



Ask SSG

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May - June 2009

A Fond Farewell to Naomi Kageyama, SSG Development Director



Naomi Kageyama

SSG bids a fond farewell to **Naomi Kageyama** after 20 years of dedicated service. A well recognized and respected leader of SSG, Naomi has often been viewed as the embodiment of SSG's 'spirit' through her warmth, compassion and commitment to unity. While completing her graduate studies at UCLA, Naomi was volunteering with several nonprofit groups

and was introduced to Executive Director Herbert Hatanaka who was looking to hire a part-time grant writer and researcher for SSG. Her first job was completing the 1989 'A Study of Charitable Giving and Financial Support to Asian Pacific Human Service Organization in Los Angeles' as commissioned by the Asian Pacific Planning Council (currently known as A3PCON). Naomi was then hired as a Program Specialist in July 1990 under the supervision of the late Paul Chikahisa. She was the founder and original Director for the Pacific Asian Language Services Project (PALS, currently known as PALS for Health) in 1993, although she continued in her role as a Program Specialist to assist all of SSG's programs and divisions. She was promoted as the Director of Program Development for SSG in 1995 and became part of the SSG Core Management Team.

She was instrumental in developing exemplary proposal writing practices and the creation of the 'Development Team' for which SSG is well known. She created an information sharing system that significantly increased the efficiency of grant-writing, contract support and budget development. In other areas of Program Development Naomi excelled in building external relationships and collaborative projects for which SSG is now renowned. Other areas of expertise include insurance, risk management and human resources. In 1997 Naomi undertook a 12-month effort together with key SSG Board Officers to analyze, update and expand SSG's Personnel Policies and Procedures, paving the way for the SSG HR Department as it currently stands today. Naomi has also built the SSG Risk Management Unit that oversees agency insurance policies and ensures compliance with all applicable standards. Since 1999 she has been the lead negotiator for the SSG group medical plan and related benefits.

Over the years, Naomi has participated in various local and

regional Committees and Advisory Boards as a representative of SSG. She has been a strong and tireless advocate for all of SSG's many programs and divisions receiving a commendation from the SSG Board of Directors in 2004 as well as a 'Leading By Example' award in 2008 at the annual Staff Appreciation Luncheon.

When asked what she feels is her most enduring contributions to SSG she smiles and says half-jokingly "the SSG Newsletter". The very first edition was a brief 1-page sheet back in January 1999; but has since evolved to become an integral tool and historical tracking system for SSG with over 500 copies published bi-monthly. When asked what she will miss the most, Naomi says simply "SSG has always been more than a regular job. I'm proud to say that many of my colleagues are also my dearest friends". She also adds "It has been a privilege to work for SSG all these years and be part of the agency's growth and transition from a modest nonprofit agency with a staff of 75 to an innovative, unique and high profile nonprofit with a staff of over 450. Herb's leadership has been an inspiration".

Naomi plans on spending more time with her family, creative writing projects and volunteerism. Final day 7/31/09.

"WHERE MIRACLES SHINE"

The 2009 Los Angeles Al-Impics was held on Saturday, May 16th at El Camino Compton Center. The County-wide event hosted more than 3,500 people and celebrated the spirit of recovery. The all day event included a parade, basketball, volleyball, weightlifting, track and field, chess and pinochle tournaments and much more. This year's Al-Impics was attended by several LA County Commissioners and the new ADPA Director, John Viernes.



HOPICS's Parade Competition Banner



Cheryl Branch, HOPICS Director and John Viernes, ADPA Director at Opening Ceremony and Parade Competition

SSG NEWS & HIGHLIGHTS

RE-ENTRY MAINTENANCE ORGANIZATION

Congratulations

Day Reporting Center Graduates!

The Los Angeles County Probation Department's Day Reporting Center (DRC) celebrated their inaugural 2009 Graduation Ceremony honoring a graduating class of ten young men on May 29, 2009. These young men are all on probation. The DRC is part of a multi-agency collaboration to provide a strong intervention program for high-risk young adults. Rather than punishment, a range of support services including education, counseling and skills-building is provided through a private/public collaboration that includes but is not limited to Probation Dept., DMH, ADPA, LAUSD and community providers such as SSG. The Keynote Speaker was **Robert Taylor** the Chief Probation Officer for LA County and commendations were provided by the office of **Supervisor Mark Ridley-Thomas**. As part of the host committee, SSG provided acknowledgment and gifts to the graduates. Kudos to **Edward Sykes**, Supervising DPO of the Center and to SSG RMO Director **Veronica Lewis** both key to the event's success.



I-r Jackalyn Moultrie, ADPA Prog. Mgr, Veronica Lewis, RMO Director, Robert Taylor, Chief Probation Officer-LA County Probation Dept., Ed Johnson, Senior Director, Adult Supervision Oversight/Day Reporting Ctr.

Culmination Event

On June 6th, 2009, REEOP clients and their families enjoyed a fun-filled day of celebration at Knott's Berry Farm to celebrate the ongoing recovery and successful community re-integration for State parolees. Administrator **Susan Quigley** of the City of LA/Community Development Department and REEOP Project Director **Veronica Lewis** were the key organizers for this wonderful event. Partner agencies for REEOP include Friends Outside/LA, Mum's the Word, LAM/Ex-Offenders Action Network, and several LA City WorkSource Centers. SSG REEOP Case Managers **Webber Dowells** and **Dan Thomas** celebrated client successes with other collaborative partners. Over 30 clients and their families enjoyed a family-centered day at the amusement park that culminated in a poignant program and banquet. Several clients spoke candidly of their tribulations and triumphs, moving many to tears. Best wishes to all and a big 'Thank You' to the many staff and volunteers who made this event a success.

HOMELESS OUTREACH PROJECT INTEGRATED CARE SYSTEM



Carlos Moran

Congratulations to **Carlos Moran**. On June 1st he became the Project Director for the new 'Families In Transition' Project (FIT) funded by the Community Development Commission of the County of LA. FIT is a part of HOP's Homeless Services Division. For the past year, Carlos has worked as an Analyst on the Development Team at SSG's Core Office.

Homeless Women & Children's Project

HOP's Homeless Women & Children's Project is a 90-day program designed to help families move toward permanent housing and life-long stability. The pictured baby items are needed year round and the backpacks and school supplies will be distributed at our *2nd Annual Back To School Party* in August. To donate contact **Lisa Perdue** at 323- 948-0444 or lperdue@hopics.org.

Please Donate Your Gently Used and New Items.



BENEFITS ASSISTANCE CLIENTS URBAN PROJECT/ LIFE CENTER

The **Book & Clothing Fair** held Saturday, June 20th was a great success; the proceeds will be used to purchase new computers for the computer lab.

A **Big Thank You** to the many SSG staff members who supported this event by donating hundreds of books.



SSG NEWS & HIGHLIGHTS

When Times Are Hard, Tell Stories...

By Anita Le, JD, PALS for Health Director

Unemployment. Homelessness. Uninsured. Unprotected. California in crisis.

Anita Le

Just like you, I have been incredibly anxious and scared for the survival of critical health, human and social services programs that are meant to keep our communities healthy, safe and hopefully, thriving. With each email, news-blast and action alert about the proposed budget cuts, I get more scared and anxious. I feel utterly overwhelmed when the effect of the current crisis is compounded with my own personal issues.

You see, I have been recovering from PTSD since I was 8 years old. Living with constant fear, both real and imagined, every day has been my reality. As a child of a war-torn country and trauma survivor, my childhood and adolescent years were a blur of broken but frightful images. Fear remained within me even as I gained academic grounds, and eventually received my JD. Fear was my constant and intimate companion even as I tried cases or testified at the Capitol. Friends would try to support me by telling me to simply find COURAGE – courage to make a difference, courage to fight for civil rights, courage to march on despite adversities. Times are definitely hard and I desperately want to find courage to keep fighting the good fight. But, no one has ever been able to tell me what courage looks like or where to find it...

Then, courage found me and her name is **Edna**!

April 16, 2009 was Unity Day in CA. Many immigrants, concerned residents, educators, advocates and others gathered in Sacramento to raise a collective voice to protect immigrant rights and advocate for competent health care and vital social services. Edna, a recovering breast cancer survivor and client of PALS/ALAS Para Tu Salud, was able to overcome her own fear and find the courage to tell her moving story of hope, survival and triumph during several legislative visits.

Edna is from Guatemala and unable to speak English. In 2000, Edna went to a local hospital for breast cancer diagnosis and treatment. Despite numerous requests, she was not provided with language assistance; not by a Spanish speaking staff and definitely not by a trained health care interpreter. When she was prepared for a biopsy, the nurses and doctors were working on the wrong breast. With hand gestures, Edna desperately tried to inform the staff of their error. Due to her inability to communicate in English, the staff did not even look at her to recognize the gestures she frantically made to them. The result of the biopsy came back normal. "I returned home feeling disappointed and helpless," said Edna.

Four years later, she could no longer tolerate the shooting pain in her breast so she returned to the hospital. Edna had to use her children to help cross the language barrier. Edna's 15 year-old daughter just could not bring herself to tell Edna

that her cancer advanced to stage 4 - "she would cry and just tell me 'everything will be fine'," recalled Edna.

On the day of her surgery consultation, out of desperation, Edna had to call her brother, a big rig driver who was on the road, to help interpret for her. Her brother later recalled that it was devastating for him to have to tell Edna that her chance of survival from surgery was 30%.

By chance, Edna found out about PALS for Health/ALAS Para Tu Salud. With the help of ALAS interpreters, the quality of her health care improved immediately. "I gained confidence in my treatment and recovery. I also joined PALS for Health Speakers' Bureau and attended a public speaking training that encouraged me to speak up for the rights of others like me, who have experienced the language barrier."

Upon request, Edna enthusiastically agreed to travel to Sacramento to educate lawmakers about the importance of providing language assistance to limited English proficient patients at Unity Day 2009. Along with other participants, Edna, Camila Crespo, a PALS staff who came to interpret for Edna, and I rushed off to our first visit with Lina Hamilton of Sen. Lou Correa's office. Noticing that Edna was lagging behind, I asked her what was wrong. "I'm scared and don't think I can talk." We assured her that we would stand with her no matter how much, or little, she was able to say.



l-r: Edna and Lina Hamilton

After delivering my talking-points, I looked at Edna to gauge her fear level. Timidly, Edna straightened out her back, swallowed hard and began to speak ever so softly. I could see the level of her confidence and passion rise as she told her story. When we arrived at our subsequent legislative visits, Edna immediately sat up when being introduced and forcefully declared, "My name is Edna and this is my story..."

On our flight back to LA, I asked Edna how she felt about the trip. Edna replied, "Not being able to speak English, I am often ignored, as if my sufferings and I do not mean anything to anyone. But when I am heard, I feel empowered like I am a real person and that I matter." It dawned on me that Edna found courage in telling her story and in doing so, she found the power to fight for language assistance for all LEP patients.

When I came back to Sacramento for Immigrant Day on May 18th, and when I testified at the Conference Committee on the Budget hearing on May 27th as member of the API Policy Summit, fear was making my knees shake, my voice crack and my thoughts float all about like snow flakes. With Edna firmly on my mind, I simply sat up, took a deep breath and began, "My name is Anita Hong-Ha Le and this is my story. I am a trauma survivor and a former Medi-Cal recipient..."

Times are hard. We must fight but how or where do we even begin? Tell your stories. Have your clients tell their stories. Stories matter! California is the golden state and the precious gold to be mined here is the variety and sum of our stories.

To read more on Edna's story, please visit: http://tcenews.caleadow.org/pr/tce/document/In_the_Absence_of_Words.pdf

SSG NEWS & HIGHLIGHTS

OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY TREATMENT PROGRAM - LA

Congratulations Sarah Bream



l-r: Herbert Hatanaka, Sarah Bream, John Eckman

On 4/21/09, in honor of Occupational Therapy Month, Division Director Sarah Bream was recognized for her accomplishments in the field of OT during a surprise luncheon hosted by OTTP Managers. Dr. Bream had previously been recognized as one of the 'Top Ten OT's in California' by the Occupational Therapy Association of California at their most recent annual conference. Dr. Bream was presented with a Leadership Award by SSG Board President John Eckman and Executive Director Herbert Hatanaka. Family members from Minnesota were in attendance at this heartwarming event.

2009 AOTA Conference

OTTP made a big splash at the annual *American Occupational Therapy Association* conference held on April 23 - 26, 2009 in Houston, Texas. Director Sarah Bream together with Liz Carley and Michelle King-Nimmers represented OTTP-LA at this prestigious event that drew over 1000 participants nationwide. Highlights:

- Dr. Carley and Ms. King-Nimmers showcased OTTP's "On A Good Note" Music Program with a poster presentation and musical excerpts. OTTP staff Eric Drake was recognized as the "creative mind" and founder of this group.
- Dr. Bream's presentation was entitled "School-Based Mental Health Services for Adolescents within the Public Mental Health System" and generated much interest from OT practitioners from across the country interested in providing similar services in their communities.
- Dr. Carley and Dr. Bream presented findings from OTTP's Follow-up Study, which attempted to identify the long-term sustainability of performance outcomes identified in OTTP adolescent clients at least 1 year post-discharge. This timely topic generated much interest as practitioners across the nation recognize the need to do more long-term follow-up studies such as the one OTTP presented.

All in all, the 2009 AOTA Conference was a success! OTTP was well-represented and generated a high level of 'buzz' from leaders and providers across the nation. Faculty from several states expressed interest in sending their students to OTTP for a unique, interdisciplinary, community-based mental health Fieldwork opportunity, which is not available in most states. Kudos to OTTP!

First Annual Art Show to Celebrate Occupational Therapy Month

OTTP organized its *First Annual Art Show* on April 27, 2009, at the Viento y Agua Gallery in Long Beach. The art show showcased OTTP clients engaging in their favorite "occupations" which included poetry, drawing and painting. During the art show there was also an "open mic" which featured clients singing, reading poetry, rapping and dancing. It was a spectacular evening and the clients were involved in all aspects of the event including displaying their artwork, setting up for the event and performing on stage. One of the clients was even the Master of Ceremony for the evening. The art show was attended by clients, families, administrators and staff from schools, OTTP staff and the community. The art show was a wonderful venue for our clients to showcase their amazing talents and be acknowledged for engaging in a positive occupation.



API Spring Fair A Celebration of Recovery

In celebration of *API Heritage and Mental Health Awareness Month*, SSG API Providers together with Collaborative partners hosted the inaugural 'API Spring Fair' on May 29th, 2009 at Griffith park in the Friendship Auditorium. The host agencies from SSG included API Alliance, APCTC, AP Residential and OAP. Partner CBO's included PACS, AP Family Center, CAA and SNNA. DMH County providers included LB AP Family Services and Coastal AP Family Svcs. Funding provided by DMH. It was a wonderful success! Over 180 consumers and their families attended the fun-filled event with live music provided by APCTC's consumer band 'Never Stop'. There was make-up and photo booths and a wonderful display of consumer art work. OAP coordinated a health fair including blood sugar screenings by SNNA and OAP as well as dental screenings by Tzu Chi Buddhist Free Clinic. Health education was available in various API languages. A buffet of API delicacies was served for all. Several consumers shared their personal stories relating to their road to recovery and were recognized with certificates. Speakers included Mariko Kahn, E.D. of PACS and Dr. Chong Suh, APCTC Director.



Never Stop

SSG NEWS & HIGHLIGHTS

ASIAN PACIFIC AIDS INTERVENTION TEAM



Jury Candelario

APAIT commemorated the 5th Annual National API HIV/AIDS Awareness Day with a Chinese banquet luncheon at the Empress Pavilion, Chinatown, on May 19. The Awareness Day is sponsored by the *Banyan Tree Project*, a social marketing campaign funded by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. APAIT Director Jury

Candelario highlighted the division's current expansion areas such as substance use programming inclusive of prevention, community mobilization and an outpatient treatment clinic, and their community research projects with UCLA and Emory University on HIV/hepatitis B co-infection and HIV testing prevalence among gay men, respectively. The luncheon honored NBC's Heroes star James Kyson Lee, independent public radio personality and IMRU producer Rita Gonzalez, and the City of Los Angeles AIDS Coordinator Stephen Simon.

Budget Cuts Threaten Lives

Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger has proposed cutting over \$13 million from the AIDS Drug Assistance Program (ADAP) and all other HIV programs totaling over \$80 million along with several other crucial support services. Currently, the HIV/AIDS funding that California gets is from the Ryan White Care Act and is a matching system. Whatever the state contributes, the federal government will match dollar for dollar for each program. Unfortunately, this means that Californians will lose over \$160 million for programs that are helping keep people from becoming infected and for those already living with the disease, HIV surveillance and data collection, housing, food support, mental health, research, and so on. These cuts will be devastating on several levels to tens of thousands of Californians including keeping them alive. Please call your legislators including the Governor and tell them to STOP HIV FUNDING CUTS. Thank you.



Pictured: Manny Padua, Jury Candelario, Jennifer Kim, Alex Trac, Army Cachero, Peter Cruz, and Nick Truong on the steps of the State Capitol Building- June 10, 2009.

SSG Programs Recognized by Department of Mental Health MHPA Prevention & Early Intervention

Congratulations to APCTC, HOP/ICS Family Center, and OTTP-LA. Each of these programs were included in the Community Defined Evidence Models Guide recently published by LA County DMH. In December 2008, DMH solicited applications for prevention and early intervention models referred to as 'community defined evidence' or CDE practices. The purpose of this solicitation was to develop a guide that lists practices that agencies countywide can implement as part of the MHPA Prevention and Early Intervention activities. Of the 320 applications submitted to DMH in response, three of SSG's practices were among the 18 that met criteria and that were included in the Guide. These models are:

- * **Caring for Our Families (APCTC)** - a child abuse prevention intervention
- * **LIFE (OTTP)** - a training program for parents of children who are at risk of involvement with the criminal justice system
- * **Positive Directions (HOP/ICS)** - a comprehensive prevention and early intervention for youth substance abuse and delinquency

Visit <http://dmh.lacounty.info/mhsa/index.html> to read the full draft PEI Plan and to view the Guide, which is included in the Appendices to the Plan.

State Budget Cuts

As everyone knows, California is faced with a far-reaching budget crisis. But the voters have spoken and are asking for real budget solutions. In a recent poll by David Binder Research, the majority of voters surveyed said the state should raise revenues to address the budget shortfall. As we move forward, it is up to the Legislature to make tough decisions that include revenues to prevent the collapse of CA's already battered safety-net and the elimination of critical programs for our communities. For those of us in the social service arena, keeping up with the rising tide of information is key to strategic planning and ongoing advocacy efforts.

For more information on the proposed budget cuts, please visit: <http://www.cbp.org/>

To answer questions on how the budget could be balanced without eliminating safety net, education, health and human services program, visit: <http://californiabudgetbites.org/2009/06/03/options-for-closing-the-budget-gap/>

To join the fight against the proposed budget cuts, join in the "Stop the Cuts" efforts by CA Partnership. They organize weekly to visits to local legislators; you only have to show up and tell your stories. <http://www.california-partnership.org/>

To join local (LA County) API collaborative efforts to ensure quality health care for all, please join: Health Justice Network by contacting Scott Chan, schan@apalc.org.

Other ethnic specific coalitions include the CA Black Health Network (<http://www.cbhn.org>); Latino Coalition for a Health CA (<http://lchc.org>); and Coalition for Humane Immigrant Rights of LA (<http://chirla.org>).

To join state-wide efforts to promote competent health care for all, please join the Having Our Say Coalition, <http://www.cpehn.org/havingoursay.php>.

SSG NEWS & HIGHLIGHTS

Mobilization Awards

Double congratulations to OCAPICA and Saath - both awardees of *Dr. Diane Fink Awards* on June 5, 2009. The awards are funded and administered by the California Dialogue on Cancer.



PATH Team

OCAPICA, an SSG Affiliate Agency is already recognized as a national Center for Excellence to Eliminate Disparities (CEED). They are lauded for their accomplishments in tackling Access to Care, Disparities and Early Detection for low-income, minority and limited English speaking women at risk for cancer. OCAPICA's *PATH for Women Project* includes a consortium of partner agencies, including FIGH/SMMC, GCN, PIHP, SNNA, UPAC and SSG's Tongan Center. Kudo's to Executive Director *Mary Anne Foo MPH* and CEED Director *Jacqueline Tran MPH*.

Saath is a motivated grass-roots coalition focused on cancer prevention, early detection and survivorship targeting medically underserved South Asians in Southern CA. The Saath group founded in early 2004 is led by *Zul Surani* and is currently under the stewardship of SSG. Saath has successfully conducted a breast cancer survivor needs assessment in



Saath founders, staff and volunteers

collaboration with UCLA's Division of Cancer Prevention and Control Research using trained interviewers that collectively speak over 8 South Asian languages spoken by immigrants from India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh and Nepal. Saath is now developing effective interventions to improve cancer screening and support South Asians affected by cancer. Congratulations to *Zul Surani*, *Loraine Agustin* and the many dedicated community members of Saath!

June 15 - Global Celebration of World Elder Abuse Awareness Day

Commit yourself to helping older Americans protect themselves from scammers and thieves. By signing the Pass The Elder Justice Act online petition, you send a clear signal to Washington, DC that the Elder Justice Act must be passed into law this year! It's fast, easy and you can sign anonymously.

The Elder Justice Act:

- Would provide federal resources to support State and community efforts on the front lines dedicated to fighting elder abuse with scarce resources and fragmented systems.
- Assuring adequate public-private infrastructure and resources to prevent, detect, treat, understand, intervene in and, where appropriate, prosecute elder abuse, neglect, and exploitation.

Personal Accomplishments

Congratulations Graduates



On May 15, 2009, OTTP LA Division Director *Sarah Bream* received her Doctorate Degree in Occupational Therapy from the USC Division of Occupational Science. Dr. Bream wrote *"The History of OT Practice in Adolescent Mental Health"* and was also awarded the Lela Llorens Award for Creativity in Occupational Therapy.



Alberto Alvarez, OTTP LA graduated from San Jose State with a Masters in Library and Information Science on Saturday, May 23, 2009.

Marion Pate, OTTP LA graduated for CSU Long Beach with a Masters in Public Administration on Wednesday, May 27, 2009.



Denise Lopez, OTTP LA graduated from CSU Long Beach with a Masters in Social Work on Wednesday May 27, 2009



Congratulations

Shondell Mishaw, OTTP LA became a Licensed Marriage Family Therapist on March 30, 2009.

David Lim, OAP Director completed the LA Marathon on May 25, 2009. Way to go David!

SOME DATES TO REMEMBER FOR JULY - AUGUST

- 7/3 Independence Day Observed (SSG Holiday)
- 7/24 SSG Annual Board & Staff Luncheon