

Henry David Thoreau

"Could a greater miracle take place than for us to look through each other's eyes for an instant?"

touch

fall 2015 | issue 14

in this issue

The Healing Garden pg2

crestwood's
journey pg4

Collaboration Changes Lives pg6

Supporting Recovery pg10

Crestwood Wildcats pg11



THE HEALING GARDEN

Liberty Hyde Bailey, a renowned American horticulturist, botanist and cofounder of the American Society for Horticultural Science once said, “A garden requires patient labor and attention. Plants do not grow merely to satisfy ambitions or to fulfill good intentions. They thrive because someone expended effort on them.” At Crestwood Manor Modesto, their residents demonstrate exactly that philosophy with their Healing Harvest Project. The Healing Harvest Project is part of the facility’s vocational rehabilitation program, which consists of offering three types of jobs for residents - staff assistants, peer assistants, and caring for plants, animals, and the environment with the Healing Harvest Project.

The Healing Harvest Project gives residents the opportunity to put their hands in the dirt and have the ability to enjoy outdoor time, while being simultaneously productive, industrious and a contributing member to the Crestwood community. “I like being outdoors, and having the freedom,” said one resident who is working in both the vegetable and flower gardens.



Crestwood Modesto’s beautiful summer flower garden.



The vegetable garden is flourishing.



The gorgeous flower and tomato harvest.

The volunteer residents participate in the garden’s care and cultivate its growth, making it into a serene and beautiful place. It also gives the residents tools and skills, which they can use in the garden, as well as in their life. It has been shown that gardening is a genuine therapeutic tool for some and can help improve memory, cognitive abilities, language capabilities, socialization and problem solving skills. Furthermore, gardening can help strengthen muscles and improve coordination, balance, endurance and overall health. One resident who works in the flower garden commented, “I like to water, it’s calming and relaxing.”

The gardens are often filled with beautiful flowers and nutritious vegetables and fruits that are used throughout the facility. The head of the vocational rehabilitation department, Judi Jimenez, makes great use of the flower garden, conducting a flower arranging group when they are in bloom. Dietary Supervisor, Rene Springfield, teaches nutrition groups, and Behavior Specialist, Michael Russ, who has a Culinary Arts degree, conducts a cooking group with geriatric residents using produce from the garden. Activity and program staff also teach independent living skills, focusing on food preparation with various cultural delights being created, always with delicious results.

The benefits of the garden are not just for the residents, but for the staff as well. On occasion when things get tough and staff need a moment to relax, the garden offers a beautiful place to rejuvenate, smell the flowers and realize that this amazing garden is a product of the residents’ hard work and a reminder of the importance of what they do each day.

“Plants do not grow merely to satisfy ambitions or to fulfill good intentions. They thrive because someone expended effort on them.”

Contributed by: Robert Leavy, Director of Program Education and Leslie Darouze, Program Director, Crestwood Manor Modesto

I first learned about Crestwood four years ago in Boston, where I met Mertice “Gitane” Williams, Crestwood’s Vocational Wellness Educator, at a Trauma Summit hosted by the National Center for Trauma-Informed Care. My introduction to Crestwood and subsequent work with Crestwood has had a profound effect in my personal and professional life.

crestwood’s journey

I train and consult on creating trauma-informed systems all over the country and in some other parts of the world. As many of you know, trauma-informed care (TIC) is about operating from a set of values consistent with trauma-informed principles. First and foremost, Crestwood values are very much aligned with the values of TIC. But more importantly, Crestwood lives and practices its values, which makes it a trauma-informed organization.



Creating trauma-informed organizations is a journey. This journey can be difficult and challenging, but rewarding. Crestwood understands this and has made a commitment to this journey for the long haul. This is what makes my journey with Crestwood unique. I have assisted many organizations in this journey and some organizations introduce TIC as a “flavor of the month”, and then later that energy fades away. But this is not the case at Crestwood. Two years after my big training for Crestwood on TIC, the DVD of that training remains mandatory viewing for their new staff orientation. Of course, I still blush when I walk into a program and get recognized from that DVD!

Trauma-informed care is about healing. There are experiences in all our lives and our clients’ lives that leave an emotional wound, and some of those are deeper than others. A very wise Native American psychologist once said that trauma is the “wound that does not bleed.” Therefore, our job is to create a system of care that ultimately helps heal these wounds. We can call it many names, but ultimately most everything we do boils down to promoting healing. Crestwood understands this concept and that is why the many initiatives that Crestwood embarks on helps people heal. For example, the development of welcoming rooms to replace intake/admission rooms is a significant move towards healing. When clients walk into a Crestwood building, their first encounter is to walk into a room that says, “We are here to make you feel safe and wanted” versus “We are here to fix you.” Practices that empower clients to manage their treatment honors clients’ self-determination. Also the preponderance of rocking and sliding chairs in the programs provides rhythmic and repetitive movements for self-soothing and building new self-regulatory pathways, which are important in a client’s healing journey. All the environmental improvements and enhancements convey the message to your clients and staff that you provide them with a place to live and work that reflects their importance in this world. The Dreamcatchers Empowerment Network program is not just a vocational program, it is a program that helps clients rediscover and reinforce their worth in this world and that they can make a difference.

There are many big and small things that are being implemented throughout Crestwood. I urge you to view all of these as steps in the healing journey and that there is no deed too small to make an impact on healing. There is no job or function that does not contribute to this journey.

The Crestwood motto, “It’s About Growth” is founded on the understanding that it is hard to grow without healing from the past. A trauma-informed approach is akin to preparing and tilling the land to ensure growth is possible. A good gardener knows that it is important to know the nutrients that already exist in the soil in order to supplement and enhance what is already there. This is why it is also crucial that you recognize and honor the many years you have been conducting healing practices with your clients. Your journey is in discovering and implementing healing practices that will augment the wonderful things you all are already doing.

Lastly, I thank you all for the privilege of making me a part of the Crestwood journey!

*Contributed by: Raul Almazar
Almazar Consulting & Senior Consultant
to the National Center for Trauma
Informed Care*



CHANGING LIVES THROUGH COLLABORATION

It's unusual to observe collaboration as it is happening. It is far more common to celebrate the success of collaboration after its culminated. Crestwood's collaboration with San Diego Health Care Hospital system and San Diego County Behavioral Health Services has provided an incredible opportunity to observe it in real time with measurable milestones and outcomes.

This collaboration story began in 1992 when a case manager from San Diego County was seeking a placement for a very challenging client and a Crestwood facility in northern California was willing to take a chance. Later that case manager's program manager got a chance to visit this client at the Crestwood Facility in northern California. What she saw there that day left a very positive impression that she remembered for many years to come. This was the first collaboration between Crestwood and San Diego County and set the stage for future events.

Fast forward to 2013 when that very astute and dedicated program manager, Anna La Rocca Palid, LCSW, who is now a leader as a Behavioral Health Program Coordinator in San Diego County Behavioral Health Services, contacted Crestwood about the need in San Diego County for secured behavioral healthcare services. The county had grown tremendously and there were more challenging people to serve and insufficient programs to serve them. They needed a provider to work with the community and them to serve at least 40 clients requiring intensive, secured, recovery-based services. The county also wanted a provider who thinks outside the box, has creative individualized employment programs, recovery services and focuses on integrated alternative tools for clients and they chose Crestwood to be that provider.

Collaboration is about working
with others to achieve shared goals.

Crestwood and San Diego County Behavioral Health Services began devising a plan to address the county's needs. Crestwood found a beautiful site for a 42-bed Mental Health Rehabilitation Center (MHRC) on a hospital campus in San Diego and created the first of two programs – Crestwood San Diego. Crestwood San Diego opened in June 2014 and quickly filled up with 42 clients. Before long, there was a flow of individuals successfully reintegrating into the community and new admissions moving into the program. The hospitals in the area felt a sense of relief and the new services served their purpose with helping many clients with their recovery.

(continued next page)

Through collaboration we can make a difference.

Soon Crestwood San Diego was full and the San Diego County behavioral healthcare system again felt the pressure of impacted Emergency Departments, long waiting lists at the psychiatric hospitals and a bottleneck in the mental health system. So they looked among themselves to find a possible location for a 40-bed MHRC. Paradise Valley Hospital found a location that would work. Crestwood and Paradise Valley Hospital started discussions about creating a 40-bed MHRC on this site. Dimitrios Alexiou, FACHE, President and CEO of The Hospital Association of San Diego and Imperial Counties and San Diego County Behavioral Health Services worked very closely together to successfully garner support from the San Diego County Board of Supervisors and the community to commit to the 40-bed MHRC in Chula Vista. Crestwood and Paradise Valley Hospital invested significantly in an extensive refurbishing project to create a beautiful, home-like, welcoming recovery-based MHRC known as Crestwood Chula Vista. Crestwood Chula Vista opened in late July of this year and is now Crestwood's eighth MHRC in California.

Collaboration is working with others to do a task and to achieve shared goals. The wonderful collaboration of these groups created an environment that enabled San Diego County Behavioral Health Services to provide beds to some of the clients in greatest need for these services, helping them with their recovery and easing stress in the community and local hospital emergency rooms. It is clear to see that through collaboration we can make a difference.

*Contributed by: Patty Blum, PhD
Crestwood Vice President*



The collaborating team

(BACK ROW L TO R)
Janet Vlavianos (Crestwood), Alfredo Aguirre (San Diego Co Behavioral Health Services), Dimitrios Alexiou, (Hospital Association of San Diego and Imperial Counties), George C. Lytal (Crestwood)

(Front Row L to R)
Anna Palid (San Diego Co Behavioral Health Services), Maria Stefanou (Crestwood), Michael Bargagliotti (Crestwood), Piedad Garcia (San Diego County Behavioral Health Services), Patty Blum (Crestwood), Neerav Jadeja (Paradise Valley Hospital)



Crestwood Chula Vista: honoring the intrinsic value in all humanity.

The staff at Crestwood Chula Vista met before the facility opened and decided as a group on what their mission and values would be for this new facility. Here is what they embrace, honor and live at Crestwood Chula Vista.

Crestwood Chula Vista shall provide the most effective mental health treatment services in California, with the strongest committed team of employees.

We will support our clients, families, employees, and community in achieving their highest quality of life by establishing a solid foundation of client-centered services. We shall ensure continuity of care through teamwork, advocacy and education within our facility and the community.

We shall celebrate success daily through reaching milestones, integrating clients into the community, sharing success stories and lighting the way for others to walk in the path of recovery. We, at Crestwood Chula Vista, love and respect each of our team members which help us as a team to radiate the love and respect to our clients.



SUPPORTING RECOVERY WITH WRAP

At Crestwood Bakersfield, Wellness Recovery Action Plan (WRAP) is an important part of the healing and recovery process for their clients. Their motto and goal is to stay well by playing and focusing on their key recovery concepts, which

include hope, personal responsibility, education, self-advocacy and support. WRAP is used to learn to uncover each person’s own wellness tools and put them into action on a daily basis. Many of the WRAP activities they have incorporated into their classes are team building activities, which help others learn how to work as a team, increase problem solving skills and improve communication.

“Our goal is to incorporate more fun, interactive and competitive activities into our WRAP trainings. Just recently I developed a WRAP Trivia/Crestwood Family Feud game which has been helpful in understanding why WRAP is such a vital part of our lives,” said Linda Johnson, Director of Recreation Therapy.



Crestwood Bakersfield incorporates a beach theme as part of their WRAP classes to help create a peaceful setting.

Another creative way Crestwood Bakersfield is presenting WRAP in their programs is by having individuals team up into pairs, with the assignment to create and design a WRAP community in which people would enjoy living. This exercise is not only a lot of fun for the clients, but it also brings communication, group understanding and decision making skills in to play.

“Since so many of us enjoy being in a peaceful setting, we have also incorporated a beach theme into our WRAP classes this summer, with ocean sounds, beach sand, sea shells, candles, lounge chairs and many other soothing items which seem to help ease the pressure of daily life,” explained Linda.

Crestwood Bakersfield continues to find wonderful ways to support clients in their recovery through innovative WRAP activities and they love to say, “We are playing. What are you doing to stay well?”

*Contributed by:
Linda Johnson, Director of Recreation Therapy
Crestwood Bakersfield*

The Crestwood Wildcats

It’s all About Trust, Teamwork and Community

As hundreds of people gathered in Pleasant Hill Park for the annual NAMI Contra Costa Picnic on June 19th, 15 residents and staff from Crestwood Healing Center Pleasant Hill’s softball team, the Crestwood Wildcats, were all business. While others ate, socialized and played games at the picnic, the Wildcats stretched and warmed up on the field, preparing for the championship game of the 2nd Annual NAMI Contra Costa Hope Cup Softball Tournament.



*The Crestwood Wildcats 2015
Hope Cup Champions*

The annual Contra Costa NAMI Picnic is an event to connect people, with the goal of eliminating the stigma of mental health. The Hope Cup Softball Tournament, coordinated by the Putnam Clubhouse, was one of the picnic’s highlights and helped to create a venue for staff and clients from eight different local agencies to compete and have fun. The day wasn’t about treatment, it was about community.

Two months prior to the picnic, the Wildcats had competed in the first two rounds of the softball tournament, beating Nevin House’s team handily in the Quarterfinals before moving on to the Semifinals against NAMI’s team. The Wildcats were led in this tightly contested game by the dazzling defense of their second baseman Claudio, as well as Matthew, whose headfirst dive to home plate late in the game just beat the tag. Moments later, a thrilling walk-off win sent the Wildcats to the Finals.

Now, at the NAMI picnic, the Wildcats’ hard work had them a step away from the Hope Cup championship title. With a matchup against Rainbow Coalition’s team, the game began with the singing of the National Anthem and was played in front of a large, supportive crowd. Kyle, Wildcats’ slugging third baseman, came up with big hits and solid defense, while pitcher, Aviana, inspired the team with her hustle and great attitude. Behind their strong bats, great defense and outstanding teamwork, the Wildcats took an early lead and never looked back, and went on to become the 2015 Hope Cup Champions. Abeth, utility woman and cheerleader, best described the experience by saying, “It was a valuable opportunity to create trust, safety and dedication to our passion and dream. It was like a bridge that reconnects us to one another, like a wheel of trust for the whole team, working towards the road of personal recovery.”

While much of the team and its fans are still reveling in the big win, star shortstop Corey is already looking ahead to the next tournament and said, “Hopefully we can continue defending the trophy and keep it with Crestwood.” With such a dedicated and competitive team, it wouldn’t be wise to bet against the Wildcats doing just that. Congratulations Crestwood Wildcats!!

*Contributed by:
Travis Curran, Administrator
Crestwood Healing Center Pleasant Hill*

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.



Crestwood Behavioral Health, Inc.

520 Capitol Mall, Suite 800
Sacramento, CA 95814
(916) 471-CBHI (2244)
crestwoodbehavioralhealth.com

spotlight

"There is freedom waiting for you,
On the breezes of the sky,
And you ask "What if I fall?"
Oh but my darling,
What if you fly?"

Erin Hanson
Author



accreditation

Crestwood Behavioral Health Inc. is accredited by the Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities (CARF), which requires a higher standard of care than the licensing standards in California. Crestwood believes this accreditation demonstrates our unwavering commitment to achieving and maintaining the highest level of care and rehabilitation.