10TH ANNUAL BEHAVIORAL HEALTH COMMUNITY HEROES AWARDS

RESILIENCY IN CRISIS

FEATURING KEYNOTE SPEAKER JIM BEALL

MAY 5, 2021
12:00 PM - 1:30 PM
VIA ZOOM
PROGRAM

OPENING
12:00 PM
WELCOME & INTRODUCTION
Gary Miles, Behavioral Health Board Chairperson

INVOCATION
Rev. Patrick Fitzgerald, Behavioral Health Board Member

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE
RaeAnn Ramsey, Behavioral Health Board Member

LEADERSHIP REMARKS
Sherri Terao, Behavioral Health Services Department Director
Rene Santiago, County of Santa Clara Health System Director

KEYNOTE ADDRESS
12:15 PM
RESILIENCY IN CRISIS
Jim Beall, Former State Senator

2020 AWARD RECIPIENTS
12:35 PM
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF 2020 HEROES Awardees & CIT Officers
David Tran, Behavioral Health Board Member
2021 AWARD RECIPIENTS

12:40 PM

AGENCY
Gardner Health Services- Behavioral Health Team

CONSUMER/CLIENT
Dr. XiXi Zhai

EDUCATOR
Gabi Elfenbein

FAMILY MEMBER
Enrique Alvarez

MEDIA
ABC 7 News- Tracey Watkowski

MOVER AND SHAKER
Jodi Pinn, PhD
Dr. Jules Chyten-Brennan and Aricka Arana-O’hara

YOUNG MOVER AND SHAKER
Myles White
Student Action Team- Eating Disorders Resource Center

PROGRAM
Jason Pierce- Adult Custody Mental Health

VOLUNTEER
Abre’ Conner
Health Program of the Law Foundation of Silicon Valley
FORMER BHB MEMBERS
Charles Pontious, Former BHB Member
Evelyn Vigil, Former BHB Member
Teresa Downing, Former BHB Member
Victor Ojakian, Former BHB Member
Marsali Hancock, Former BHB Member
Larry Blitz, Former BHB Member

FORMER BHSD LEADERSHIP
Deane Wiley, Former Deputy Director
Pat Garcia, Former Director of Administration
Todd Landreneau, Former Deputy Director
Toni Tullys, Former Director

CLOSING REMARKS
Gary Miles, Behavioral Health Board Chairperson

PROGRAM ENDS
2020
Behavioral Health Community Heroes

Agency
Behavioral Health Services Department,
Mobile Crisis Response Team

Consumer/Client
Ginamarie Cecconi

Educator
Chris Harris

Elected Official
Marc Berman

Faith-Based
Carolyn Bowker

Family Member
Sharon Roth

Media
Damian Trujillo,
NBC Bay Area
&
Elena Kadvany,
Embarcadero Publishing

Mover and Shaker
Nira Singh, Psy. D

Young Mover and Shaker
Hanna Suh,
Sophia Lu,
Vardaan Shah

Program
Blackbird House Peer Respite

Volunteer
Jack Phillips
The mobile crisis response team was started in 2018. The mission of the team is to provide crisis response to the community and support to law enforcement in responding to crisis situations. The team has provided services to 1,727 callers with hundreds of field responses. This has included talking clients down from ledges, assisting in hostage situations, and working with clients who have barricaded themselves in dangerous situations.
Gina Cecconi was born in Oregon and moved to California as a child. She is a graduate of Branham High School and attended San Jose City College. Gina first became acquainted with NAMI Santa Clara County six years ago after seeing an In Our Own Voice presentation at Mission Oaks Hospital when a family member was hospitalized there. Gina not only was able to find support as a family member but also as a client who lives with dual-diagnosis, depression, anxiety, and PTSD. Gina has now been clean for 25 years! Through NAMI, Gina has completed Family to Family, Peer to Peer, is trained as an In Our Own Voice presenter, does community outreach events, is a regular volunteer, and was Volunteer Project Assistant for a few years. She is also certified in Suicide Prevention, WRAP, and is a QPR Gatekeeper. Gina is delighted to serve as a regular volunteer at Grace Community center, assisting with other clients. In her free time, she enjoys music, fishing and spending time with her partner Rick of 29 years, children Vance and Amanda, and her four grandchildren. Gina is thrilled to have been named a Behavioral Health Hero, and to be given the opportunity to stand alongside other admirable community heroes!
I am currently the Chief Schools Officer for CHC and the Interim head of Sand Hill School. I was the Director of the Esther B Clark Schools, a non-public school from 1996-2000 and then again from 2007-2019. During my tenure, we developed, implemented and refined the interdisciplinary staffing model that has effectively helped children with emotional and behavioral regulation challenges learn to recognize and manage themselves to the level of being able to return to their home school districts and participate in their district programs more successfully. In 2016, we expanded from just the Palo Alto campus to the south bay and the school now serves over 60 school districts from Marin to Gilroy and Santa Cruz and 125 students. Before coming to CHC in 1996, I was the Director of the Chartwell School, a private elementary school for children with significant learning Disabilities, in Monterey County for ten years. It was during my time at Chartwell School that I first came to appreciate the need these students have for behavioral health services and have been an avid supporter of providing such services for all students who are struggling to be successful in school, with peers and in life. Let me express my gratitude and appreciation to all those on the nominating committee, Dr. Joan Baran for nominating me and to all my CHC colleagues who have been so supportive and instrumental in helping me build the Esther B. Clark School and now the Sand Hill School to the professional caliber we have attained.
Marc Berman was first elected to the California State Assembly in November 2016. He represents the 24th District, which includes southern San Mateo County and northern Santa Clara County in the heart of Silicon Valley.

In the Assembly, Marc serves as chair of the Committee on Elections and Redistricting, the Select Committee on the Master Plan for Higher Education in California, and the Select Committee on the Census. He also serves on the following Assembly Standing Committees: Governmental Organization; Insurance; Privacy and Consumer Protection; and Transportation.

Marc has had one of the highest rates of legislative success in the Legislature, having sent 47 bills to the Governor in the first three years in office. He has authored legislation related to a number of issues, including elections, the 2020 Census, education, youth mental health, sexual assault, firearm safety, deep fakes, housing, and the environment. Prior to being elected to the Assembly, Marc served on the Palo Alto City Council while working for the Silicon Valley Education Foundation. Prior to his work in the non-profit sector, Marc was an attorney with Latham & Watkins LLP and Merino Yebri, LLP. Marc was raised in Palo Alto, California. He earned his bachelor’s degree from Georgetown University and his law degree from the University of Southern California.
Carolyn Bowker received her BS in Nursing from California State University, San Jose (now known as San Jose State University) in 1972. She received a master’s degree in Nursing from the University of California, San Francisco in 1982. She worked in the field of Mental Health Nursing at the Palo Alto Veterans Health Care System from 1973 to 2004. Following her retirement, she volunteered as a chaplain with the Correctional Institutions Chaplaincy. She has been with the Correctional Institutions Chaplaincy since 2006. Initially serving with the mentally ill inmates with lower security status, she led Bible studies and co-led a class where she taught relaxation skills. In 2017, this cell block was dispersed throughout the jail system, so these efforts ceased. Starting in 2008, she started serving in a second mentally ill cell block with inmates with a higher security status and more severely persistent mental health problems. She continues to serve these inmates going cell to cell, offering prayers, support and hope.
Family Member

SHARON ROTH

I have been a NAMI member and mental health advocate for many years. My youngest child was diagnosed with a mental illness around 30 years ago. Since then I have also been member of the Mental Health/Behavioral Health Boards of both Santa Clara and San Mateo counties. I sat on the Board of Directors of NAMI California for 6 years. CIT began in Santa Clara county and then to many other counties in this state and was brought here by me with the help of San Jose P.D. and NAMI and then many other county and law enforcement agencies. My main goal is to get faster and more efficient treatment, and safe housing for individuals with a mental illness.

(not pictured)
Since 1996, has been an NBC Bay Area News reporter, host and producer of “Comunidad Del Valle,” the longest running public affairs program in the Bay Area. Comunidad Del Valle now also airs in Spanish on Telemundo 48. Damian is a recipient of the prestigious Emmy Award. Damian grew up in Greenfield, about 2 hours south of San Francisco on Highway 101. While in high school, Damian worked in the agricultural fields of the Salinas Valley, with his family, to help make ends meet. He picked garlic, broccoli, cucumbers, and strawberries.

Elena Kadvany is the education reporter for the Palo Alto Weekly. She has reported in depth on youth mental health for several years, including the lack of inpatient psychiatric services for adolescents in Santa Clara County, the youth suicide cluster in Palo Alto and local school districts' efforts to improve student wellbeing. Her work on this subject and others has been recognized by the California Newspaper Publishers Association and the San Francisco Peninsula Press Club. She is a Menlo Park native and holds a bachelor’s in Spanish with a minor in journalism from the University of Southern California.
Mover & Shaker
NIRA SINGH, PSY.D.

Dr. Singh has been the Director of Behavioral Health at AACI since November 2016. She is a licensed clinical psychologist who has served for over 28 years in community based, non-profit settings, working with and advocating for underserved and marginalized populations, with a strong focus on programs for immigrant and refugee populations. A child of immigrants from India herself, she began her career in the field of domestic violence in a shelter begun by Dr. Lenore Walker, and then as the first staff member working with Narika, a domestic violence program serving South Asian women and children.

Dr. Singh has worked within agencies and on several coalitions to address cultural competency and cultural humility in the training of service providers and models of service delivery and has been involved in developing and implementing trauma informed and strength based services at various agencies in the Bay Area. She has served as the Director of Children Youth and Family Services at Richmond Area Multi-Services (RAMS) and as the Director of Refugee Foster Care Services at Catholic Charities of Santa Clara County (CCSCC), where she invested in integrated client centered care and also helped to develop and meet with client councils to inform services and empower consumers.

She has served as Adjunct Faculty at CSPP-Alameda teaching multicultural awareness, on several dissertation committees and has enjoyed teaching, supervising and mentoring up and coming clinicians, supervisors, managers and educators in the field for the last 15 years. At AACI, Dr. Singh oversees the diverse range of behavioral health service programs for Survivors of Torture, Family and Children, Adults/Older Adults, CalWORKs beneficiaries, and those impacted by Substance Abuse and Problem Gambling.

She oversees a culturally and linguistically diverse and multidisciplinary team including peer support staff, paraprofessionals, interns, licensed staff, registered nurse and psychiatrists. She also expanded the team to include an expressive arts counselor this year and is a trained dancer in global dance forms. She serves as a clinical supervisor for various staff, doctoral interns and trainees and nurse practitioner intern both within her department, and for the Integrated Behavioral Health program housed in AACI’s Federally Qualified Health Center as well as the Domestic Violence and Human Trafficking program. Dr. Singh is also an active part of the Executive Leadership of the agency dedicated to integrated, client centered, culturally competent and trauma informed services.
Hanna is a co-producer of Project Oyster and a recent graduate of Gunn High School. She is also an executive at BEAM, a non-profit organization (from which Project Oyster was founded) aimed to help teens develop business skills and entrepreneurship skills. Hanna co-founded Project Oyster on the idea that anyone can begin a conversation about mental health, and she hopes to continue spreading awareness about mental health in college and beyond. Hanna plans on studying business & technology management with a minor in mechanical engineering at NYU.

Sophia is a recent graduate of Gunn High School, and the co-founder and main anchor of Project Oyster— a podcast that aims to destigmatize mental health using the power of storytelling. Using her involvement with Project Oyster to share that lesson, she gave a speech at the TEDx Gunn High School event, titled "Speaking Up in the Face of Stigma," where she spoke on the consequences of remaining silent when you see a problem in your community. Sophia plans to continue advocating for mental health awareness in college and beyond.

Varaan is a recent graduate of Gunn High School and a co-founder of the Project Oyster Podcast. His favorite part about producing episodes is meeting new people and learning about their experiences. He hopes to study business in college and continue advocating and promoting mental health.
In December of 2018, Blackbird House opened its doors as the first Peer Respite program in Santa Clara County, becoming one of only six peer respites in the state. With no local footsteps to follow in, we are proud to be one of the pioneers of the peer respite movement. Blackbird House’s leadership team is a collective of unique individuals that have both professional experience, and the lived experience that allow them to connect with staff and guest alike. Blackbird House will continuously strive to surpass all expectations of the peer respite model.
Born on an Army base outside Boston, as an Army Brat, I moved around a lot in my youth. We settled down in Oakland, where I got a B.S. in Mechanical Engineering from U.C. Berkeley and later a M.S. in Math from San Jose State. I am retired from Lockheed after 38 years. Married, I have 3 kids and 2 step-kids. Hobbies include playing the piano, playing cards, and working out.
The Crisis Intervention Team (CIT) training seeks to bridge the gap between a police response and behavioral healthcare by forming a partnership with health providers, law enforcement, hospital emergency departments, and consumers and their families to improve responses to people in crisis. CIT training enhances communication, identifying resources for assisting people in crisis. CIT training provides officers with 40 hours of intensive training, including connecting officers with behavioral health professionals, verbal de-escalation skills, and personal stories from consumers who have experienced and are in recovery from behavioral health challenges. The CIT Officers utilize scenario-based practices to respond to crises using the County’s interactive video simulation. CIT training has been proven to reduce officer injury, reduce arrests of consumers with behavioral health challenges, increase the likelihood of treatment with community-based providers, and save money on jail diversion programs.
Crisis Intervention Team
Officer of the Year

City of Palo Alto Police Department
Agent Brad Young
Officer Charlie Tannous
Sergeant David Lee
Detective George Pons

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Officer Charlie Tannous
Sergeant David Lee
Detective George Pons
Crisis Intervention Team
Officer of the Year

City of Palo Alto Police Department
Officer Ian Johnson
Agent Marianna Villaescusa
Sergeant Nic Martinez
Officer Rob Longwell
Simon Williams, Business Analyst

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Agent Marianna Villaescusa
Sergeant Nic Martinez
Officer Rob Longwell
Simon Williams, Business Analyst
Crisis Intervention Team Officer of the Year

Los Altos Police Department
Officer Anthony Fantozzi
Officer Keli Janda
(not pictured)

California Highway Patrol
Officer Jayson Doumas
(not pictured)

Campbell Police Department
Officer Mark Cutler
(not pictured)
Crisis Intervention Team
Officer of the Year

Los Gatos-Monte Sereno Police Department
Officer Logan Howard
(not pictured)
Corporal Richard Campbell
(not pictured)

Milpitas Police Department
Officer Clint Jackman

Mountain View Police Department
Officer Angelica Espitia
Crisis Intervention Team
Officer of the Year

Santa Clara County
Office of the Sherriff
Deputy Christopher Vorpahl
Deputy Fredrick Da Silva
(not pictured)
Deputy Jesse Sanders

Santa Clara Police Department
Officer David Britton
(not pictured)

Sunnyvale Department of Public Safety
Officer Nelson Williams
(not pictured)
2021
Behavioral Health Community Heroes

Agency
Gardner Health Services-Full Service Partnership
Criminal Justice Team
Richard Swayze
Dario Puga
(not pictured)
Juan Carlos Navarro
(not pictured)

Consumer/Client
Dr. XiXi Zhai

Educator
Gabi Elfenbein

Family Member
Enrique Alvarez

Media
ABC7 News,
Tracey Watkowski

Mover and Shaker
Jodi Pinn, Ph.D.
&
Dr. Jules Chyten-Brennan &
Aricka Arana-O'Hara, LCSW

Young Mover and Shaker
Myles White
&
Student Action Team- Eating
Disorders Resource Center
Taylor Lin
Maggie Shi
Evelyn Tran
Sahana Nayak
Ava Iwashita
Nikhil Kapasi

Program
Jason Pierce
Adult Custody Mental Health

Volunteer
Abre' Conner
Health Program of the Law
Foundation of Silicon Valley
Agency

GARDNER HEALTH SERVICES-FULL SERVICE PARTNERSHIP CRIMINAL JUSTICE TEAM

RICHARD SWAYZE

I have been working in the field for a little over 7 years. I do this work because I feel like it is my purpose in life and it has my heart. I just love being there for the people that don't have much of a voice in the system or in life period. I've always considered myself the kind of person that protects and stands up for the vulnerable. When the pandemic started I didn't think it would be over soon. When I realized how devastating it was going to be my heart kicked into over drive. I couldn't just sit back and watch people suffer, I just wanted to help even if that meant putting myself in harms way. Putting myself on the front line was like second nature to me. I look at myself like being a lifeline for others. I have dedicated myself to this work and it has been a pleasure serving the community. What makes it even better I work with a very unique and supportive dream team. Shout out to the Gardner FSP/CJP squad. We all support each other and work hard through many trials and tribulations.

DAVID ROMERO

I am a 53-year-old Hispanic man that grow up on the east side of San Jose in a single parent home. Despite how hard my mom struggled to provide for me and my seven siblings we still required the help of social services to be able to make ends meet. Being from a single parent family made it easy to get involved with what the streets had to offer which was the results of me getting caught up in the criminal justice system as a young adult. Knowing that this is not the life I wanted, it was an easy decision in 2010 to enroll in San Jose Community College to pursue my associates in Alcohol and Drug studies, which in 2013 I successfully completed my associated degree. Knowing that I want to help and give back to the community it was going to require more education which led me to transfer to San Jose State in 2014 to pursue my bachelor’s degree in social work. My personal life history is what has led me to Gardner Health Services where I can work with Judge Manley’s court, probation and parole department and other county services which helps and provides the best services I can give to my clients, it has been rewarding.
Dr. XiXi Zhai is a perfectly imperfect human being who happens to have a medical degree. She first experienced extreme mental distress during her second year of medical school and this continued at various levels throughout her medical training. In the end, she chose her health and life over the traditional and conventional medical path. She has been on a steadfast healing journey since late 2018. It has only been within these past few years that she has realized the damaging nature of labeling patients (including herself) with psychiatric diagnoses, the severity of adverse effects from antidepressants, and just how awful it is to go through antidepressant withdrawal. She hopes to relaunch her private practice in mid to late 2021, this time specializing in de-prescribing SSRIs for those who wish to go down that path. She currently has multiple projects going on and is just so grateful to be in a place where she can share herself with the world, hoping to inspire and guide others along their own healing journeys!
Gabi Elfenbein spent her formative years in Huntington Beach, where she learned that she had the passion, patience, and determination necessary for helping others. She earned her Bachelor of Science degree in Clinical Psychology at San Francisco State University and then went on to earn her Master's Degree in both School Counseling and Marriage and Family Counseling where she graduated Magna Cum Laude. She became Licensed as a Marriage, Family, and Child therapist in 2002. Gabi dedicated the last 30 years of her career working as a Behavior Consultant and Mental Health Therapist in the East Bay, San Francisco, Peninsula, and Santa Clara school districts. Gabi has specialized in treating elementary - post-senior students who have Autism, Asperger's, ADHD, Emotional Disturbance, Significant Learning Disabilities, and general social-emotional developmental delays.

Gabi was the lead behaviorist in the Counseling Enriched Program in the Mt. Diablo Unified School District--providing both mental health and behavioral services--and for the last 10 years has worked in the Mountain View-Los Altos Union High School District, where she started the Academic Communication program and continued to provide individual/group therapy with students with a wide variety of social, emotional, behavioral, and learning challenges.

Gabi is also the author of a full inclusion manual, is a leading social skills coordinator/facilitator, and is a specialist in program development. When Gabi is not at work, she volunteers her time in the Belmont Redwood Shores Little league and provides pro-bono work for the Autism community. She enjoys hiking, kayaking, running and spending time with her Fourteen year old son.
Enrique Alvarez is a bilingual Licensed Clinical Social Worker working in Santa Clara County Behavioral Health as a Psychiatric Social Worker at Kidscope, a mental health clinic. Enrique has specialized in working with Spanish speaking parents and children and has provided individual and family therapy and advocacy for 6 years. He has worked in the field of Domestic Violence as Group facilitator, Therapist, and Domestic Violence Assessor. Prior to working in Mental Health, Enrique worked in the Department of Family and Children services and the Department of Drug and Alcohol services. He worked in the sexual abuse, domestic violence, and emergency response units. He also worked in Juvenile Hall in the Youth Drug Court. Enrique received a bachelor’s in science in Criminal Justice from Florida International University. After graduation, he worked as a Federal Correctional Officer in several Federal Prisons in Florida and California. He received a certificate of Addiction Counseling from the University of Miami and holds a Master of Social Work from San Jose State University. Born in Cuba and raised in Puerto Rico, he is a passionate advocate for justice, cultural diversity, inclusion, and equity, serving as a Union Steward for over 17 years. He is a committed mentor to Social Work interns and has an extensive record of volunteer work as a Child Advocate, Guardian Ad Litem, Youth Shelter, and Suicide Hot Line responder. He lives with his wife and two children (10 and 15) in San Jose, California.
What sets ABC7 apart from other local news brands is our mission to help “Build a Better Bay Area.” This means ABC7 devotes more time and resources to the major stories that directly impact the quality of life in the Bay Area. The issues here were already complicated, then 2020 hit. ABC7’s commitment to covering health – both mental and physical, intensified with more authentic reporting and bold messaging.

At ABC7, we are dedicated to giving our audience a powerful platform for their voice and vetted resources to help them make the best decisions for themselves and their community. We believe mental health must be covered with greater context, urgency, and empathy. Sometimes storytelling is the best way to educate, support and empower both our audience and employees to take action for their own wellbeing and for others.
Jules Chyten-Brennan, DO, MS (pronouns: they/he) is the Medical Director for Transgender Care at the Santa Clara Valley Medical Center. They direct the Gender Health Center—a multidisciplinary clinic specialized in care for trans, nonbinary and gender expansive people—and lead system-wide improvements in care for trans people. Prior to this role, Jules cared for patients and developed trans health programming at Montefiore Medical Center in an integrated FQHC setting in the South Bronx, and within the New York City Jail system. Jules has additionally completed a Master of Science in Clinical Research with a focus on use of electronic health records to examine trans health disparities.

Jules believes that all people have a right to culturally competent care to support their mental, emotional, and physical health and wellness.
Aricka Arana O'Hara, LCSW is a Medical Social Worker at the Gender Health Center (GHC) in the County of Santa Clara Health System. The GHC provides comprehensive health services for patients who are Transgender, Nonbinary and Gender Diverse. She has assisted in developing and expanding services within the GHC since its opening in 2018. Aricka participates in numerous committees and initiatives to ensure gender affirming care is provided throughout the Health and Hospital System, including the BHSD, and throughout Santa Clara County. To continue developing her skillset of working within the LGBTQ Community, Aricka has completed extensive study in best practices for working with the LGBTQ community, such as the LGBTQ Clinical Academy, the RISE Training and Coaching Intensive, and Gender Spectrum and WPATH Conferences.

Access to affirming and competent mental/emotional support is a gap in services that has long been identified within the Transgender community. As a direct patient care provider, Aricka observed a pattern in patient experiences and used their feedback to guide her advocacy in ensuring Transgender patients have access to the care they deserve. Aricka has worked with many community-based organizations to develop and expand their clinical services in working with the Transgender community. Through her work with the Trans Justice and Equity Committee and the Trans Care Coalition, Aricka assists in organizing and identifying champions within SCC Behavioral Health Services system, including with dozens of community-based organizations, to establish guidelines for ensuring a welcome environment for Transgender patients, process for collecting SOGIE data for all patients, coordinating referrals and placement for Transgender patients accessing behavioral health care, and developing standard of care for behavioral health clinicians serving Transgender patients. Aricka hopes to continue her work at GHC while ensuring gender affirming and competent care is provided to all Transgender patients wherever they may receive care.
Mover & Shaker
JODI PINN, PH.D.
PRIMARY CARE BEHAVIORAL HEALTH
Dr. Jodi Pinn is a neuropsychologist who started her SCVMC career as a student at Barbara Arons Pavilion in 1997. She graduated from Pepperdine University with a B.A. in Psychology, and went on to earn Master’s and Doctoral degrees from the Pacific Graduate School of Psychology at Palo Alto University. In addition to SCVMC, she trained at the Palo Alto VA hospital and completed internship in the Department of Neurology at UCSF.

She has worked in various settings at VMC Hospital & Clinics over the years and was part of the integration of psychology into the Ambulatory clinics. In 2018 she became the first Chief Psychologist in Santa Clara County, and in 2020 took on the role of Primary Care Behavioral Health Chief wherein she has prioritized the full integration of Primary Care Behavioral Health to improve access to preventive behavioral health care services.

She feels very fortunate to work with an incredible team of both Primary Care leadership and frontline staff and wants to ensure that the PCBH teams who are caring for our patients every day are recognized as the real community heroes. The PCBH teams made up of LPTs, LCSWs, Psych NPs, Psychologists and Psychiatrists have risen to the challenge of serving the behavioral health needs of our community during the pandemic, both in the clinics and as Disaster Service Workers. They have been asked to do more with less resources and support; they have pivoted to telehealth services which did not exist in our system prior to the pandemic; and they have formed new collaborations with our specialty mental health department for coordination of care. Dr. Pinn continues to be impressed with the dedication and commitment to patient care exemplified by the PCBH teams and takes joy in celebrating them during the 1st annual PCBH Recognition Week May 3-7, 2021.
Myles (he/him, they/them) was born in Cleveland, Ohio and graduated from Miami University of Ohio with a Bachelor of Science in Mechanical Engineering. During his last years of college, he found his passion in community building as a Residence Assistant. In his final year he focused more on increasing the visibility of the QTPOC community through active and passive programming such as creative bulletin boards and interactive community events.

After college, Myles moved to San Jose and began working in Tech. True to his nature Myles found himself looking for a community that embraces queer folks, in the area, and can provide a sense of comfort for him while he navigates a new life 2,000 miles away from his old one. The LGBTQ Youth Space has become just that for Myles, and since beginning his internship, Myles has continued to focus on the visibility of Queer and Trans Black youth and their experiences; Highlighting books like “All Boys Aren’t Blue” or “Black on Both Sides” and not to mention critical TV series like “Pose.” Myles has truly enjoyed working with the Youth Space and cannot express his gratitude for how insightful his internship with them has been. He hopes to continue this line of work, after the internship has ended.
The EDRC Student Action Committee is a group of student volunteers based in the Bay Area who are passionate about helping those suffering from mental illnesses, specifically eating disorders. The committee has accomplished many things, including but not limited to organizing the EDRC’s 12th Annual Be-You-tiful, Be Free Writing Contest, presenting about eating disorders to the Palo Alto Youth Connectedness Initiative, leading the EDRC’s annual NAMI Walk Team, and organizing an EDRC guest speaker event at Evergreen Valley High School.

The EDRC Student Action Committee is comprised of Taylor Lin, a junior at Evergreen Valley High School, Maggie Shi, a sophomore at Basis Independent Silicon Valley, Evelyn Tran, a senior at Evergreen Valley High School, Sahana Nayak, a sophomore at Lynbrook High School, Ava Iwashita, a junior at Crystal Springs Uplands School, and Nikhil Kapasi, a junior at Saratoga High School.

Taylor is the writing contest coordinator for the EDRC’s annual Be-You-tiful, Be Free Writing Contest, where she initiated a partnership with Bring Change to Mind, organizes judging, and works on promotional efforts. Outside of the EDRC, she enjoys cheerleading, making arts & crafts, volunteering in her community, and being further involved in mental health through BC2M.

Maggie is one of the website developers at the EDRC, and she updates provider and support group listings as well as blog posts. In her free time, Maggie enjoys playing volleyball, cooking and baking, singing in choir, and studying physics.

Evelyn does a little bit of everything for EDRC; she brings energy, positivity, and new ideas to meetings, contributes to projects, and is there to help whenever needed. In her free time, she enjoys watching Asian shows, cooking, and is a Pokemon fanatic.

Sahana is the student volunteer coordinator, and she leads and coordinates the student action committee, along with interviewing new volunteers and helping with other projects. Outside of volunteering at the EDRC, she swims competitively, sings, and enjoys reading books and watching movies.

Ava is an intern at EDRC who helps with graphic design, managing EDRC’s social media, and various other projects. In December of 2020, Ava was featured in EDRC’s Ask the Experts series where she shared her experience battling anorexia.

In her free time, Ava enjoys playing lacrosse, going on walks with her dog, and calling friends.

Nikhil has been volunteering at EDRC since eighth grade and has worked on the website as well as tech support. Currently, Nikhil is working on fundraising and interviewing new volunteers. Outside of volunteering at EDRC, he is a captain on his school color guard team and loves watching comedies and baking.
After I graduated with my master’s degree, I have dedicated my life to making a difference. I have found that working with people on improving their self-confidence and self-worth it becomes reciprocal. Positive energy moves and flows between therapist and the client. I believe it is important to find purpose and passion in other things besides work. I have been fortunate enough to do art and it is one of my most rewarding forms of therapy. I continue to work with my co-workers and team on providing emotional support when I can, because I realize that these are the people I turn to when I need their support. Mental health appears to be one of the biggest things we talk about but seems to be most overlooked. One of the things that I have learned is that there is a great need in our society and especially in our most marginalized communities for support and treatment. I am privileged to have been nominated and I am honored to have such a great team of people to work with.
The Law Foundation’s Health Program serves communities who are historically excluded from health systems including Black, Indigenous, Latinx, AAPI, other people of color, LGBTQIA individuals and people experiencing homelessness. Founded nearly five decades ago, the Health Program provides free legal advice and representation to individuals residing in Santa Clara County and to people who identify as having mental health or developmental disabilities and/or individuals who live with HIV or AIDS.

The Health Program provides direct services legal work while incorporating community and movement lawyering and grassroots advocacy. This includes public education and legislative campaigns, legal advocacy on behalf of unhoused individuals and people with mental health disabilities. Our advocacy is centered within grassroots community groups. We believe that our legal and policy advocacy should support and advance health equity for all. Thus, in our Behavioral Health work, we always put our client’s needs first.

The Law Foundation’s pro bono program, which engages attorneys from law firm and corporations as volunteers, has worked extensively with Behavioral Health in developing and promoting our Gender Marker and Name Change program. In this program, volunteer attorneys are paired with individuals from our clinic at the Gender Health Center, as well as other community referrals, to prepare and file court paperwork for legal name and gender marker changes. The volunteer training piece was developed with the assistance of Behavioral Health, and we have continued to work together in outreach efforts.

Our team of attorneys, advocates, and specialists are deeply engrained in the communities we serve and ground our work in the principles of this program.
Former
Behavioral Health Board Members

**BHB Members**
(not pictured)

Charles Pontious
Evelyn Vigil
Larry Blitz
Marsali Hancock
Terry Downing
Victor Ojakian
BHSD Executive Leadership

Deane Wiley, Former Deputy Director

Pat Garcia, Former Director of Administration

Todd Landreneau, Former Deputy Director

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Mental Health Services # 1-800-704-0900
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