

Helen Keller

"The best and most beautiful things in the world cannot be seen or even touched, but must be felt with the heart."

touch

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*“One thing that I know is
we will never be the same.”*

Coming Together in Tragedy

The evening of Sunday, October 8th in Napa County started out for many of us as a calm night, watching football, enjoying the return of loved ones from trips away and a night to prepare for the next work day. Later that night, with very little warning, the weather took a horrific turn, with winds that tore through the area at 70 miles per hour. And with the winds, came deadly fast-moving fires that became infernos almost instantly.

Shortly after 1:00 am on that Monday morning, many of us were awoken to the notification sound on our cell phones, alerting us that a Nixle alert had been received. Then our phones became this continuous beeping of alerts notifying us of the fires and evacuations. The notifications were so widespread, it was hard to comprehend what was occurring. Multiple fires were being reported in Napa, Sonoma, Lake and Mendocino counties. The winds were so strong that it fueled the fires faster than anyone had anticipated. People were forced to flee from their homes with very little warning and had to leave everything they had behind. Sadly, not everyone was able to evacuate in time and some people perished in the fires.

Our Crestwood Leadership Team moved into a heightened state, first assuring those we know, love and are responsible for, that they are safe. Then as leaders, we moved into a place of support and compassion for our staff and clients, to ensure that they and our campuses were safe, and that we were addressing the needs of everyone that needed help.

For many of our Angwin staff these fires triggered prior trauma, as they had already been through the Rocky, Jerusalem, Valley and Clayton fires that had caused significant destruction in 2016 and 2017. Those staff now became the fire veterans to support the staff that were now experiencing firsthand the fear and the power of destruction that fires can do. Many of them were evacuated or had family and friends that were evacuated. Their concern then turned to the possibility of evacuating our Napa Valley 52-bed campus, which thankfully did not happen.

In the days that followed it was amazing to see the outpouring of support from staff from other campuses who offered assistance in the form of vans, evacuation sites, masks, emergency phone supports, donuts, hugs, prayers, and just a “How are you and how can I help.” To those of you who were visibly present and those sending silent prayers and good wishes, we all thank you!

As the fires were contained and people were let back into their homes or learned that their homes had been destroyed, our Crestwood staff rallied around everyone with love and support. We have learned so much from this experience and we will take those lessons forward to help us in our development of our next emergency preparedness plans. One thing that I know is we will never be the same. When you experience the fear, the lack of any control and the absolute love and compassion of people, you are changed. It is an appropriate time to again reflect on our mission and values as an organization. They were created to help guide our organization. They are the foundation of who we are, not only as a business, but at the core of who we are as people. I am so proud to work for an organization where I was blessed to experience those values from people when we needed it the most!

To all who have suffered loss or pain in the Northern and Southern California fires, our prayers of support are with you and your families.

Contributed by:
Pam Norris, Director of Operations

Celebrating our Spirituality

At Crestwood Chula Vista, we celebrate our spirituality. We strive to create an open and free environment for all clients and staff to embrace their spiritual beliefs and practices and who identify with various faiths such as Islam, Catholicism, Christianity, and Judaism. We also have those who consider themselves agnostic or atheist. We do not judge anyone for what they choose to believe and how they choose to express those beliefs.

“I think a spiritual journey is not so much a journey of discovery. It’s a journey of recovery. It’s a journey of uncovering your own inner nature. It’s already there.”

Billy Corgan, Smashing Pumpkins

When people think of spirituality they may automatically think about a certain religion, but spirituality is so much more than that! Spirituality is one of our Pillars of Recovery at Crestwood and we define it as a connection to a greater power, others and self and a way to find meaning, hope, comfort and inner peace in life. Spirituality is a lifestyle, and for many, it is the very core of who they are as individuals. We live in a multicultural society and we are surrounded by an array of religions and spiritual practices. Our world is rich in culture and that is a beautiful asset to healthy living.

Each week I have the wonderful privilege of facilitating our spirituality groups with our clients. We have created learning and hands-on experiences with each culture, belief and spirituality practice we’ve studied. We devote an entire month to a specific faith/spirituality practice and we post flyers throughout the campus announcing that month’s spirituality group and topic. For example, last July, we focused on Judaism and we went through a PowerPoint presentation that laid out its foundation. The next week we learned about the Israeli flag and painted that flag as we listened to Israeli music. For our next group meeting we watched a documentary on Judaism, which our clients absolutely loved! The final group was centered on what Challah bread means to the Israeli people and learned about Shabbat and ate Challah bread together.

During August, we studied Islam. One of our clients is from Afghanistan and since Afghanistan is an Islamic country, we chose to focus on his home country. Our first week started out with a PowerPoint presentation that helped clients and our staff learn the fundamentals of Islam. The following week we learned about the significance of the Afghan flag as we all painted it. We also painted mosques as we learned about the roles they play in Islam. The next week, I read to the clients from the Quran as they completed Islamic word searches. They really enjoyed hearing the words of the Quran, which for many of them, was the first time. For our last group session that month, we gathered in the recreation room and watched an excellent documentary on the Islamic faith and spiritual practices.

When choosing the topics for each month we invite the clients to select what they would like to focus on. For the month of September, they requested that we learn more about Christianity; for October, the clients asked to discover the treasures of Buddhism; and in November, they asked to learn about the traditions of Catholicism.

At the end of each group, I like to ask clients what their golden nuggets are of what they have learned and what they will take with them. Each week I am amazed at the insightful answers that they share with the group and it is wonderful to see they truly are enjoying this experience. I am so blessed to have the support and encouragement from our leadership team to fully engage our staff and clients in our spirituality groups.

As Billy Corgan, musician with Smashing Pumpkins, said, “I think a spiritual journey is not so much a journey of discovery. It’s a journey of recovery. It’s a journey of uncovering your own inner nature. It’s already there.”

Contributed by:
Wanda Anderson, Service Coordinator
Crestwood Chula Vista



The Gift of Collaboration

Crestwood's San Francisco Healing Center

When a company turns 50 there are moments when you look back and remember the many milestones and accomplishments throughout the years. Crestwood has had many of these milestones and the one common thread throughout our 50 years of memories is our ability to join forces through collaboration and create a synergy to support those who are in need the most. This ability is based on Crestwood's belief that the best things happen when we engage with and support each other to meet the ever-increasing mental health needs of the people of California. By sharing our resources, we believe we are stronger as a community to serve people with mental health issues. For Crestwood, we recently added a new significant milestone to our history with the opening of our newest Mental Health Rehabilitation Center (MHRC), the San Francisco Healing Center, which was made possible through an amazing collaboration effort.

Collaboration has been defined at Crestwood as the beauty of giving and receiving. It is a partnership, an alliance and a relationship. It is the space where we connect in a common purpose. The San Francisco Healing Center (SFHC) came together through a true collaboration between Crestwood and remarkable people and organizations including the late Mayor of San Francisco, Edwin Lee; the current Mayor of San Francisco, Mark Farrell; Aneeka Chaudhry, the Mayor's Office Senior Advisor/Health Policy; Barbara Garcia, San Francisco's Director of Public Health for the San Francisco Department of Public Health; Kelly Hiramoto, Director of Transitions for the San Francisco Department of Public Health; Maga Jackson-Triche, UCSF Health's Vice President of Adult Behavioral Health Services; Rita Ogden, UCSF Health's Director-Project Manager; John Allen, President of St. Mary's Medical Center; Lloyd Dean, President & CEO of Dignity Health; and Mark Laret, President & CEO of UCSF Health.

At Crestwood we believe collaboration is a value of the heart. It recognizes the ability to create synergy and requires more than a plan or an intention, it requires humility. Humility allows us to recognize and identify when we make mistakes or that others may have better solutions. Humility demonstrates a strength that many organizations shy away from - the strength to learn from mistakes, allow others to take the credit and share the spotlight on support for the people we serve.

Collaboration also requires committed, intentional and active communication. At Crestwood this communication focuses on transparency, with the intention to enable all parties to have a voice, for messages to be heard, and for respect to be present even during painful confrontations. Communication is built on a foundation of boundaries and ethics. There must be mutuality and respect for communication to be effective.

Listening is another key ingredient in collaboration. Tara Brach, a psychologist, author and teacher of meditation and emotional healing, states that listening is more than a communications skill; it is a capacity that arises from a receptive presence and awakens our awareness. As we learn to listen inwardly, we begin to understand and care more for others.

Collaboration at Crestwood has also grown through gratitude. The opportunity to sense supreme gratefulness is a key ingredient of collaboration. An example of this type of gratitude was demonstrated by St. Mary's Medical Center offering to lease the 5th floor in their building to our SFHC, so that more mental health services will be available in the community to help this most disenfranchised population.

Our S.F. Healing Center exemplifies another characteristic of collaboration with creativity. This program grew from the belief Kelly Hiramoto had that one day we would find the right location for a recovery-oriented MHRC, rich in evidence-based and promising practices. Kelly then worked with Barbara Garcia to bring together the partnership of San Francisco, Dignity Health, St. Mary's Medical Center, UCSF and Crestwood to grow the program.

Lastly, collaboration requires patience. Patience is defined as the ability to wait, to continue doing something despite difficulties. Collaboration takes time and there are many bumps in the road, delays and difficulties. Patience allows us to "Keep our eyes on the prize," which is the ultimate goal. It enables us to weather the difficulties, knowing the outcome, such as the San Francisco Healing Center, will be well worth the struggle and wait.

During the past 50 years at Crestwood, we have had numerous examples of collaboration, resulting from our patience, creativity, gratitude, listening, communication and humility. Crestwood collaborates every day, at every program and campus, to bring the highest-level of service to our clients. Today, at our San Francisco Healing Center, collaboration has made it possible to have more mental health recovery services be provided to the people in greatest need, which is a victory for all who came together to make it a reality.

Contributed by:
Patricia Blum, PhD
Crestwood Executive Vice President



Ribbon Cutting Ceremony at SFHC's Open House (L to R) Barbara Garcia, Mayor Farrell, Lloyd Dean, London Breen, Maga Jackson-Triche and Sister Mary Kieffer



San Francisco Healing Center's beautiful, calming environment.

Crestwood Treatment Center's Hens Bringing Love & Joy

Last Fall we welcomed two new family members into our community at Crestwood Treatment Center in Fremont.

These individuals became instant local celebrities with their inquisitive demeanors, gentle dispositions, and feathered feet. Our new family members are two hens that have provided our residents and staff with the opportunity to deliver nurturing care, revisit childhood memories, and stimulate cognition, as well as being a source of therapeutic amusement.

Our residents consist of men and women who have had brain injuries, as well as a combination of psychiatric and dementia-related behaviors. Many have resided here for many years, supported by the structure, consistency and kindness of our environment. Our staff's primary goal in developing the Hen Program was to promote a sense of well-being and self-worth for our residents, that by caring for an animal, offers an opportunity for companionship and a calming and emotionally regulating experience. By promoting participation in our Hen Program, we hoped to educate our residents and minimize a sense of boredom and isolation.

Our Hen Program officially started months before the arrival of the hens themselves as a truly interdisciplinary collaboration between our Administrator, Lilian Fong, our Rehab Staff/Occupational Therapists, Maintenance staff, and Program staff. A large enclosure was constructed in our Zen Garden, with a smaller henhouse inside; both are able to be locked to protect the hens. Food, wood shavings, and hay, along with storage containers, were purchased from a local feed store.

When our hens arrived, residents submitted ideas for names, which were then voted on by everyone and the winning names were Buddy and Gismo. Residents then got to know each hen's distinct personality traits, favorite foods, and daily routines. Residents are an integral part of each hen's care and wellbeing. "We make sure the chickens know they're loved, safe, and welcome here," said Patti, one of the residents. The chicken coop has now become a favorite destination for socializing, restorative ambulation programs, 1:1 meetings, gardening groups, and the official Chicken Welfare Committee. Another resident, Gloria, observed, "Buddy and Gismo have potential. They help us feel good when we go outside by playing together and taking care of each other."

Our Chicken Welfare Committee (CWC) consists of a group of 6-10 residents who meet weekly to discuss and make decisions about Buddy's and Gismo's health, as well as to ask questions and research answers to better understand these animals' behavior and preferences. Each meeting begins with an egg count, overview of each hen's health, and any significant changes in their routines/behaviors during the past week. The group then delves into activities such as cage beautification projects, scientific articles about the anatomy/cognition/evolution of chickens, or group discussion and personal anecdotes about chickens. The CWC has also led to improving our hens' wellbeing by adding a dust bath to their enclosure, discovering a favorite treat (freeze-dried mealworms), and providing companionship.

Perhaps the most notable accomplishment of the CWC was the celebration of Gismo's and Buddy's 1st birthday party in February. The residents spent time making a celebratory banner and birdseed birthday cakes, then converged in the Zen Garden to prepare a fruit salad and enjoy the party. This experience was immensely meaningful for the residents, who continue to talk about it.



Gismo



Buddy

Residents are not the only ones who benefit from our chickens. Our staff, many of whom grew up in rural areas, have expressed delight, concern, and nostalgia regarding our hens. Staff is invited to take home the eggs and often compete playfully to get to the eggs first. One CNA reported that she made a quiche with our eggs and brought it to share with her co-workers. Rehab staff often elect to have their meetings outside in the garden to enjoy the calming effects of nature on their overall wellness. The hens have provided a warm and fun meeting place for residents and staff to relate to each other and share experiences. Cortney, another resident, remarked, "The chickens are role models for us; they teach us about companionship and how to interact with each other."

Buddy's and Gismo's presence here at Crestwood Treatment Center has benefitted our entire community immeasurably. The hens are thriving under the dedication and care provided by our residents and staff, and the humans are thriving through the provision of that care. Our Hen Program embodies our Crestwood values and will continue to do so in the years ahead.

**Contributed by:
Amanda Lord
Occupational Therapist
Crestwood Treatment Center,
Fremont**



As we age there are many emotional and physical transitions to cope with, and change is difficult, no matter how old you are. It's natural to feel those losses. But if that sense of loss is balanced with positive ingredients, you have a recipe for staying healthy as you age.

IMPROVING WELLNESS WITH ZUMBA!

Healthy aging means finding new things you enjoy, learning to adapt to change, staying physically and socially active, and feeling connected to your community. An active lifestyle as you age can help reduce physical illness and emotional distress and increase longevity and quality of life. It is never too late to start to exercise. Regular physical activity helps you look and feel younger and stay independent longer. It also lowers your risk for a variety of conditions such as heart disease, diabetes, Alzheimer's and dementia, high blood pressure, certain cancers, and obesity. The mood benefits of exercise can be just as great in the elderly as for the youth. And did you know that exercise and stretching that is appropriate for your ability, will reduce falls and increase balance. At Idylwood Care Center, their Medical Director, Dr. Silver, observed about their residents and exercise, "Regardless of underlying medical conditions the data is clear that the one thing that will increase the length and quality of life is exercise."

"Regardless of underlying medical conditions the data is clear that the one thing that will increase the length and quality of life is exercise."



Greg Parnell getting Idylwood residents and staff moving and having fun during a Zumba class.

Motivation to exercise as you age can be challenged by loss of strength and stamina, medical conditions and lack of social support. Communities play an important role in promoting health and wellness. Recently Greg Parnell, Crestwood's Health and Wellness Facilitator and Zumba Zen Master, visited Idylwood Care Center to work with their new Zumba instructor, Elsa DeIxta. Residents and staff alike had a great time moving their bodies to a playlist of music featuring oldies and Latin classics. "Zumba has shown to help create new neural pathways and new brain cell growth reversing signs of Alzheimer's and Dementia and improving physical, psychological and emotional health," said Greg. He adapted the class to be done in a chair or bed for those that are bed bound or physically disabled. "As I visit each of our unique campuses, the one thing I know for sure is when more staff are involved in participating in a Zumba class, it inspires more of our clients to participate. Zumba and exercise are a part of our Wellness Initiative and when we get moving together, it feels like one big community coming together, creating an organizational wellness landscape. Remember, there is no right or wrong way to do Zumba, as long as you are moving and smiling."

*Contributed by
Cindy Mataraso,
Director of Operations*

WORKING TOGETHER TO ADDRESS HOMELESSNESS IN SAN DIEGO

Homelessness is a national challenge and evident in the streets of our cities. The number of homeless across the country is staggering, however, in California it is a crisis. The state auditor stated in April 2018 that California is doing a poor job of sheltering the nation's largest homeless population and needs to provide statewide leadership to address it. California has approximately 134,000 homeless people, roughly 24 percent of the nation's total homeless population. Of this homeless population, 34 percent lived in a place not meant for human habitation, such as the street, under freeways, grassy fields, parks and abandoned buildings.

Our Crestwood San Diego campus had an opportunity to interface and participate in relieving homelessness for some individuals in the community. In 2017, Crestwood San Diego took its first steps toward a major expansion project to increase their bed capacity by an additional 80 beds throughout the campus. As we assumed responsibility for the entire property, we had opportunities, as well as challenges.

We found a sizable homeless encampment on our property, in a large canyon adjacent to the parking lot. There were 15 to 20 individuals living in the canyon, with an enormous amount of belongings and trash. The status of the canyon posed safety risks, leaving Crestwood with no choice but to address the homeless camps that had taken over the canyon.

Our approach was to address these campsites and its inhabitants with dignity and compassion. We assembled a team of caring community partners that included San Diego County Behavioral Health Services, local law enforcement, the city's Homeless Outreach Team (HOT), the San Diego Public Health Department, Alpha Project, Episcopal Community Services, and local city government. Preparation for the upcoming move-out day was very thoughtful and deliberate. We worked together to provide as much notice as we could, to prepare the homeless individuals for their need to

relocate. Our goal was to provide support to them every step of the way, to connect them to needed services, while considering the major impact this would have on their current living situation and sense of safety. The homeless safety risk in San Diego was also increased by an outbreak of Hepatitis A, that had already killed 17 people.

The canyon encampments were visited by Terry Hoskins, San Diego Police Department's Community Outreach Officer, and Crestwood staff, who provided them with information and resources, as well as notification of their need to relocate. Months of preparation went into this project and by the time the day of the move arrived, many of the inhabitants had already found alternative housing. The few that remained were assisted by our team of compassionate workers who provided counseling and supportive services to those who were dealing with issues of substance abuse, family displacement, unemployment, financial issues and health concerns.

Once the inhabitants had vacated, another large project lay ahead. There was an abundant amount of trash and belongings left in the encampment, as well as the overgrowth of trees and bushes. We contracted with an amazing local organization, Alpha Project, to spearhead this phase of the project. Alpha Project is a not-for-profit human services organization that serves more than 4,000 people each day with affordable housing and residential substance abuse treatment. They have a program called Take Back the Streets (TBS) that is a catalyst for homeless people who are able to work, providing them with immediate transitional employment and training, while providing the community with vital cost-saving services. TBS arrived within an hour with a crew of 10 able-bodied adults, many of them with their own life experiences with substance abuse and homelessness. They worked tirelessly for two weeks to clean out the canyon and restore it to its natural beauty. "I cannot express my appreciation for the work that has already been accomplished in such a short amount of time. This type of productivity and sense of responsibility is so refreshing," said Officer Hoskins.

Addressing this homeless challenge aligned beautifully with Crestwood's mission and values. Crestwood's values of compassion, character and family were prominently displayed throughout this project, teaching us all that such challenges are best handled with sensitivity, respectful care and teamwork.

*Contributed by:
Patricia Blum, PhD
Crestwood Executive Vice President*

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

“Stay true to your passions, never lose sight of the people we serve and each other. It’s about Wellness.”

– Greg Parnell, ALWF
Crestwood’s Health and Wellness Facilitator



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.

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