

crestwood

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Family and Caregiver Support Plays an Essential Role in Recovery

Crestwood Center Sacramento's

staff strives to create a support system for their clients that is based upon the values, principles and strengths of consistency of care, effective communication and problem solving, understanding, common goals, respect, and love. However, since the staff is only able to work with the clients for a short period of time, they know that they are only one part of this total support system for their clients, and long-term recovery is in large part dependent upon the support that each client has outside of their program. To help address this important need for support, Crestwood Center Sacramento created its Family and Caregiver Program and Support Group. The establishment of this program at the facility has been awhile in the making, borrowing from similar programs at other Crestwood facilities, while adding their own particular touches that make the program unique to their environment. The program's goal is to create an environment of learning and support for clients and their families. Clients' family and friends are invited to attend the monthly meetings and are also encouraged to provide input on topics they would like to learn more about. The meeting agenda topics are then created by the attendees.

Crestwood Center Sacramento has had very successful Family and Caregiver Support Group meetings. One of their upcoming meetings will host one of their psychiatrists who will be on hand to answer questions about the role of the psychiatrist in treatment, how to develop an effective relationship with a physician, the use of medications and a tutorial on how to locate specific and reliable health-related resources on the internet.

The response from attendees has been wonderful. Several family members have commented that they have not had this opportunity at any of the places their loved ones have stayed in the past. They have thanked the staff and have stated that they are excited to participate. One former client's parents have continued to participate, even though their loved one was discharged, stating that they just want to continue to learn as much as they can.

"As the father of a daughter who suffers from the challenges of severe anxiety, I have personally experienced the difficulty and challenge of learning how to truly support my daughter," said Yusef Abner, Crestwood Center Sacramento Administrator. "It began as an emotional rollercoaster that none of us knew how we got on, and nobody seemed to be at the controls. The fear, frustration, and feelings of being lost were, and can still be, overwhelming. But it is with the education that I received while working at Crestwood, along with the incredible family system that I am fortunate to have, that gives me hope that she will be able to lead a life that she believes is worth living. I want this for everyone."

It is the continued desire of Crestwood Center Sacramento, with its Family and Caregiver Program and Support Group, to assist all family and caregivers to gain the knowledge to truly support their loved ones, so that each individual, along with their families, will have the hope and empowerment to walk confidently and purposefully down the path of recovery together. "I'm reminded of a quote from the movie Lilo and Stitch that embodies what our Family and Caregiver Program is about," said Yusef. "'Ohana means family - no one gets left behind, and no one is ever forgotten.'" <



Crestwood Behavioral Health Receives ECS Imaging Achievement Award

Last October at the ECS Imaging

Laserfiche conference in Riverside, Margarita Rosero, Crestwood's General Ledger Manager, and Jessica Colmenares, Crestwood's IS Manager, were awarded the ECS Imaging Achievement Award in recognition of their

multi-facility implementation, innovation and streamlined processes with Laserfiche.

This ECS award recognizes Crestwood's innovative and seamless integration of both Quickfields and Laserfiche into financial processes to improve performance and timeliness of multiple procedures at Crestwood's Finance and Accounting office. Margarita, Jessica and their team were able to create high availability of information through Laserfiche that is user-friendly, cost-effective and increases productivity due to the reduction of document processing time and cost at both the corporate and facility level. Crestwood is now an example of successful Laserfiche implementation for other companies to look at in this field. "We truly appreciate the support from Crestwood to allow us to enrich our knowledge with Laserfiche," said Margarita.

Congratulations to Margarita, Jessica and their amazing team! ◀

Crestwood Wellness and Recovery Center

in Redding has created the Discharge with Dignity Program that has produced extraordinary results in helping to instill self-esteem and confidence in their clients who are being discharged.

Many of the clients at the facility have found themselves, due to a variety of reasons, owning very little possessions. Although the facility has helped many of them to obtain needed clothing and personal care supplies, it wasn't uncommon for the clients to pack their limited possessions in plastic bags as they left the facility. So even though the clients had progressed in their well-

ness, enjoyed relief from their recent troubling symptoms and gained new tools to effectively re-engage in the community, they often felt undignified arriving at their new residence with their possessions packed in plastic shopping and garbage bags.

To help alleviate this issue, the facility staff began the Discharge with Dignity Program to collect backpacks, suitcases, and related items. Now as clients prepare for discharge, they are notified of the Discharge with Dignity Program and are offered suitcases or backpacks to store and transport their possessions in. They are also offered toiletry items, such as travel-size soaps and shampoos, to accompany their luggage.

This simple gesture and assistance has made a remarkable difference in the attitude and confidence of the facility's clients who are continuing on their journey of wellness and recovery. "It is heartwarming to see clients hold their heads up high with their suitcase in hand," said Nicoletta Groff, Administrator. Many of their clients have stated that arriving at a new residence with nice luggage, instead of garbage bags, has fostered self-worth and pride. First impressions and perceptions are very powerful, not only for the new acquaintances, but also for the clients. The Discharge with Dignity Program gives these clients that little boost of confidence that helps them to shine. ◀

Discharged
with Dignity

Collaboration is not always common in business. Organizations develop new practices, formulate and design specific treatment interventions and then all too often, hold onto these to promote their business. However, at Crestwood Behavioral Health, Inc., we believe in collaboration so that any effective intervention, practice or treatment design should be shared, so that it can benefit as many individuals with mental health issues as possible.

The Art of Working Together

Crestwood has a long history of collaboration which began in the mid-1970s when we partnered with the state of California to provide long-term, community-based mental health support services in skilled nursing facilities. These facilities served as a home for more than 500 clients who had to move out of the state hospitals. The theme of collaboration continued into the 1980s and 1990s when Crestwood partnered with counties to provide more sophisticated mental health treatment for clients emerging from crisis and requiring locked, structured support.

In 2007 Crestwood partnered with Recovery Innovations, a company that is dedicated to creating opportunities and environments that empower people to recover (www.recoveryinnovations.org). Recovery Innovations shared their best practice “Living Room” model with Crestwood, which has become the cornerstone for the Crestwood Psychiatric Health Facilities. The Living Room model is built on the principle that providing a comfortable, loving, homelike environment for a person in and emerging from crisis and having peer providers as part of the treatment team, will foster recovery. This model has propelled Crestwood’s belief that a Psychiatric Health Facility (PHF) should be a soft place to land for a person in their moment of greatest despair. It is this comforting environment and peer providers who support the healing process.

Crestwood’s most recent collaboration is with Fresno County in which Crestwood became the first private organization to transition a PHF on a county site, without halting or hampering previous county PHF services. When Crestwood took charge of the Fresno County PHF in January 2011, it was transformed into a recovery-focused, living room model PHF, with peer support, a welcoming room, a serenity room and a beautiful back yard. Crestwood and Fresno County continue to share many projects in this successful, evolving collaborative relationship.

Collaboration is the art of working together for a shared goal. This has been the foundation of Crestwood since the earliest days and continues to be an integral element of our operations and philosophy. Crestwood looks forward to partnering with organizations with similar values to provide services to an ever expanding group of stakeholders that will benefit the lives of clients, families and communities throughout California. <

Outstanding Competition at the 4th Annual Crestwood Olympics



The Crestwood Solano relay team celebrating at the Crestwood Olympics.

The Crestwood Olympics has become an annual event that is not to be missed. Hosted by Crestwood Solano, this past September marked the 4th year that this exciting event was held at Dan Foley Park in Vallejo. Participants from Crestwood Center Sacramento, Crestwood Center at Napa Valley, Crestwood Manor Vallejo and Crestwood Solano came together to compete in this year's event.



This Crestwood Olympics included the discus throw, the 50-yard dash, the javelin throw, the long jump and relay, and basketball. The basketball game between Crestwood Center Sacramento and Crestwood Solano went down to the wire, with Crestwood Solano's team winning by one point. Lorenzo of Crestwood Solano, who was part of Crestwood Solano's relay and basketball teams, said, "We went in with a goal, and succeeded with victory!"

Participants were awarded medals and certificates in the Closing Ceremony. Congratulations to all of the 2011 Crestwood Olympics participants! ◀

Early adulthood can often be a very challenging time for many young adults ages 18 to 25 known as transition age youth (TAY). Once high school ends, society expects us to either go to college or get a job and begin acting like adults.

Without the experience often required to find employment, the finances to make it on one's own or the skills and support to know how to deal with day to day life, many young adults struggle to find the life they want. Often use of drugs and alcohol, family and relationship troubles and legal issues make this a very volatile time for many. Also this is the age that mental health issues often first appear, adding even more to the stress and difficulties these youth face.

Making a Difference in Young Adults' Lives

To provide help with these many challenges, Crestwood Solano and Dreamcatchers Empowerment Network started a program, in collaboration with the Solano County Office of Education (SCOE), to provide supported education and supported employment services for these at risk TAY. The program is supported by Mental Health Services Act Prevention and Early Intervention funding. Participants do not need a formal diagnosis to be part of the program and may either be referred to the program by someone or they may refer themselves.

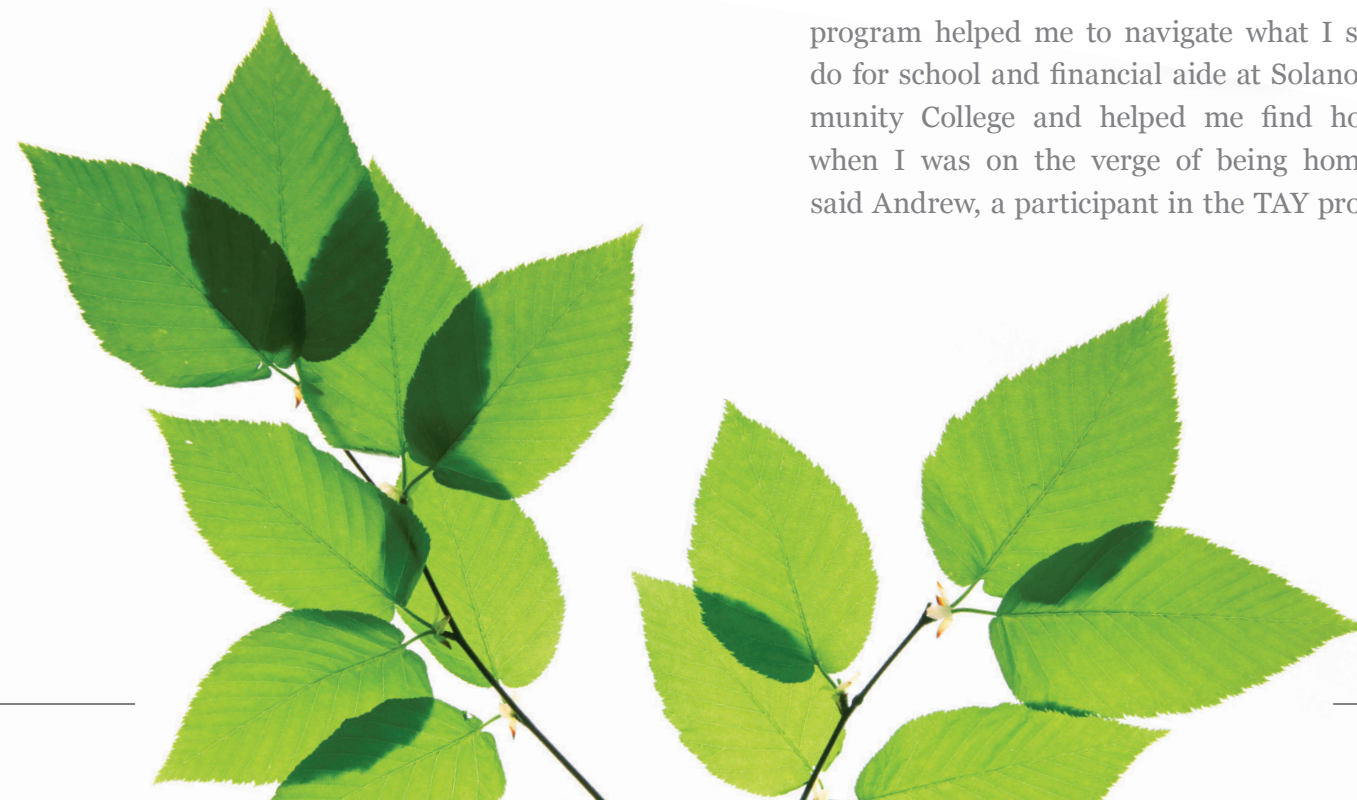
Many of the TAY that participate in the program are at risk of being homeless, and have little or no positive family support. Some of them have already experienced some depression or anxiety or have been on medication as a child, or have been diagnosed with learning disabilities. "One of our TAY was even diagnosed with Schizophrenia, hospitalized once, then got on a medication regiment that works and has been functioning outside of the system ever since," said Travis Curran, TAY Program Director.

Crestwood Solano's and Dreamcatchers' main focus in the program is supported employment, where they find job placements for the TAY in different agencies in the community such as Walgreens, Eco-Thrift and on the Solano Community College campus. Participants in the program have varying levels of employment and educational experience, as well as different professional goals and desires. The employment experience helps each person learn transferable job skills and independence, while receiving encouragement and support from their on-site Dreamcatchers supervisor. "By learning how to cope with challenges at the work site or in the classroom, they are hopefully able to apply the same skills in the rest of their lives," said Travis. "This can be learning to complete a work shift while experiencing symptoms of anxiety or depression, or may involve dealing with difficult customers on the job site and not internalizing those actions as a reflection of their own self-worth."

While Crestwood Solano's and Dreamcatchers' main role is supported employment, the program has thrived by giving as much wrap-around support as possible to each participant, such as resume building, job fairs, job searching and interview preparation to help further strengthen their employability in the community. However, employment is just one piece of each young person's life and the program makes sure to fit work-related activities around each person's college or adult education school schedule.

Also, an important part of the program ensures that each participant has their basic needs met such as assisting with housing, food stamps, transportation, crisis prevention and anything else that is needed in the moment. "The TAY program helped me to navigate what I should do for school and financial aide at Solano Community College and helped me find housing when I was on the verge of being homeless," said Andrew, a participant in the TAY program.

The TAY program has been a great success. In less than two years since it was started, Crestwood Solano and Dreamcatchers have employed 36 TAY, 8 of whom have gone on to find competitive work in the community. The Crestwood Solano, Dreamcatchers and SCOE TAY program has been successful in providing these young adults with a purpose by helping educate and train them, along with connecting them to resources, so that they are able to have the life they want. ◀



Crestwood Behavioral Health, Inc.

Crestwood Behavioral Health, Inc. is proud to be California's leading provider of mental health services, assisting thousands of clients from across the state. Our focus is on creating strong relationships with counties in which we both have a financial commitment, providing the services which are tailored to meet clients' specific needs, and reinforcing a common set of values that guide our practices and policies.



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Spotlight

“Gratitude is something none of us can give too much. For on the smiles, the thanks we give, our little gestures of appreciation, our neighbors build their philosophy of life.”

- Jeff Doiron, Pre-Vocational Coordinator
and Recovery Consultant, Crestwood Center
at Napa Valley

Touch Editor Kari Friesen

