

TRANSITIONS-MENTAL HEALTH ASSOCIATION

Year-End Report

PROJECT 1: GROWING GROUNDS FARM

Growing Grounds Vocational Advancement Program represents a significant first step in the county for mentally disabled adults to return to work. Anyone who has gone through a period of unemployment understands the frustration and humiliation that comes with the inability to make a living, to have nowhere to go each day. Adults living with mental and emotional disorders already feel marginalized by society. At present, the national unemployment rate among those diagnosed with a severe and persistent mental illness is over 85%. In San Luis Obispo County, nearly 75% of our local population with a mental illness desire work in order to lead a “normal life.” Yet there are few employment opportunities in our community for the mentally ill.

CBO/PHG funding was used exclusively to pay the wages of disabled adults who are interested in returning or joining the work force. Approximately 1,800 hours, or 600 shifts, of additional paid labor will be made available due to this funding either to new participants or to current employees who want additional shifts.

The Growing Grounds Vocational Advancement Program is composed of three distinct steps: work on the Growing Grounds Farm, work in the downtown retail outlet (or, if necessary, a series of community-based retail opportunities), and work within the greater community of San Luis Obispo through the Supported Employment Program. In 2015-16, the GGVAP offered the following services to each of our clients:

- Vocational training in all aspects of growing, marketing, presentation and selling.
- Training in work readiness, such as personal responsibility for a work schedule, arranging for transportation, wearing suitable attire and being punctual.
- Opportunities for job advancement and increased responsibility.
- A safe, supervised environment for strengthening social skills among peers.
- Supervision, trained observation, and immediate communication with rehabilitation counselors.
- SEP Vocational Specialists who work one-on-one with individuals to obtain and maintain employment in the community.
- Job Coaching, Job Development, Benefits Counseling, Job Readiness Training, and Vocational Assessment.
- Individualized time-unlimited job support.
- A job and a paycheck.

In providing clients with the opportunity to acquire jobs and skills, we have seen increased health and well-being and a decreased use of expensive and traumatic community intervention. We have witnessed positive results as clients move into other jobs and re-establish their lives in the

community. Recovery, growth and independence are crucial to our agency's mission, and our experience with Growing Grounds Farm demonstrates that all three goals are achievable when you empower clients to realize personal milestones through employment.

We are pleased to report that we exceeded our contractual obligations with San Luis Obispo Behavioral Health on non-duplicated clients served by 28%, 77 vs 60, our attendance units by 1%, 2677 vs 2639 and our target of having people go on to less supervised employment by 23%, 14 vs 12. These all show that we are serving more people and are more successful in moving people on to other jobs in the community.

As an enterprise, the Growing Grounds Farm had its highest sales ever, an increase of approximately 14% over the prior year. Highlighted projects include the sale of 1600 oaks to Justin Vineyards to help mitigate their loss of trees.

FY 2015-2016 Program Results

Grant Funds Received in Fiscal Year 2015-16: \$18,000

Program: Growing Grounds Vocational Advancement Program

Goal/Objective	Major Tasks (in order to achieve goal)	Actual Numbers (through 6/30/16)
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OUTPUTS:

The CBO/PHG funds will directly provide at least 526 contacts/employment shifts to client employees working in the program and 20 new client employees within the contract year.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Growing Grounds Farm is an ongoing operation. We anticipate hiring people who would like additional hours or who are on a waiting list to be hired. • Orientation and initial training will be provided to new client employees; existing employees will have additional hours given to them based upon interest and length of employment. 	To date, 2,677 contacts/employment shifts have been provided to clients working in the program, 600 of which were provided through CBO/PHG funds; we anticipate exceeding our goal by the end of the fiscal year. 53 new client employees have been hired, through 6/30/16.
20 consumer employees will graduate into the SEP program.	Growing Grounds Farm Program Manager will work with consumer employees and the Supported Employment Program Manager to facilitate “graduation” into SEP program.	15 consumer employees have graduated into the SEP program so far this fiscal year.
8 consumer employees will find regular employment through the SEP program.	SEP staff will provide job exploration and development, job coaching, external situational assessments and ongoing, time-unlimited job support.	12 employees have gained regular employment in the greater community.
Administer Satisfaction Survey	The employees participating in the Growing Grounds Vocational Advancement Program will be surveyed about the positive impact that employment has had on their mental illness and quality of life.	Survey completed March 2016
	Growing Grounds Vocational Advancement Program survey responses regarding increased life satisfaction and learning work skills	Submitted 8-31-16

Submit final report to Preventive Health Grant Committee.	towards future employment are formatted into a report and submitted to County Administration. Overall year-end output results are also provided.	
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Program/Project
OUTCOMES:

85% of consumers surveyed will report an increase in satisfaction with quality of life.	Use of the Annual Client Satisfaction Survey	94% (17/18) of consumers surveyed stated that the overall quality of their life has improved.
90% of consumers surveyed will report they are learning work skills that will help towards further employment.	Use of the Annual Client Satisfaction Survey	89% (17/19) of consumers surveyed stated they are learning work skills that will help towards further employment.

PROJECT 2: NORTH COUNTY WELLNESS CENTER

The Life House in Atascadero offers a centrally-located facility for Mental Health Services Act program staff, consumers and family members, support groups, educational classes, vocational work clubs and more. Currently TMHA offers a variety of services at the Life House: mental health consumers facilitate groups and programs that cover such topics as self-advocacy, self-care, relapse prevention and stigma busting. Supported employment is available, along with individual peer support, for both adult and transitional age youth clients.

In the Fall of 2015, Life House and two other Wellness Centers operated by TMHA were presented with the SPOKES Hindsight Award, which recognized a local program that went through strategic reinvention to improve and survive. The Wellness Centers were honored for their transition from “illness-centered” to “person-centered” programs, one that now places an emphasis on the input of consumers and family members. Life House has been a member of the Atascadero Chamber of Commerce since 2013 and we include our members when we attend Chamber events. Life House was recognized by the Mayor of Atascadero in May 2015 and received a Proclamation at a City Hall meeting celebrating its goal to eliminate stigma and build an inclusive community.

In 2015-16, the following activities were available at the Center:

- A daily (M-F) program that provides information and discussion on a variety of topics, including self-advocacy, nutrition, medication, mindfulness, housing assistance and community resources;
- Groups and trainings that include Wellness and Recovery Action Plan, Mental Health First Aid, Crisis Prevention, Self-Esteem, and Smoking Cessation;
- Access to a Mental Health Advocate who can help persons in need navigate through the system and weekly access to a Behavioral Health Department mental health staff for consultation;
- A variety of activities that respond to member requests, including: dual diagnosis groups, job clubs, and classes that focus on music, art, meditation, cooking, and mindful movement.
- Offsite outings that encourage members to be connected to their community, including visits to local art galleries, historical museums, parks with hiking trails, community centers and local community events and celebrations.
- Group facilitation training so that members are able to lead groups and classes that they are interested in. This provides leadership opportunities for members to become Wellness Center Ambassadors and strengthen their social and supportive relationships with their peers.
- Support for members seeking work in the community via computer skills classes at the Wellness Center and visits to local college campuses to further their interest.
- Guest speakers who have areas of expertise that benefit our members such as Father Michael Cicinato who works with Veterans and PTSD, Tori Blue who is an expert in Non-Violent Communication, and Kris Gottlieb who made a presentation on LGBT Community.

- Evening support groups such as NAMI family to family, Bipolar, and Partners living with loved ones who experience Bipolar Disorder.

The Life House collaborated with several community partners, including Cal Poly, Cuesta Nursing Program, Atascadero State Hospital Psychiatric Technician program, Community Counseling Center, SLO County National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI), and Ethos Wellness programs.

We have begun to see an increase in people accessing services at the Life House as the Affordable Care Act allows for more people to be eligible for both Medi-Cal and private insurance and more people have begun seeking mental health services. A Medi-Cal Enrollment Counselor, funded through SLO County Behavioral Health, utilizes Life House as an access point for people in the North County needing help with Medi-Cal applications.

FY 2015-2016 Program Results

Grant Funds Received in Fiscal Year 2015-16: \$10,000

Program: North County Wellness Center

Goal/Objective	Major Tasks (in order to achieve goal)	Actual Numbers (through 6/30/16)
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Program/Project OUTPUTS:

Operate the Wellness Center Program 5 day-a-week. Provide outreach, support, education and employment opportunities 5 days a week to 225 adults in northern San Luis Obispo County who have mental disabilities.	Program is currently operating and providing the full service stated.	The Wellness Center is fully operational, providing services 5 days a week. 333 adults have been served through 6/30/16.
Continue to grow peer advisory council, hold regular meetings, and continue to expand and improve the program.	Program Supervisor continues to solicit participation and holds monthly meetings.	Advisory meetings take place monthly. In addition, Life House staff and member leaders attend the bi-monthly Peer Advisory and Advocacy Team meetings in San Luis Obispo. The Life House presented once again at the Area Peer Advisory Council meeting in May 2016. This council includes representatives from mental health peer advisory councils in Northern Santa Barbara and San Luis Obispo Counties.
Administer consumer surveys to gauge satisfaction and areas of improvement	Administered by Program Manager and Advisory Council	Surveys were administered, collected and processed in February/March 2016.
Submit final report to Preventive Health Grant Committee.	Final survey responses regarding empowerment, consumer leadership and well being are formatted into a report and submitted with the final report. Overall year to date output results are also provided.	Submitted 8-31-16
Increase direct service employment opportunities for adults with mental illness.	Employ four mental health consumers as employees at the wellness center.	As of 6/30/16 four (4) mental health consumers have been employed by the center.

Program/Project OUTCOMES:

<p>85% of consumers participating in the Wellness Center will report an increase in life satisfaction as a direct result of their involvement with the program.</p>	<p>Use of the Annual Client Survey</p>	<p>93% of consumers surveyed (14/15) reported an increase in life satisfaction as a direct result of their involvement with the program.</p>
<p>90% of consumers participating in the program will agree that they have opportunities to participate in making decisions about how services are provided.</p>	<p>Use of the Annual Client Survey</p>	<p>100% of consumers surveyed (14/14) agreed they have opportunities to participate in making decisions about how services are provided.</p>
<p>90% of consumers participating in the program will agree that they are more empowered to make use of their talents and abilities as a direct result of their involvement with the program.</p>	<p>Use of the Annual Client Survey</p>	<p>94% of consumers surveyed (15/16) agreed that they are more empowered to make use of their talents and abilities as a direct result of their involvement with the program..</p>

PROJECT 3: SLO HOTLINE

SLO Hotline is a 24-hour, free and confidential call center serving the entire county of San Luis Obispo since 1970. In 2015-16 the program:

- Ensured that suicide prevention and intervention was available to every resident of San Luis Obispo County via a 24/7 toll free phone line.
- Served as a conduit between the community, hospitals, law enforcement, Adult Protective Services (APS), mobile crisis and the inpatient unit.
- Provided linkages to TMHA services and other mental health services throughout the area, utilizing a prevention and early intervention approach developed in tandem with San Luis Obispo County's Mental Health Services Act Prevention and Early Intervention Program (MHSA PEI).
- Held trainings, presentations and community outreach throughout the year. Training locations included: SLO Women's Shelter, Cuesta College, San Luis Obispo Suicide Prevention Forum, Cal Poly, and Life Steps.
- Employed the web effectively for both general information and crisis resources. Working with an MHSA PEI award for the County of San Luis Obispo, TMHA and SLO Hotline helped design a county-wide stigma reduction campaign and online resource, which can be found at <http://slothestigma.org/seeking-help/> or in Spanish language at <http://slothestigma.org/spanish/>.
- Provided caller response in English and Spanish language with a staff and volunteers who receive regular cultural competency training in the areas of welcoming, understanding your personal culture, consumer stories, family perspective, LGBTQIA diversity, and Latino culture.

SLO Hotline continues to see a dramatic increase in the number of calls received. There were over 6,000 in 2015-16.

The program continues to utilize members of the local Peer Advisory and Advocacy Team (PAAT) for assistance with test calls. During this project period, the team made 30 anonymous test calls to SLO Hotline, assessing for the following criteria: helpfulness, empathy of call handler, appropriateness of referrals, and inquiry regarding current level of suicidal risk. Results have helped SLO Hotline work with call handlers and provide training that will enhance the service.

Last year, SLO Hotline joined the Common Metrics project: a data collection and reporting project coordinated by Didi Hirsch Mental Health Services in Los Angeles, with 15 crisis call centers participating statewide. Beginning in January of 2015, SLO Hotline began submitting data to this collective and now receives a monthly report on the services we provide, as well as a statewide report for comparison. So far, we have utilized this report to confirm that our call handlers are reducing suicide risk and to inform us that we are not reaching the elderly at the level we would like. Efforts are in place to increase outreach to elderly people and their family members.

TMHA and SLO Hotline continue to collaborate with the San Luis Obispo Suicide Prevention Council. The Council consists of nearly 30 local providers and agencies including Hospice, the Vets Center, and Cal Poly. The Council is working towards delivering another Suicide Prevention Forum in the Fall of 2016.

In addition to completing one ASIST (Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training) training this fiscal year, SLO Hotline staff provided suicide intervention trainings and presentations at a variety of sites (as listed below), and tabled several different outreach events including a Cuesta College Health Fair, Cal Poly WOW Week, Farmers Market, and Atascadero State Hospital.

FY 2015-2016 Program Results

Grant Funds Received in Fiscal Year 2015-16: \$25,000

Program: SLO Hotline

<p>PROJECT GOAL: The goal of SLO Hotline is to provide 24/7 emotional support, mental health crisis intervention, and mental health information and stigma reduction for the people of San Luis Obispo County in a caring and cost effective way.</p>		
Goal/Objective	Major Tasks (in order to achieve goal)	Actual Numbers (through 6/30/16)

OUTPUTS:

Operate SLO Hotline 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.	Personnel are trained and available for each shift, including Volunteers, bi-lingual staff and Supervisors.	Ongoing
Provide emotional support, crisis intervention, and/or information about Mental Health services and stigma reduction to every resident that calls; provide at least 8,000 call responses during project year.	Personnel are trained and available for each shift, including Volunteers, bi-lingual staff and Supervisors.	8,586 call responses
Train 20 new volunteers for SLO Hotline service.	Volunteer recruiting is conducted at community events and outreach opportunities are developed	17 volunteers were trained in FY 2015-16
Provide 10 trainings and/or presentations throughout San Luis Obispo County in the project year to at least 100 people.	Staff meet with various organizations and community providers to prevent on such topics as suicide prevention and interventions skills training, mental health stigma, and active listening skills.	10 trainings and/or presentations have been provided in the fiscal year for 299 people: Transitional Homeless Housing program suicide prevention training (30), CASA suicide prevention trainings (13), EMT training at Cuesta SLO (25) and North County (20), two Suicide Prevention Forums in San Luis Obispo (150), Suicide Prevention Training with Cuesta EMT student (29), and at Wilshire with bereavement counselors (5),

		THH/50 Now clients suicide prevention training (18), and Suicide prevention training at SLO women's shelter (9).
Provide suicide prevention resource information and referral to the community, reaching 1,000 people during the project year.	Staff attend various outreach events in the community and provide suicide prevention and mental health service materials in Spanish and English language.	Outreach has been provided to 2,466 individuals at a variety of events, including: Pride in the Plaza, Connect at Cuesta College, Shandon Health Fair, NAMI Beautiful Minds Walk, AAFP Out of Darkness Walk, MASH Homeless Outreach, Project Teen Health, Veterans Celebration at SLO Farmers' Market.

**Program/Project
OUTCOMES:**

90% of callers are satisfied with the support and information they received.	Use of confidential Caller Quality Surveys	88% of callers surveyed (29/33) agreed that they would use SLO Hotline again in the future, if needed, or refer someone else to hotline.
90% of callers surveyed will agree that the support and intervention received from SLO Hotline was valuable.	Use of confidential Caller Quality Surveys	76% of callers surveyed (26/34) agreed that they received an increased knowledge of local mental health resources.
90% of new volunteers remain with the SLO Hotline Program for over 6 months.	Volunteer database	82% (14/17) of new volunteers remained with the program for over 6 months.
Community members attending a suicide intervention training will show a 30% increase in their confidence that they can help a person at-risk of suicide.	Use of post-training Attendee Survey	Community members surveyed (61) after attending a suicide intervention training showed a 16% increase in their confidence that they can help a person at-risk of suicide.

