

April
2016

Winds of Wellness

A Monthly Publication of Wellness Connections Phone (520) 452-0080 • Fax (520) 452-0090

www.wellness-connections.org

Member Involved - Key to Success

"Healing comes when we CHOOSE to walk away from darkness and move towards a Brighter Light." ~ Dieter F. Uchtdorf



Page 2 Health Corner - Alcohol Awareness Month

Page 2 Employment Tip
Fun in Photos

Page 3 Staff Spotlight - Veronica, Program Manager
Nogales Wellness Connections

Page 3 News & Notes
Birthdays

Page 4 Mission/Visions Statements, Key Staff, Board Members

According to many studies, the fear of public speaking is greater than the fear of death.

Not so for Amber, a member of Nogales Wellness Connections.

She thinks nothing of getting up in front of a group of people and talking.

"My number one fear is actually writing and reading," she admits. "I prefer to talk and use my vocabulary. I don't mind talking to lots of people."

A member for about a year, the 26-year-old was hesitant about attending the center at first.

But after seeing the progress that some members were making during group sessions, she changed her mind.

It wasn't long before Amber was throwing herself into the programs and has become something of a social butterfly, organizing outings and fundraisers.

She credits her people skills with her ability to get easily involved.

"My mom told me I never met a stranger," she said. "I like helping others with their skills. That's one of my main goals. I guess I

was born with people skills."

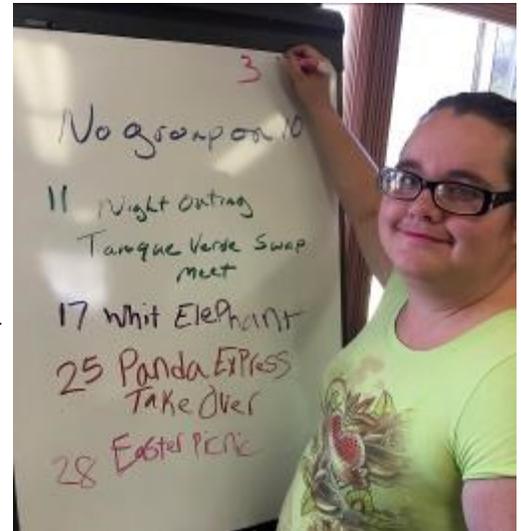
Amber now hopes to land a job at Wellness Connections as an outreach coordinator, which she believes will suit her skill set.

"I'm quite well known in the community and I'm a member of the Nogales Women's Club. I also know a lot of the local agencies that could help some of the members," she said.

She does, however, already treat coming to the center like a job.

"It really helps me with my depression and fires me up to do something. I do look at it as a job," she said.

For now, Amber is keeping herself busy with helping the Nogales Peer Advisory Council to organize fundraisers, which included a Panda Express takeover held in March, which saw 20 percent



Amber loves to help plan member activities and outings

from that day's purchases at the restaurant go to the center.

She is also vice president of the members' group, which also has a president and secretary.

"It's like a club for us," she explained. "We have to take care of our own."



Health Corner: Alcohol Awareness Month

For more information visit <http://rethinkingdrinking.niaaa.nih.gov>

APRIL is ALCOHOL AWARENESS MONTH
 Help for Today
 Hope for Tomorrow

Employment Tip

A clean, neat professional appearance is an important step in making a good first impression. You want the interviewer to focus on you and your skills not your clothes. Dress as you want to be seen - professional, successful, and the kind of person the company wants representing them.

April is Alcohol Awareness Month. If you think you may be dependent on alcohol and decide to stop drinking completely, don't go it alone.

Sudden withdrawal from heavy drinking can be life threatening. Seek medical help to plan a safe recovery.

You can also follow these self-help strategies:

Find alternatives: If drinking has occupied a lot of your time, then fill free time by developing new, healthy activities, hobbies, and relationships, or renewing ones you've missed. If you have counted on alcohol to be more comfortable in social situations, manage moods, or cope with problems, then seek other, healthy ways to deal with those areas of your life.

Avoid triggers: What triggers your urge to drink? If certain people or places make you drink even when you don't want to, try to avoid them. If certain activities, times of day, or feelings, trigger the urge, plan something else to do instead of drinking. If drinking at home is a problem, keep little or no alcohol there.

Plan to handle urges: When you cannot avoid a trigger and an urge hits, consider these options: Remind yourself of your reasons for changing (it can help to carry them in writing or store them in an electronic message you can access easily). Or talk things through with someone you trust. Or get involved with a healthy, distracting activity, such as physical exercise or a hobby that doesn't involve drinking. Or, instead of fighting the feeling, accept it and ride it out without giving in, knowing that it will soon crest like a wave and pass.

Know your "no": You're likely to be offered a drink at times when you don't want one. Have a polite, convincing "no, thanks" ready. The faster you can say no to these offers, the less likely you are to give in. If you hesitate, it allows you time to think of excuses to go along.

Fun in Photos

Sean, SVWC's chef, presents Michael, a member, with a certificate for the 12-week culinary Serv-Safe Training



Staff Members Tom and Fred in the garden at Sierra Vista Wellness Connections



Nogales Wellness Connections and Benson Mobile Program at Rancho Sahuarita Lake



Savanah and Jamar at their Baby Shower hosted by SVWC members

KEEP CALM AND HAVE FUN

Staff Spotlight - Veronica Corella, Nogales PM

Sometimes starting with nothing can have its advantages.

You get to take a blank canvas, paint the future that you want, and enjoy the fruits of your labor.

That is certainly the case for the Wellness Connections center in Nogales, which only found a permanent home about eight months ago.

And while the building may look ordinary from the outside, there is something extraordinary taking place beyond its doors.

At the helm is Program Manager Veronica Corella, who came on board a year ago when the community was still being served by the Mobile Services team in a nearby café and meeting center.

Since then, she and her team, along with the members, have been working to build a center they can be proud of.

"This building was empty and it needed a lot of work," said Veronica of the La Castellana Drive location.

It was all hands on deck to transform the former medical center, but there were plenty of willing volunteers, Veronica explained.

"The members have been a big help and now we have a small kitchen, a

conference/arts and crafts room, two offices, and a work out / meditation room," she said. "Throughout the members have had the opportunity to make their own choices."

That has included the group sessions, which are focused on the areas the members would like to discuss.

This involves, for the most part, learning life skills such as self-esteem, hygiene, cooking, and help with job searches.

There are now 31 members enrolled at the center, who have fast become like one big family.

"They are all just loving each day," Veronica said. "They really like to be together as a group."

Veronica and her team, which currently consists of a custodian, two drivers, two peer support specialists, an employment specialist and a program coordinator, will be celebrating their first year together this month.

With about three and a half years of previous experience working in the behavioral health field, Veronica is happy to continue with that line of work.

"The last place I worked closed and I



was looking for a job for about seven months," she recalls. "I interviewed for the job here and also for a job working in medical records at the hospital. I passed the interviews for both and wasn't sure which one I would take. But I realized that I wanted to work with people and to not just be surrounded by four walls every day."

The center provides services five days a week and Veronica is hoping she can soon hire an outreach specialist.

In the meantime, she is excited about the progress already being made.

"It's about us helping the members, but also the members helping us," she said. "I love my job and I love to help people. I also love to see the members' faces when they get helped and to see their successes."

News & Notes



Wellness Connection's is proud of our Executive Director, Deanna Bellinger (pictured far left). Deanna was named Honorary Chair of this year's NAMI Mental Health March. The NAMI March is scheduled for April 16th, 2016. The event takes place at Co-

chise College's Sierra Vista Campus. Registration begins at 7am with the 5k march starting at 8:30am. There will be fun, food, music, information booths and giveaways, appearances by local dignitaries, raffles and other surprises! Come join the fun to raise funds and awareness!

- Amelia Gastelum 1st
- Cameron Waddell 1st
- Portia Lyon 2nd
- Leigh Quiles 2nd
- Marc Anton Lugo 4th
- Roberto Mendoza 4th
- ESummie Zubia Trujillo 5th
- Laurel Stangel 7th
- David Strange 9th
- Gloria Torres 9th
- Hilda Ulloa Orduna 9th
- Eric Saft 13th
- Savana Ingram 14th
- Kaylena Fox 17th
- Rosamber Rosas 20th
- Scott Strong 20th
- Wendie Orr 24th
- Judith Smith 24th
- Timothy Joyce 25th
- Teresa Malonado 25th
- Anthony Purciella 27th





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1201 E. Fry Blvd.
Sierra Vista, AZ 85635



Phone: 520-452-0080

Email: admin@wellness-connections.org

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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 Connection's Key Staff

Program Managers:

REGINA AUTRY ~ Sierra Vista Program
rautry@wellness-connections.org

VERONICA CORELLA ~ Nogales Program
vcorella@wellness-connections.org

SEAN CROSBY ~ Culinary
scrosby@wellness-connections.org

KARI L. FERRELL ~ Mobile Program
kferrell@wellness-connections.org

STEVEN "STEVE" NATH ~ Safford Program
snath@wellness-connections.org

Administration:

DEANNA BELLINGER ~ Executive Director
dbellinger@wellness-connections.org

TOM SPINOSA ~ Manager of Business Development & Employment Services
tspinosa@wellness-connections.org

RACHEL WATERBURY ~ Administrative Manager
rwaterbury@wellness-connections.org

JULIE HUMMEL ~ Comptroller
jhummel@wellness-connections.org

Articles submitted by
Amanda Baillie,
Freelance

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 is a peer-run organization providing peer-run behavioral health and addiction recovery services since February 2002.

Wellness Connections maintains a qualified staff of Peer Support Specialists and Behavior Health Technicians.

The expected outcome for all Wellness Connections' program members is a significantly improved quality of life. Programs are funded through service contracts with Cenpatco, 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!
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Newsletter Editor: Kari L. Ferrell