

Pacific Clinics

*Highlighting the Innovative Programs and Experts
That Transform Lives | Summer 2017*

ADVANCES

▶ **Head Start/Early Head Start Expands Full-Day Slots Serving Low-Income Children**

Also in This Issue:

*New Peer Housing Specialist Training
Milestone Conferences
Meet the Experts*

Embracing Innovation:

A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT AND CEO



James J. Balla, MBA
President & CEO

“Pacific Clinics is constantly innovating to create and improve programs that are culturally and linguistically tailored.”

As we continue to adapt to the emerging needs of the many communities we serve, Pacific Clinics is constantly innovating to create and improve programs that are culturally and linguistically tailored. We have a distinguished history of addressing behavioral healthcare needs of hard-to-reach populations, as evidenced in part through such programs as our suicide prevention services for Latina youth, our Hye-Wrap program for Armenian families, our peer health navigation services for clients and, soon to be offered, health navigation services for families.

As we’ve shared in past issues of our *Advances* magazine, mental illnesses impact individuals across culture, gender, age, and economic spectrums. Moreover, there exists a high correlation between individuals being treated for mental illness and who also experience untreated chronic health issues. Research has shown that adults with mental illness are three times as likely to delay seeking medical care compared to adults without a mental illness. This same population is ten times more likely to postpone buying medication because of costs. Statistics also demonstrate that adults with severe and chronic mental illnesses often lack the resources to successfully navigate health systems to access and treat their medical issues. This statistic is compounded when you consider cultural and linguistic factors.

As a leading behavioral healthcare organization, Pacific Clinics promotes research to develop innovative and cost effective services with measurable outcomes. Guided by our new strategic plan, PC 2020, we are committed to the continuous improvement of our behavioral health and early childhood education (Head Start/Early Head Start) programs. By focusing on initiatives related to service delivery, workforce development, internal operations, communications, financial sustainability, business development, and strategic opportunities, we are continuing our concerted efforts to lead Pacific Clinics in providing current and relevant programs.

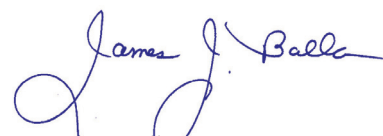
This issue of *Advances* highlights a few of our current innovative programs that address health disparities and help clients lead healthier, more

fulfilling lives. Together, working with our clients and families, we are committed to providing high quality, integrated care that produces meaningful, lasting outcomes. In this issue, you’ll read about:

- **Meet the Experts** – We spotlight the experienced leaders on our staff who drive our vision for care. This quarter we are pleased to introduce our Medical Director, Dr. Ranganath, who oversees the integration of our clinical and medical services.
- **Head Start/Early Head Start** – Early childhood stressors and trauma can have lifelong impacts, so we’re providing education, supportive services, and screening for mental and behavioral health issues to low-income children and families in the first five years of life.
- **Peer Housing Specialist Training** – We created a specialized approach for engaging and supporting our homeless, mentally ill clients as they access and adapt to their new lives in permanent housing.
- **Latino Conference 20th Anniversary** – One of Pacific Clinics’ flagship events, the Latino Conference, convenes mental health professionals and community members alike to lift up effective practices for ending stigma, reducing disparities in accessing healthcare, preventing suicide, and seeking mental health services in the Latino community.
- **News & Notes** – Events, grants, and new staff that provide a quick glance of the tremendous work of our agency.

In addition to reading this issue of *Advances*, we invite you to follow us on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and LinkedIn to receive additional updates on our life-changing work. Thank you!

Sincerely,



James J. Balla
President and CEO



MEET OUR EXPERTS

Medical Director Dr. Ranganath’s Professional Journey in Child Psychiatry is Rooted in Cultural Understanding

Dr. Vijay Ranganath’s impressive career in child psychiatry — which has spanned four decades, three countries, twenty organizations, and thousands of clients — has brought her to come full circle with Pacific Clinics.

Her courageous journey started with training in India and emigrating to Canada for her medical residency. “I arrived in Canada with \$8 in my pocket, and I had to pay \$5 for the cab to the university!” she recalls. After gaining hands-on experience, she moved to California in 1972 and started a fellowship at Pacific Clinics, when the organization was called Pasadena Child Guidance Clinic.

From there, she directed a range of clinical services and child psychiatry programs throughout Southern California in hospitals, health centers, schools, and nonprofits including Pacific Clinics. She also established a children’s clinic in Compton, led research on the effects of medication on different ethnic populations, and taught psychiatry residents and medical students.

Throughout all her appointments, she drew upon her early experiences and appreciation for cultural strengths to work with clients.

Dr. Ranganath specializes in working with children as young as two years old, and helps families more effectively support the emotional and behavioral well-being of their children. Her dedication to helping young people is exemplified by the fact that she has been caught in gang cross fire and the 1992 Los Angeles riots because she refused to stop going in to see clients in these high-need communities.

Today, Dr. Ranganath is Pacific Clinics’ Medical Director. She oversees almost 40 doctors and nurse practitioners who provide medication treatment to clients. She is focused on better integrating communications and work processes for teams of clinicians and physicians to improve the quality of comprehensive care to clients. ■

“If you can’t understand the culture the person comes from, you can’t provide good care.”

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HEAD START/EARLY HEAD START EXPANDS FULL-DAY SLOTS SERVING LOW-INCOME CHILDREN

The effects of childhood trauma and stressors caused by poverty can have lifelong impacts on health, mental health, educational achievement, and income.

Pacific Clinics' Head Start/Early Head Start program improves the lives of low-income children and families. The model serves the whole child and the whole family through high quality education, parent engagement, health screenings and connections, linkage to social services, nutritious meals, and mental health services. Every classroom has bilingual staff to communicate with parents in Spanish, Armenian, Eastern Slavic languages, and Chinese dialects.

These services ensure that low-income children have the opportunity to succeed by developing critical social-emotional and kindergarten-readiness skills. Lucy Ashjian says that the services also benefit foster children. "As a Family Child Care Specialist, I observe children every week and it is wonderful to see how much they grow and learn," she says. "Our Child Care Partnerships team has provided our family child care partners with all the essentials including toys, books, and furniture to help them develop cognitively, physically, and

socially-emotionally. Head Start works! We all make a difference in the lives of children and families."

Building on the program's success, Pacific Clinics received an expanded contract to convert 52 slots from half-day to full-day, meaning that the program can serve more children for longer periods of the day. This transition requires double the classroom space, so Pacific Clinics is expanding into a new facility in the Glendale area.

"There are many disadvantaged children that would benefit from Head Start/Early Head Start services, and our hope is that one day, every child who needs high quality early childhood education and support services will have access to them," says Wassy Tesfa, Divisional Director Head Start/Early Head Start. This expansion brings Pacific Clinics one step closer to that vision for the future.

By helping families who are struggling with poverty and other challenges to achieve their goals for education and employment, Head Start/Early Head Start plays a transformative role across two generations and helps the entire family get ahead. As with other Pacific Clinics programs, the goal is to help individuals become



Facts and Figures:

645 children served in Fiscal Year 16-17

331 Head Start (children ages 4-5 years)

219 Early Head Start (children ages birth to 3 years and pregnant women)

95 Early Head Start - Child Care Partnerships (children served through community partners)

7 cities (including Glendale and Pasadena) with 5 stand-alone centers, child care partners, and home-based visiting services.

Pacific Clinics' Head Start/Early Head Start program is nationally recognized for its performance, and especially for coordinating the Early Childhood STEM Institute conference each year. In 2017, the 3-day conference featured Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) experts presenting on the latest developments in early childhood STEM education research and practices to engage children in hands-on learning.

Wassy Tesfa, Divisional Director Head Start/Early Head Start, was recently elected to serve as President of the Board of Directors for the Region 9 Head Start Association, which includes Head Start programs in Arizona, California, Hawaii, and Nevada. "My goal is to continue to provide quality training to Head Start programs in the region so that Head Start is synonymous with quality early education."

"I'm inspired by the staff. I always marvel at their dedication."

– Wassy Tesfa

self-sufficient and maintain health and mental health wellness. Parents are children's first and primary educator, so program staff encourage strong family engagement in supporting their children's healthy development. Parents make program-related decisions by serving on the Head Start Policy Council.

Unique to Pacific Clinics' Head Start/Early Head Start program is the ability to conduct mental health screenings with young children and provide a smooth transition to in-house mental or behavioral health services for children exhibiting problems. This early prevention and intervention can make a life-changing difference.

The program's impacts are significant: by the end of one year of Head Start services, 22% more children were enrolled in health insurance; 50% more children had access to a dentist; and all children and families had access to a mental health professional. By the end of one year of Early Head Start services, 20% more children were enrolled in health insurance; 139% more children had access to a dentist; and all children and families had access to a mental health professional. ■

TACKLING HOMELESSNESS THROUGH PEER HOUSING SPECIALIST TRAINING

Scaling up Specialized Approaches to Help Clients Sustain Permanent Housing

Finding affordable housing in Southern California is difficult across the demographic landscape. For homeless individuals with mental illness, it's nearly impossible to find and maintain suitable housing due to the limited availability of affordable housing, the stressors of application paperwork and paying rent, and the complications of mental health conditions.

Pacific Clinics began implementing the Housing First Model years ago — the concept that homeless clients require stable housing as the first and most critical step of their mental health treatment because it increases the likelihood of continued engagement in mental health services. With stable housing, clients are less stressed, have a consistent place to be contacted (which facilitates regular appointments), and are better situated to focus on recovery and wellness.

Now, through a partnership with the Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health (LACDMH), Pacific Clinics Training Institute (PCTI), the training division of Pacific Clinics, has teamed up with experts

from the Pacific Clinics Housing Department along with lead housing expert Amber Roth, the Director of Programs and Operations at Homeless Health Care Los Angeles, to create a training for peer housing specialists to scale up our effective approach. With the training, more mental health providers in Los Angeles County will have the knowledge and competency to deliver specialized housing services and counseling.

The Peer Housing Specialist Training Program is designed to train peers (individuals with lived mental health experience) to outreach and engage homeless mentally ill clients and assist them in securing housing and learning the independent living skills needed to maintain permanent housing.

PCTI, which develops innovative and culturally competent training programs for the behavioral healthcare workforce, translated current Housing Department practices into a five-day, 40-hour training curriculum. Training topics included tenant rights, housing retention, managing crisis situations, integrated care linkage, management of independent living skills, and more. The training contained role playing, group work, and discussions to give trainees the opportunity to apply techniques and to practice messaging.

The training sessions began in January 2017, with four implementation coaching sessions occurring regularly

“Permanent housing is a critical component of the recovery and wellness process.”

Policy Corner:

In March, Angelenos approved Measure H, a Los Angeles County-wide 10-year, quarter-percent sales tax that will be used to fund homeless services and prevention. The tax went into effect July 2017.

According to Measure H advocates, implementation of the expected \$355 million annual tax funds, spearheaded by the Los Angeles County Homeless Initiative, is projected to help 45,000 families and individuals break the cycle of homelessness within five years, and

prevent homelessness for 30,000 others. Homeless and housing service providers will expand proven efforts to reduce and prevent homelessness, such as outreach, rapid rehousing, permanent supportive housing, mental health and substance abuse treatment, and job training. Services will be targeted to homeless children, transitional age youth, at-risk families, domestic violence survivors, and veterans.

“We are very excited about the passage of Measure H because it

will infuse the system with additional funding to enhance support for consumers to obtain housing and maintain their housing,” says Wendy Wang, MPP, Director of Public Policy. “We know that housing plays a crucial role in mental health and substance use treatment and recovery, and we’re glad to see that funds will be used for these critical support services,” adds David Garcia, Corporate Director of Housing.

To learn more, visit:
homeless.lacounty.gov

through May 2017. All 30 participants representing 17 local mental health service providers completed the training.

“We are excited to offer this specialized training for behavioral healthcare providers to meet the growing housing needs of the homeless population in Los Angeles County,” says Elva Pacheco, PCTI Director. “The success of the initial training program has led to a continuing partnership with LACDMH with two additional trainings that will take place in Fall 2017 and Winter 2018.”

As part of our commitment to workforce development and high quality care, PCTI provides other ground-breaking trainings, including Health Navigator Certification, Peer Advocacy Certification, Core Competencies for Mental Health Workers and Case Managers, Trauma-Informed Care, and more.

For more information on trainings, visit www.mypcti.org ■



Pacific Clinics' first Peer Housing Specialist Training Program cohort graduates in 2017



David Garcia, Corporate Director of Housing, Kevin White (training graduate), Amber Roth, MSW, MS, Trainer



Blanca Padilla-Stevens, Dr. Susan Mandel, Dr. Luis Garcia, Jim Balla

20th Annual Latino Conference Continues to Address Health Disparities

Twenty years ago, Pacific Clinics identified a need to reverse the climbing suicide rates among young Latinas. Dr. Luis Garcia, then the Director of Latino Services, understood that creating educational programs to dispel mental health misconceptions and show the importance of seeking mental health treatment was key to saving lives. Moreover, involving whole families and communities in supporting mental health wellness was critical to a strengths-based recovery approach.

After the success of these community education campaigns, Dr. Garcia approached three partners to establish the Annual Latino Conference in 1997: National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI), Latino Behavioral Health Institute (LBHI) and Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health (LACDMH).

The goals of the conference were fourfold: reduce disparities in mental health service access; improve quality of care by providing mental health professionals and community members with more information on the latest research, innovative treatments, community-defined evidence-based practices and clinical best practices to effectively address mental health issues within the Latino community; end the stigma of mental health issues within a community that generally considers the subject taboo; and support treatment for individuals from a strongly family-oriented culture.

“We were surprised by the turnout the first year.

We realized there was a huge demand for a space dedicated to discussing effective treatments for Latinos, and our conference has grown every year since,” explains Dr. Garcia, now the Vice President of Quality Care, Cultural Diversity & Outcomes. From 100 participants the first year, the conference now regularly draws in over 500 participants, including mental health professionals, researchers and academics, students, peers (with lived mental health experience), and family members of people with mental illness.

The themes over the past 20 years have focused on mental health and substance use, including: Engagement, Treatment and Retention for Latinos from a Cultural Perspective; Effective Latino Program Models - Prevention, Intervention and Treatment; The Impact of Being Uninsured; Healthy Families; and Benefits of Health Care Reform for Latino Communities.

Past presenters have included experts on mental health, suicide, Latino issues, and co-occurring disorders. International speakers often fly in to present at the conference because they recognize the importance of our event in disseminating culturally appropriate approaches.

This year, the 20th Annual Latino Conference was held on May 18 in San Gabriel – in honor of Mental Health Awareness Month in May. The theme focused on Healing and Empowerment within the Latino Community. Speakers presented on mental health service delivery to Latinos at the local level; the reasons Latinas commit suicide and ways to prevent it; thought leadership; the role of spirituality in health and healing;

CELEBRATING MAY MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS MONTH WITH MILESTONE EVENTS

integrating faith into mental health treatment for Latinos; and a lunchtime keynote by Father Gregory Boyle, Founder of Homeboy Industries, about showing boundless compassion. This milestone conference concluded with a reception featuring a mariachi band and healing art exhibit.

Pacific Clinics has had the extreme honor of receiving support from elected officials and community partners in making the event successful each year. “The ability for Pacific Clinics to engage clients, particularly those with very specific cultural needs, is unmatched,” proclaims Dr. Jonathan Sherin, Director of LACDMH, at the 2017 conference.

Blanca Padilla-Stevens, EBP Training Manager to Dr. Garcia and long-time Latino Conference organizer, adds, “We are extremely proud that this conference has helped to educate more and more staff on how they can provide better treatment and culturally competent care to the Latino community.”

Looking forward, future conferences will continue to strengthen integrated care. Plans are in place to partner with healthcare agencies to present on how Latino physical health issues – such as cardio-vascular disease, diabetes, obesity and hypertension – play a part in mental health and vice versa, and how we can improve the quality of life and lifespans for the Latino community.

Search for #LatinoConference2017 on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram to catch up on our posts from the conference! ■

AFPC 30th Anniversary Symposium

In celebration of the Asian Pacific Family Center’s (APFC) 30th anniversary – and of both Mental Health Awareness Month and Asian Pacific Islander Heritage Month, both falling in May – APFC convened a one-day symposium on May 24th with the theme: “API Mental Health Services in Los Angeles County: Looking Back to Go Forward.”

A panel of leaders who greatly influenced the trajectory of APFC and increased access to mental health services for the Asian Pacific Islander (API) community in Los Angeles County since the early 1970s used the culturally-congruent “talk story” format in an opening panel. Moderated by Dr. Terry Gock, Divisional Director of APFC, panelists included Gladys Lee, founding director of APFC; Dr. Susan Mandel, President Emeritus of Pacific Clinics; Dr. Herb Hatanaka, Executive Director of Special Services Group and longtime partner; and Dr. Ford Kuramoto, president of Magna Systems and longtime mental health administrator. “The panel was an opportunity for APFC to acknowledge the contributions of these pioneers and leaders,” noted Dr. Gock.

Keynote speaker Dr. Anna Lau, Professor of Psychology at UCLA, spoke about addressing disparities in mental health treatment of Asian American and Pacific Islander youth and families. She shared the striking statistic that Asian American youth have comparable or greater levels of mental health issues to non-white youth, but are five times less likely to get referred to treatment. This is often because they tend to show less disruptive behavior and less academic impairment when compared to other racial/ethnic groups until their mental health problems become severe or they are in crisis. As a result, they are not brought to the attention of school gatekeepers for early intervention. She highlighted programs at APFC that are successfully addressing the disparities and providing linguistically and culturally syntonic services.

A client who has benefitted from APFC’s services also gave a personal testimony about the profound impact of these mental health and medication services on his life and that of his family.

NEWS & NOTES

Fiesta Brunch Breaks Fundraising Record

Thanks to our 300 guests, partners, and supporters, we raised almost \$340,000 at our Fiesta Brunch on May 21 – a new record! These funds will make an immediate impact by supporting our life-changing mental health, behavioral health and support services for children, adults, and families living with mental illness.

Our annual fundraising event, held again at the Brookside Golf Club at the Rose Bowl, featured special guests who stand with us to end mental health stigma: emcee Ellen Leyva, ABC7 Anchor; auctioneer Robert Lyons, Lyons Design and Build, Inc.; US Congresswoman Judy Chu; US Congresswoman Grace Napolitano; CA State Senator Edward Hernandez; CA State Senator Anthony Portantino; CA State Assemblymember Chris Holden; LA County Supervisor Kathryn Barger; Pasadena Mayor Terry Tornek; Norm Nixon, Los Angeles Lakers; Bill Russell, Los Angeles Dodgers; and Garret Hedlund, Actor.

We appreciate all of our sponsors, heroes (donors), special guests, elected officials, staff, partners, and mental health champions for helping us transform lives since 1926. And we are grateful for the resolutions and honors we received from the City of Pasadena, Congressmembers Judy Chu and Grace Napolitano, and others in recognition of our 90 years in service. We look forward to working together to provide recovery, wellness and transformation to many more individuals in our community!

You can catch all the event festivities by searching for #PCBrunch2017 on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram.



Robert Lyons (auctioneer), Lyons Design and Build, Inc.



*Kris Giordano, Executive VP/
Chief Administrative Officer*



*Lucy Pliskin, Vice President
of Human Resources*



*Denise Jackson, Senior Director
of Human Resources*

Pacific Clinics Welcomes New Senior Management

In an ongoing effort to strengthen its executive management team, Pacific Clinics has hired Kris Giordano as its Executive Vice President/Chief Administrative Officer. Ms. Giordano will help to set the strategic direction for the agency's administrative functions, including operations, financial management, claims operations, workforce development, contract negotiations and management, compliance and quality improvement, and information systems. Ms. Giordano brings to the agency an impressive breadth of healthcare management experience spanning more than 20 years at organizations including VITAS Healthcare and RAND Corporation (Health Division).

Also joining the Pacific Clinics team are Lucy Pliskin, Vice President of Human Resources, and Denise Jackson, Senior Director of Human Resources. Ms. Pliskin brings valuable experience managing personnel talent at large nonprofits such as Goodwill Southern California and the American Red Cross. Ms. Jackson brings a corporate perspective from her time at Career Academy Corporation.

"The in-depth knowledge of the healthcare landscape and administrative operations of these three individuals is invaluable," said Jim Balla, President & CEO. "We're thrilled to have them join our team to transform and elevate the services we provide to the culturally diverse communities we serve throughout Southern California."

New Grants

Thanks to a \$78,200 grant from The Ahmanson Foundation, Pacific Clinics will enhance network security for our electronic health records system, to ensure that client health records and electronic data are kept safe and protected.

A \$2,500 grant from The Maximus Foundation will provide Pacific Clinics Employment Services clients with professional clothing, money for out-of-pocket expenses such as business cards, and transportation to and from work. Job training and placement is a key component to recovering a meaningful and fulfilling life for our clients.

Pacific Clinics was one of four awardees statewide to receive an Office of Statewide Health Planning & Development (OSHPD) grant. The three-year, \$1,050,000 renewal grant will support the Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioner Preceptorship Internship Program at Pacific Clinics, which offers students a broad scope of recovery-focused placement opportunities and experience in the public mental health system. We are partnering with several schools to offer 32 preceptorship placements.



The Maximus Foundation site visit

UniHealth Grant Supports New Integrated Delivery Model

A generous grant of \$240,000 from the UniHealth Foundation will support the planning of a new integrated delivery model for serving individuals with mental illness in partnership with private health providers and commercial insurers. The goal at project completion is to pilot an innovative collaborative care delivery model to improve the quality of life and health of individuals with mental illness regardless of their health care coverage type or financial resources. An added benefit of the model is its reduction in the total cost of care. UniHealth Foundation is a non-profit philanthropic organization whose mission it is to support and facilitate activities that significantly improve the health and well-being of individuals and communities within its service area.



Jean Champommier, Nancy Pelosi, Marie Torres, and Luis Garcia at the press conference on Health Care

Dr. Luis Garcia Speaks Out About the Impact of the ACA Repeal

To protest the repeal of the Affordable Care Act (ACA), which provides funding for early intervention and prevention mental health services, Congresswoman Nancy Pelosi, House Minority Speaker, led an event on January 16 at the California Endowment with many other Congressmembers and community leaders, including Luis Garcia, PsyD, Vice President of Quality Care, Cultural Diversity & Outcomes at Pacific Clinics. Dr. Garcia praised the positive impact of the ACA, which has saved the lives of Latina youth served by Pacific Clinics.



CELEBRATING
90 years

Pacific Clinics
ADVANCING BEHAVIORAL HEALTHCARE

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