

April
2014

Winds of Wellness

A Monthly Publication of Wellness Connections (Formerly SEACRS) • (520) 452-0080

www.wellness-connections.org

"Don't take anything personally. Nothing others do is because of you. What others say and do is a projection of their own reality, their own dream. When you are immune to the opinions and actions of others, you won't be the victim of needless suffering."
~ Miguel Angel Ruiz

Douglas Wellness Connections

Beginning mid-April, 2014, Wellness Connection's will officially open its newest sister center, Douglas Wellness Connections. The new center is located at 661 G. Avenue. The building used to be occupied by the City of Douglas. On March 12, 2014, several members and staff of the Douglas Mobile Wellness Program, Kari Ferrell, Mobile Wellness Connection's Program Manager, Candace Weingart, Program Manager for the new Douglas Wellness Connections and Deanna Bellinger, Wellness Connections Executive Director attended the Douglas City Council Meeting and item number 15 on the agenda was to approve the lease of the building at "7th St. and G Ave." After an informative presentation by Deanna, the agenda item was unanimously approved by the Douglas City Council along with Mayor Danny Ortega Jr. Although we were confident the item would pass there were still hugs of excitement shared when the item was officially approved.



Services, although limited for the first few months, will be fun and exciting. Interesting and informative groups, yummy lunches, exciting outings and recreational activities are just a few things to look forward to. Once open and during the first 4 to 6 weeks, services will be available on Tuesdays and Wednesdays from 10am to 2pm.

To tell you just a little bit about Candace Weingart, Program Manager of Douglas Wellness Connections, I asked the following questions of her: (1) Tell us about yourself in two sentences. (2) What inspires you? (3) What motivated you to seek employment in the behavioral health field? Candace answered: (1) I am a Douglas resident and look forward to the opportunity to share with our community the Wellness Center in our town as the Mobile Program expands. (2) I am inspired by people who work and care for others and are willing to stand up

for health, wellness and change to better our lives. (3) All the women in my family are RNs and I love the medical field however I am interested in the whole person rather than the focus on illness. The field of behavioral health has always interested me. I began volunteering when I was in high school and continued in the field

Manny Cazares has been hired as the Douglas Driver and Skills Training Group Facilitator. You will hear more about Manny later.

If you are enrolled with behavioral health agencies such as Pinal Hispanic Council, CIA or Corazón and you have a designation of SMI (Seriously Mentally Ill), you are eligible to be a member of the program. We provide services to both Title XIX and Non-Title XIX members at Wellness Connections. If you or someone you know would like more information please contact Candace at (520) 508-4887 and ask your case manager too. Looking forward to hearing from you!

Manny & Candace



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Mobile Wellness Connections



Douglas Members and Staff working on Collages



Mobile Wellness Connections is in full swing helping to establish the new center based program, Douglas Wellness Connections. Mobile staff and members are working with newly hired Douglas staff to make the transition as smooth as possible. In an effort to create souvenirs of memories with the mobile program, members and staff worked together to create three large collages with photos of past outings the Douglas crew par-

ticipated in. Everyone had the best time making the collages while reminiscing and also some wishing for what the future will hold at the new center. You can really feel the excitement in the air!

The Benson Mobile Program remains steady and strong. We have been running near 10 people weekly for several weeks in a row. It's refreshing to see such a good turn out and so much participation.

We are excited at the prospect of starting new mobile programs in Willcox and Sonoita/Patagonia. It will be a lot of work but worth it to be able to provide support for people in the more rural areas.



Benson at 5 Guys in Tucson after a day at HOPE

Growing Well

What's new in the world of plants? There is plenty going on with Growing Well, the garden project at Wellness Connections. Ron Fruchey, Wellness Connection's Veteran's Program Coordinator, is heading up the project with the assistance of Julia Baker, Wellness Connection's Culinary Coordinator and the Green Team comprised of members of Wellness Connections who have chosen to participate in the program.

The purpose of the group is to

supply the kitchen with a variety of foods for member's meals as well as for the Comfort Café, the catering business.

The project hopes to grow herbs in bulk for resale at the local vendors and provide a therapeutic atmosphere. There are eight horse troughs ranging from six feet to eight feet in size. Two of the smaller troughs are being used to experiment with straw bale gardens. Plants that are already growing include; strawberry,

red and purple grape vines, baby raspberry bush, tomato and pepper. The oregano growing in the garden has already been used in several lunch meals.

Other fruits and vegetables that will be in the garden are; cucumber, lettuce, melons and gourds for art projects. Congratulations to staff and members who've worked so hard on this project.



"The project hopes to grow herbs in bulk for resale at the local vendor's and provide a therapeutic atmosphere."

Employment Corner - ADA Tips

People experience stress at a job interview. If you have a disability you may worry an employer will not consider you or allow you the chance to prove yourself. The American With Disabilities Act (ADA) prohibits discrimination against people who have disabilities. Here are a few job interview tips:

Revealing Your Disability

You are not required to tell a potential employee about your

disability. The ADA act does require employers to accommodate workers with disabilities perform their jobs. Once hired you can talk about accommodations.

Questions

Your interviewer shouldn't ask about your disability at an interview. This includes questions about physical and mental disabilities. Questions should pertain to the job you're interviewing for. Reassuring the inter-

viewer you would have no trouble performing the job duties, should be sufficient.

After the Job Offer

Once you are offered a job, then the employer can ask questions about your physical or mental health. Answer must be kept confidential, and the job offer can't be withdrawn based on the information you provide. This is also the time to reveal any accommodations you'll need in order to do your job.



Need More Information?
Go to www.ada.gov/

Health Corner ~ 1st Aid for Seizures/Epilepsy

First Aid for Seizures involves responding in ways that can keep the person safe until the seizure stops. Here are a few things you can do to help someone who is having a generalized tonic-clonic (grand mal) seizure:

- ☞ Keep calm and reassure other people who may be near by.
- ☞ Prevent injury by clearing the area around the person of anything hard or sharp.
- ☞ Ease the person to the floor and put something soft and flat, like a folded jacket, under his/her head.
- ☞ Remove eyeglasses and loosen ties or anything around the neck

that may make breathing difficult.

- ☞ Time the seizure with your watch. If the seizure continues for longer than five minutes without signs of slowing down or if a person has trouble breathing afterwards, appears to be injured, in pain, or recovery is unusual in some way, call 911.
- ☞ Do not hold the person down or try to stop his movements.
- ☞ Contrary to popular belief, it is not true that a person having a seizure can swallow his tongue. **Do not** put anything in the person's mouth. Efforts to hold the tongue down can injure the teeth or jaw.
- ☞ Turn the person gently onto one

side. This will help keep the airway clear.

- ☞ Don't attempt artificial respiration except in the unlikely event that a person does not start breathing again after the seizure has stopped.
- ☞ Stay with the person until the seizure ends naturally and he/she is fully awake.
- ☞ Do not offer the person water of food until fully alert.
- ☞ Be friendly and reassuring as consciousness returns.
- ☞ Offer to call a taxi, friend or relative to help the person get home if he/she seems confused or unable to get home without help.



For more information on Seizures check out <http://www.cdc.gov/epilepsy>

Safford Wellness Connections

Happy Spring from the Safford Wellness Connections! Lots of exciting changes and events have been happening in our center in the last month. We are getting closer and closer to opening the doors of our Appliance Connections peer run business! Our outings have been fun and exciting! This month we met up with the MORE program at the Mission San Xavier del Bac and had a fabu-

lous time! It was so refreshing to get together with some friends and enjoy the day together. We hope to meet up again on future outings! Our members have been busy in our Advisory Counsel meetings, coming up with ideas that can improve our program, and will keep us all busy as well. Some of the ideas are to build a garden, many art projects to spruce the building up, and some fun fundraising events

that they would like to plan and get off the ground! We also want to share a great success story; Don St. Hilaire is very happy to share that he no longer needs to use a cane, or take any pain medications. He believes this is a Miracle and due to a blessing that was said over him by his pastor, and due to the encouragement of his peers. Its great to see him smiling and being himself again!



Safford & Douglas Mobile Members at San Xavier del Bac Mission

Wellness Connection's Outreach

Annick Price, Wellness Connection's Outreach and Job Training Specialist, has been doing outreach for the last six months. She's been in the behavioral health field for 10 years, beginning as a receptionist then job coach, managing medical records and finally case manager for SEABHS. At Wellness Connections she works with individuals who have been referred from Vocational Rehabilitation. Referrals are for individuals with a physical or mental disability. After receiving a refer-

ral Annick works individually with the person to help them obtain work. During this process she assists in other areas such as; building resumes, filling out employment applications, learning to dress for success, assisting during or simulating interviews. Annick also assists them in maintaining a job. The process can be long and arduous. Annick said "I am dedicated to assist them regardless of the time." In her Outreach role she identifies individuals who would benefit from our services. Individuals may be

homeless, veterans, have mental health diagnosis or be in recovery. Annick assists them in determining what services are needed and obtaining those services. Annick stays involved with the individual and continues to provide peer support and advocacy. Annick is also tasked with helping the community be educated about services such as Wellness Connection and other resources. A future goal of Annick's is to expand services throughout Cochise County.



Annick Price
Wellness Connection's
Outreach & Job
Training Specialist

Sierra Vista Wellness Connections



David Longoria ~
Member of the Month



"Growing Well"

Sierra Vista Wellness Connections has several exciting things going on this month. On April 24th, we are hosting Business at Twilight which encourages other businesses to explore the community. Our newly developed catering program will be showcased at this event. We will have a very diverse menu prepared by Julianne our Administrative Assistant. Members and staff will host a car wash/bake sale on Saturday, April 5th, to raise funds for our outing to the Pima County Fair on April 17th. The Garden Project has been

intensified recently and we now have many more planters and have put up trellises along the fence in the back. We started a Member of the Month program which highlights one of our many valued members. This month's member of the month is David Longoria. David volunteers many hours at Sierra Vista Wellness Connections in different capacities. April begins another P.E.T. (Peer Employment Training) class and there will soon be four new peer support specialists. We have received a grant to train eight employees in Trauma Informed

Care. This is an exciting opportunity for us as we will be the only agency in Arizona to offer this training. April will round off with our participation in the NAMI Walk on April 26th. Members and staff will who participate will receive a free t-shirt. Please see David Longoria if you are interested in participating in the NAMI walk.

If you are interested in attending Sierra Vista Wellness Connections, come by and see Roxanne in Suite #1. She'll be happy to speak with you and get you started.



Adjoua Purnell



Steven "Steve" Nath



Jeri Long

Manny pictured on front page

New Employees

Wellness Connections continues to grow and grow. We asked our new employees to respond to a few questions; (1) Tell us about yourself in two sentences. (2) What inspires you? (3) What motivated you to seek employment in behavioral health? Responses to those questions were: **Manny Cazares, Douglas Wellness Connection's Driver/PSS** "I consider myself an active person who likes to meet new people." "My family inspires me. I always try to do my best in parenting my five year old daughter and being a good son, brother and husband." "I wanted to do something new and challenging. So far, I love it!"

Adjoua Purnell, Wellness Connection's Administrative Assistant, "I am a Christian woman of God serious about living righteous. Also I am a writer of inspirational things." "I am inspired by Jesus

Christ." "I sought employment in behavioral health because of my own situation and I love to be a blessing to others!"

Steven Nath, Safford Wellness Connection's Program Manager, "I am married, we have lots of fur babies and my hobbies are gardening, silversmith, cooking, playing with our animals and reading. I have lived in Arizona since 1996 and I have been in behavioral health since 1994 and love the opportunity to help others and to learn and grow from these experiences." "I am inspired by many things, but my wife is my biggest inspiration. She has lived with MS for 18 years and still gets up everyday ready to take on the day and all it brings. I am inspired by great books and learning God's Word gives me much of my inspiration." "I had a friend who I did meditation groups with and she told me I should get into counseling because

she felt I would be good at it. On a whim I applied for a BHT position as an intern with Nevada's Bureau of Alcohol and Drug abuse program and that netted me a job at Westcare's Harris Springs ranch. That was November, 1994, and I started working with adults in a therapeutic community and after moving to Arizona I began working with teens in treatment and have been doing so since 1996."

Jeri Long, Sierra Vista Wellness Connection's Women's Veteran's PSS, "I am a US Army Veteran and served for 10 years. I am full blooded Navajo from the Navajo reservation in New Mexico." "My son and running inspire me. I plan to be the best role model for him." "In the Army I was a Sexual Harassment/Assault Response Representative. I love taking care of soldiers and now I am deeply gratified to be able to help Veterans."

Wellness Connection's Training Update

Albert Regain, Training Coordinator/Peer Navigator, has been with Wellness Connections for two and a half months and has been busy since he started. Albert has been working on becoming the Relias System Administrator for Wellness Connections. He has been working hard to determine where each employee is with regard to training requirements. Albert has been evaluating the training resources and curriculums available from the different programs along with determining the trainers. Currently he

is working on becoming a Certified Cultural Competency Trainer which will allow him to provide Wellness Connection's staff with this mandatory training. Albert has been setting up new employee orientation.

As Centpatco's trial Peer Navigator, Albert will work with behavioral health providers to educate new member in the system about peer run programs like Wellness Connections. The hope is Wellness Connections will see more referrals from those provider agencies. Al-

bert plans to eventually provide trainings to advance employee's professional development. He is also working with SAMHSA to develop a program for trauma informed peer support care. He will be working with our administration to revisit our vision and mission statement to ensure they accurately reflect where Wellness Connections is and where it's going. Albert would like Wellness Connections to be "the hub" to provide support and educate agencies about trauma informed care.



"...it (HB 2367) would require AHCCCS to seek waivers requiring "able-bodied" adults to cooperate in a workfare program along with imposing a 5-year limit on benefits."

In the News - Bill's in Review

Additional funding requests have been made for Mental Health First Aid. One such request is HB 2490 which would add \$250,000 for this program which is focused on adults interacting with youth. The bill cleared the House but has yet to be assigned or scheduled for Senate consideration. Another measure, similar in nature, HB 2543, would provide \$250,000 for schools. This bill cleared the House and was

assigned to Education and Appropriations committees, but is not on the agenda for either committee so far.

HB 2367 is proposed and it would require AHCCCS to seek waivers requiring "able-bodied" adults to cooperate in a workfare program along with imposing a 5-year limit on benefits. Amendments offered in the House wanted to clarify the definition of able-

bodied. Additionally, the bill would have AHCCCS set "meaningful" copayments for use of the Emergency Room (ER) for non-ER care.

HB 2105 would allow law enforcement officers to detain a person whom is believed to be in need of a psychiatric evaluation because of a mental disorder and/or for reason (s) of being a danger to self or others.

Wellness Connection's Veteran's Corner

HOORAH!! We at Wellness Connections would like to take this opportunity to congratulate Ms. Ivonne Suarez for obtaining her Master's Degree in Criminal Justice. Her dedication to her community and personal gains were recognized by her instructors as well as family and friends. She is an asset to our group and support the goal, "Be all you can be." Congratulations

Ivonne for all you have gained through your personal recovery and educational advancement.

Our veteran membership has increased and though we miss those who've moved on, we offer a warm welcome to our newest veterans. Please join Wellness Connections in welcoming: Donna Adams, Debbie Grant and Dixie Brown to our Women's Veteran's Peer Support

Group. To those who have begun to build upon your own recovery please find comfort in the resilience we all have to accept the things we cannot change, change those things we are capable of and understand our role in each condition. May your healing be consistent and a positive reflection of your healthy futures.

[Career Fair]

Thursday April 10th, 11am to 3pm at the Windemere Hotel, 2047 S. Hwy 92. Transportation to and from Wellness Connections to the event will be provided. Join our veterans as we participate in this opportunity. Bring copies of your resumé and dress to impress.



Wellness Connections

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Wellness Connections Staff

Julianne "Julie" Abbey ~ Administrative Assistant
Regina Autry ~ Sierra Vista Program Manager
Julia Baker ~ Sierra Vista Culinary Coordinator
Deanna Bellinger ~ Executive Director
Bud Blanchard ~ Mobile PSS
Lorri Bonenfant ~ Sierra Vista Driver/PSS
Kimberly "Kim" Burk ~ Mobile Program Coordinator
Manny Cazares ~ Douglas Driver
Paul Clark ~ Safford Custodian
Kent Clonts ~ Safford Driver
Sean Crosby ~ Culinary Coordinator
Kari L. Ferrell ~ Mobile Program Manager
Ronald "Ron" Fruchey ~ Veteran's Support Coordinator/PSS
Mike Garcia ~ Safford Driver
Nancy Garcia ~ Community Outreach Liaison & Mobile
Rosemary Griffin ~ Veteran's PSS
Jamar Ingram ~ Sierra Vista Custodian
Esteves Jones ~ Sierra Vista PSS
Pamela "Pam" Jones ~ Sierra Vista PSS
Michelle King ~ Claim's Specialist
Jeri Long ~ Veteran's PSS
Scott May ~ Re-Entry Specialist
Emily Mitchell ~ Accountant
Roxanne Moreno ~ Sierra Vista Program Coordinator
Steven Nath ~ Safford Program Manager
Martha Nordin ~ Clinical Director
Kirby Oliver ~ Mobile PSS
Michael "Mike" Oswalt ~ SV Driver/PSS
Avion "Avi" Preston ~ Safford PSS
Annick Price ~ Sierra Vista Outreach/Job Training Spec.
Adjoua Purnell ~ Administrative Assistant
Albert Regain ~ Training Coordinator/Peer Navigator
Scott Rein ~ Operations Manager
Larry Reynolds ~ Safford PSS
Marisa Sanchez ~ Douglas PSS
Gloria Sandoval ~ Safford Driver/Billing Associate
Roberta Sandoval ~ Safford PSS
Derrick Seawood ~ Re-Entry Specialist
Tom Spinosa ~ Consumer Run Business & Job Developer
Linda Vincent ~ Nursing Consultant
Lorri Taylor ~ Safford PSS
Rachel Waterbury ~ Office Manager
Candace Weingart ~ Douglas Program Manager
Brandie Ybarra ~ Safford Program Coordinator

Wellness Connections Board Members

Joe De Francesco, Chair
Laura Lindsay, Vice Chair
Ruanda Dolak, Secretary
Lynette Land, Treasurer

Carol Goupil
Erik Heyer

If you are interested in becoming a part of the Wellness Connections Board, please contact us at admin@wellness-connections.org or (520) 452-0080.

Wellness Connections' Mission Statement & Overview

Mission Statement

"Wellness Connections is committed to providing peer-led, life-enhancing opportunities for mental health recovery and wellness."

Overview

Wellness Connections has provided behavioral health and addiction recovery services based on a peer-led model since February 2002. Wellness Connections maintains a qualified staff of Recovery Support Specialist, Peer Support Specialist and Behavior Health Technicians.

The expected outcome for all Wellness Connections' program members is a significantly improved quality of life. Funding is provided through contracts with Cenpatico, the Department of Veteran's Affairs, Bridgeway and the DES Department of Vocational Rehabilitation. Fundraising and grant funding are also pursued in support of Wellness Connections' mission.

Wellness Connections is a 501(c)3 tax-exempt non-profit organization. Your gifts and donations are tax-deductible!

Tax ID#86-1037850