminate based on race, color, gender or identity. In 2008, the U.S. House of Representatives established July as National Minority Mental Health Awareness Month. This observance aims to improve access to mental health treatment and services for multicultural communities through increased public awareness to the unique struggles that underrepresented groups face in regard to mental health conditions in the United States. While the term

'minority' is traditionally associated with racial, ethnic, or cultural minorities, it includes individuals from a wide-range of marginalized and underserved communities. This includes those who may identify as part of the LGBTQ+ spectrum, refugee and immigrant groups, religious groups, and others.

In Los Angeles, 29% of people experiencing homelessness report a serious mental illness and/or substance abuse disorder, with a higher percent including Hispanic and black populations. "People of color, particularly African Americans feel the stigma more keenly. In a race-conscious society some don't want to be perceived as having yet another deficit," said the late Bebe Moore Campbell, founder of the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) Urban Los Angeles chapter.

PERMANENT SUPPORTIVE HOUSING



Brian (*pictured*) moved into his apartment on June 3rd, after 20 years of being homeless with major depression, PTSD and severe alcohol dependence. This move was a collaborative effort between Step Up, Whole Person Care, Silver Lake Medical Center, the Salvation Army shelter, DMH and DHS. Brian had a total of 20 psychiatric hospitalizations in 2018 alone and an estimated

100 in his lifetime. Since he enrolled in Step Up's program, he has had only two.

Brian has now been sober for over a month and a half. He has never held a job, but he did help serving food at the Salvation Army shelter while waiting for housing. Although it's been stressful for him, Brian is extremely grateful for his own place and hoping to find work.

DONOR SPOTLIGHT



As part of their 7th grade Westside Neighborhood School project, Paige Kun, Marlee Porter and Emi Yanai (*pictured*) sought to answer the question: "What societal problem can we help solve?" After

researching different causes, the students decided to create a fundraiser for Step Up called 'Hoops for the Homeless' to support permanent supportive housing.

The free throw shooting contest asked each donor for a \$10 donation to make as many baskets as possible in one minute. The students canvassed businesses in the area for prizes, which were awarded to the top three scores. The teachers, parent, and students raised a total of \$1,852.27 for Step Up. They are discussing making it an annual event!

A SENSE OF BELONGING



Alone on stage with a mic in hand, Nora Soliz (*pictured with Step Up's Denise Woodruff, left*) told her story at the Coachella Valley Storytellers Project: "Stories of Homelessness," sponsored by the Desert Sun. Nora had a wonderful upbringing with loving parents. She was enjoying a career supervising 52 nurses in a correctional facility when she got a call from home. Nora relocated to care for her parents. That year she lost her grandson, her father, her mother, and her apartment. She struggled with depression. "Grief and loss have a great impact on someone's life and can result in homelessness," Nora told the audience.

Nora made her way to Coachella's Highway 86 Encampment. After seven years it had grown to 60 people when Caltrans informed them they were trespassing and had to leave. Committed to finding a solution, both sides met in front of the bulldozers. "Caltrans supervisors brought us resources for something called permanent supportive housing," recalled Nora. Step Up helped Nora and other campers move that day. One year later, Nora has stable housing in Indio, works two jobs, and is thriving.

Save the Date!

Daniel's Place
20th Anniversary Celebration

September 25, 2019
Skirball Cultural Center
6:30 pm to 8:30 pm

Honoring
Arthur Greenberg
And Step Up Founder
Susan Dempsay