

OPEN PATHS INSIGHTS

COUNSELING CENTER

A CALL TO ACTION FOR OPEN PATHS' ALUMNI JOIN THE ASSOCIATION NOW

Since Open Paths opened its doors 35 years ago, training of Marriage and Family Interns has been part of its mission. Many interns have come and gone over the decades, but it would be difficult for any to forget the critical opportunity that a small, financially challenged clinic provided them on their path to licensure.

Psychology graduate students can easily feel overwhelmed as they face learning how to translate classroom skills into therapy room skills. Open Paths continues to offer a space where a fledgling therapist can more profoundly practice the skills of empathy, listening and presence. It is not unusual for departing interns to use the word "family" when describing their experience - a place where they felt safe and supported with patient and compassionate mentoring. A place where they not only felt they contributed a sense of hope to their clients, but felt they gained a sense of hope about their own future as a psychotherapist. This is no small gift.

As the field of psychotherapy continues to evolve - new challenges and opportunities emerge in the wake of a devastating recession and health care reform - It is notable that Open Paths continues to serve the Westside as well as offer structure and training. These kinds of opportunities are shrinking for Marriage and Family Therapy Interns.

Open Paths' Alumni Association was created as a way to help support the opportunities that Open Paths continues to provide, as well as an opportunity for those who once interned at the clinic to come together and share their experiences and expertise since their departure. In a sense, the alumni association could function as another "family" in providing connection, encouragement, creativity and networking. For an annual fee of \$25, participation will include 1 to 2 events as well as subscription to a "networking email newsletter" that would spotlight the specific skills of a past intern.

We hope that you will consider being part of this Association. Each and every one of you can make a difference by giving back to the "little clinic that could" - Open Paths.

You can join online at openpaths.org.

Robin Rea
Alumni Association Coordinator

GUIDING THE WAY TO EMOTIONAL WELLBEING *A TESTIMONIAL*

My experience at Open Paths Counseling Center was very positive and educational. I went in as a very shy and nervous parent and wife. I learned how to take control of my feelings and to express myself in a way that I was able to let out what may be bothering me at that moment rather than bottling it in like I did in the past. I learned how to say "no" in situations rather than just going along with something just because I worried about how the other person might react. I know how to say things like "I don't like how that makes me feel".

I was offered individual counseling because Open Paths noticed that I was not speaking when my husband was around, he did most of the talking. Then, one day in the parenting class he couldn't make it and I talked. This is something that I am very grateful for - I was at another Counseling Center a year and that was never offered to me and my family. We always had group sessions that did absolutely nothing for us - we stayed in the same boat, so it was no wonder we were back to having to go to counseling again a year later.

I recommended Open Paths to a friend of mine who was going through a divorce and having a tough time with her kids. I can honestly say that Open Paths led me in the right direction.

~ Mary Lybolt
Open Paths' client

THE YEAR IN REVIEW

Between September 1, 2009 and August 31, 2010, Open Paths Counseling Center provided 10,020 hours of service to over 800 clients including the following:

- ▶ 5,548 hours of individual, family and group counseling and parenting education.
- ▶ 3,222 hours of domestic violence intervention by our Another Way program, to both batterers and to women and children survivors of domestic abuse.
- ▶ 654 hours of one-on-one counseling with at-risk elementary school children at four local LAUSD schools.
- ▶ 596 hours of creative writing/art therapy workshops at Venice High School, anger management groups with at-risk male and female students at Venice High School, University High School and Mark Twain Middle School, and also at Venice High School, a body awareness group with at-risk female students and individual therapy with at-risk male students.

Search and shop at
GoodSearch.com
and raise money for Open Paths. It's that simple! Go to the site, enter Open Paths Counseling Center in the box "who do you goodsearch for" and start searching and shopping. You'll find just what you're looking for and be a philanthropist at the same time.

LEARNING TO SWING

DANCE EVENT 2010



Open Paths Counseling Center held its second **Dance Away the Recession Depression** (we're really hoping to call it something else next year) on May 22nd. This year's dance lesson included the Swing followed by a little Cha Cha Cha. All this was made possible by the generosity of By Your Side Dance Productions owner, Deborah Fields Perez. Anyone in need of dance lessons, for fun, an upcoming wedding or a possible audition for "So You Think You Can Dance" should call Deborah for lessons at **310.922.0369**.

A highlight of the evening was the spoken word performance of two poets, Cynde Rodarte and Henderson Torres, from the EX/PRESS Creative Writing Project for At-Risk Youth, held at Venice High School for over a decade and led by Board member Genét Bosqué. These talented students credit their experience in the group with inspiring them to stay in school and pursue their newly found passion for writing.

And while you're in the neighborhood, please stop by our other generous donors, including:

**Faye McKinney Catering ♦ House of Thai Taste
Outdoor Grill ♦ Sazon Latin Fusion ♦ The Sensitive Baker
Tamara's Tamales ♦ Trader Joe's**

Special thanks to Karen Anthony Photography, Christina Strickland and Kindred Sprits, Sayaka Karitani and Albert Raymond for their in-kind donations.

Thank you to all the guests who attended, bought raffle tickets and those who sent donations - you all helped to make the evening a great success!



Dancers learning their steps

Photos courtesy of Karen Anthony Photography

✧ STAFF & ALUMNI NEWS ✧

We're honored to announce that Supervisor and Another Way Project Manager, Kendall Evans has once again been chosen to present his workshop "Gender, Attachment and Domestic Violence" at the 2011 California Association of Marriage and Family Therapists' conference. Kendall has also joined the West Coast Singers chorus. Also singing is former intern Lisa Friedman who has joined the Angel City Chorale.

We are very happy for current Another Way intern Dr. Charles Lacy, who has been selected as a Fullbright fellow. Chuck will be participating in research on the efficiency of the delivery of medical services in Germany.

Congratulations to current therapist and Another Way group leader Cheryl Dunn and to former interns Donna Benjamin, Danielle Green, Debra Kabrin, Erika Ross and Miriam Rothman who recently became licensed Marriage and Family Therapists and to current intern Nathalie Fine and former interns Mark Allison and Gayla Scoll who recently passed the first exam toward licensure. We wish you all the best in your careers.

Much happiness to former interns Hayley Casselman and Monica Serrao who became brides since leaving Open Paths. Monica and her graphic designer husband have just started Falling Tree Creative, which provides tools for therapists. Their website is www.fallingtreecreative.com.

Special acknowledgment to former intern, Penelope Starr-Karlin, who is completing her doctorate in Contemporary Psychoanalysis at ICP/LA and even more impressive, is serving on the Board of Directors of the institute.

Sadly, we just found out that former intern Pres Blyler has passed away.

And...a very special thank you to our volunteer interns and trainees, whose enthusiastic support of Open Paths and its mission goes far beyond the hours of excellent therapy they provide to our clients. We couldn't do it without you! And thanks to the students who volunteer their time to help with phone intake and special projects.

Jan Johnson, LMFT
Clinical Director

P.S. If any former interns reading this are not receiving our emails, please let me know your email address at openpaths@earthlink.net.

SCHOOL OUTREACH PROGRAMS CONTINUE DESPITE LACK OF FUNDING

Open Paths' Board of Directors made an important decision this year - to continue offering free school programs regardless of diminished Foundation funding to directly support them. The following illustrates the positive outcomes this work delivers by the people who facilitate groups and counsel students in our local schools:

Open Paths Elementary School Program

As an art therapist for Open Paths' Elementary School Program for 3 years, I routinely see young children reluctant to share emotional information prior to exposure to artistic mediums. But by breaking past these self-protecting barriers using paints, pastels and collage, children are able to begin discussing their emotions through their artwork. Using this method, they are able to relax and allow their inner thoughts to be projected onto paper. Art therapy analyzes imagery and enables discussion that promotes emotional and cognitive growth, fosters self-esteem and builds lifelong skills.

Over time, students develop tools necessary to respond to life situations such as loneliness, stress, anxiety, social awkwardness, and ultimately they gain self-esteem. Within each school year, students learn to express themselves verbally through art therapy. Consequently, teachers see students improve in the classroom environment and the students benefit from these services both in class and at home. When a therapist becomes a constant, positive presence in a student's life (and other relationships in that student's life are not), affirmative changes can take place that may last a lifetime.

Annette Salas-Miller
Volunteer School Counselor

Anger Management/Skills 4 Life

The teenagers and adolescents who are referred to Anger Management are often failing in school and close to being expelled because of their disruptive and sometimes violent behavior both in and outside of the classroom. They often come from gang environments, and they have

witnessed and participated in violence that has sometimes led to death. From a trauma perspective, it only makes sense that these individuals would at some time act violently.

The Anger Management groups offer a chance to interact with trained professionals who will not react defensively or aggressively like other adults may. The students get the opportunity to learn about emotional first aide, the dynamics of trauma that may be playing out within them or people they know. They learn to hear and feel their own alert signals. Some start to care for themselves more and begin to want to find alternatives to physical or verbal attacks. We have a golden opportunity to drop some seeds of health and wellbeing to some of the most traumatized students through Open Paths' Anger Management Program.

Robin A. Hubert, M.F.T
Mind/Body Psychotherapy

EX/PRESS Creative Writing and Art Project for At-Risk Teens

Now in its eleventh year at Venice High School, EX/PRESS Poetry/Art Therapy groups are small, safe, supportive workshops for at-risk teens that meet weekly. EX/PRESS functions as group therapy in which student participants are inspired and encouraged to express, process and problem-solve their life-issues and personal concerns through guided journal writing, poetry and art exercises. The participants then share their creations with peers and the facilitator, which allows them to be truly heard and acknowledged.

The groups function as a deterrent to dropping out of school and joining gangs because the participants' self-esteem is enhanced when they come to value themselves as creative artists. The value of EX/PRESS to these at-risk students - and its impact on their lives - has been and continues to be profound.

Genét Bosqué, Poet and Community Artist
EX/PRESS Facilitator

OPEN PATHS COUNSELING CENTER'S BOARD OF DIRECTORS 2010

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Christina Strickland, Vice Chair
Marshall Cole, Treasurer
Jennifer Kozlak Zinn, Secretary
Genet Bosqué, Member
Linda Goldman, Member
Jan Johnson, Member
Andrea Jones, Member
Sayaka Karitani, Member
Diana McCutchen, Ex Officio Member

Open Paths is excited to announce that two new members have joined the Board of Directors, Andrea Jones and Sayaka Karitani. Andrea, an accountant with Diamond Energy and Sayaka, an attorney with Alston & Bird, LLP shared their skills as volunteers before signing on and becoming full-fledged board members. Both members were drawn to Open Paths' Board to fill an urgent need to help others outside of their own professional fields.

Open Paths congratulates Board Secretary Jennifer Zinn and her husband Terry on the birth of their first child, Porter Wallace Zinn on June 8th, 2010.

One of our elder "statesmen" has stepped down after over 25 years of Board service. All of us at Open Paths bid Martin Gale a fond farewell and thank him for his dedication to growing the agency and overseeing its health and wellbeing for close to 2 decades. We all miss Marty's pearls of wisdom and wish him well in his future endeavors.



"I chose Open Paths for its longevity and way in which it strives to help the local community."

Sayaka Karitani
Board Member

OPEN PATHS STAYS ON COURSE BECAUSE OF YOU

Oil spills. Roadside bombs. Workplace shootings. Now for some good news - Open Paths Counseling Center is commemorating 35 years of serving the community! Let's face it, this year is not easy for most of us. At the agency we've seen families dealing with more stress than usual due to unemployment and many clients are only able to afford therapy every other week and at the lowest fees possible. How do we do it? **With help from donors like you.**

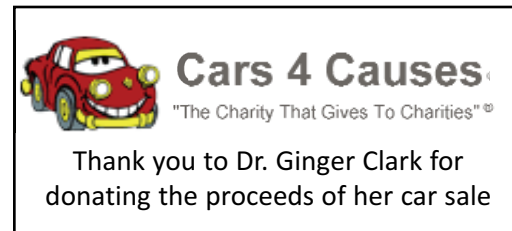
This year we've continued providing individual, couples and family counseling plus parenting classes in English and Spanish. We've expanded our school outreach programs by adding more anger management groups for teens in high school and a unique group for girls at Venice High that incorporates body awareness, yoga and talk therapy. How can we keep growing? **Your gifts make it happen.**

Not to be overlooked is Open Paths dedication to offering quality training to pre-licensed interns. Over 30 interns and trainees ply their trade during the year, getting experience with a wide-range of Los Angeles' diverse population. A special thank you goes to our terrific supervisors who give their time, energy and guidance. **But, thanks also goes to you, our supporters, whose contributions keep the doors open.**

Our new website openpaths.org went up at the end of last year and we've joined the social media craze with a page on Facebook and a twitter account @openpathsla - **follow us, we need you!**

Though times are tough, we're here to stay - because of YOU, our donors who make it possible. We are so appreciative and grateful to those who have found the resources to support the Center this year and to the many who refer clients. Please know that your hard-earned dollars are going toward making more good news for all of us through quality counseling and successful training. And, please keep giving - it works!

Linda Wayne Goldman
Executive Director



CHECK OUT OPEN PATHS' NEW WEBSITE
DESIGN AT WWW.OPENTHATS.ORG

Guiding the Way to Emotional Well-Being
12655 W. Washington Blvd., Suite 101
Los Angeles, CA 90066
310.398.7877
www.openpaths.org

OPEN PATHS COUNSELING CENTER

Many, many thanks to all of our supporters between November 15, 2009 through October 31, 2010

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- ◆ **Marie G. Dennett Foundation, Inc.** *School Programs*
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- ◆ **Playa Vista** *Elementary School Counseling*
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- ◆ **Target** *Anger Management School Groups*
- ◆ **Weingart Foundation** *General Operating*
- ◆ **Yahoo! Employee Foundation** *School Programs*

Special thanks throughout the year to:

- **Karen Anthony, Photography**
- **Andy Bishop, Yahoo! Champion**
- **Cindy Chernow, Consulting**
- **J. Scott Grant, Salesforce Administrator**
- **Pete Johnson, Ongoing Help**
- **Robin Rea, LMFT, Alumni Association Coordinator**

~Donors that contributed \$500 or more

~Alumni Associates

If we inadvertently left your name off, please accept our apologies and let us know.