

SPRING 2020

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Interim Inc. has spent 45 years providing housing and supportive services for Monterey County adults living with mental illness.

Looking back through the history of the nonprofit creates a lengthy timeline filled with hope and humanity, compassion and caring, respect and resolve.

Since 1975, Interim has upheld its mission to help those in the community with mental illness build productive and satisfying lives. Through the years, Interim's programs and services have evolved in response to changing needs in the county.

The nonprofit's values center around hope, and promoting mutual respect, self-determination and self-responsibility. By creating welcoming, caring and empowering communities, Interim provides opportunities for growth while encouraging appropriate risk-taking to learn new skills.

It didn't take long for Interim to make

an impact in its community. In 1976 it opened Monterey Halfway House, providing 12 beds for those in need. The next year it opened Salinas Halfway House, followed by the six-bed Green House.

Through the years, Interim has provided vocational services, crisis beds, outreach programs, social support groups, dual diagnosis programs, short-term crisis services, resource centers and preventative health care programs. It also promoted community events that increased understanding and compassion for people living with mental illnesses — all while reducing stigma.

Forty-five years after making its initial impact, Interim remains the only agency in Monterey County that provides affordable housing, residential treatment, social support, and supported education and employment services for adults with psychiatric disabilities.

An advertisement for an upcoming event. The background is a dark, moody photograph of three lit white candles in ornate brass holders, with a glass cloche containing red roses in the foreground. The text is white and reads: 'UPCOMING EVENT', 'An Enchanted Transformation', 'Interim Mental Health Banquet', 'May 1 at Embassy Suites in Seaside', 'Client Art Show at 4:30 PM', 'Banquet at 5:30 PM, Food, Dancing, Awards (Second annual Soskin Memorial Award)', and 'Tickets can be purchased by calling (831) 800-7530'.

Spotlight on Beth Barrell

She started hearing voices at age 5 and was diagnosed as schizophrenic. When she was 11, she was hospitalized for several months because of a psychotic episode.

As a young adult, she spent her time living on the streets of San Francisco and Marin County, where her mental health caseworkers got her to agree to a weekly injection for her symptoms in exchange for a \$10 check three times a week. Street drugs and alcohol helped her cope with the voices. Then her sister brought her to Monterey County to live with her, and in her first few months here, she was hospitalized five times for her mental illness. She was on conservatorship, and her life was managed by others. She was released from the hospital to Interim's Manzanita house and her recovery journey began. "I learned that by myself I couldn't make it, but if I reached out and asked for help, I could get out of my way

and learn what I have to do. I graduated from the Bridge Program (Interim's transitional residential treatment program for adults with serious mental illness and substance use disorders). I've been clean and sober for nine years."

Her life is now about Mental WELLNESS not mental illness. She has learned to manage her symptoms by taking her medication. When she has a psychotic episode, she gets help. "I used to be afraid. What if I have a psychotic episode when I'm out in the community? I'm not afraid anymore because I know what to do when things start breaking down. I start using my WRAP (Wellness Recovery Action Plan) tools and make sure I take my medication. When the voices start up, I practice my coping skills."

She is a valued employee. For six years now she has been working for Interim as a peer counselor in Dual Recovery Services and now the MCHOME Program where she helps provide support services and outreach to individuals who are homeless. She leads a workshop on "Hearing Voices" where she shares her mental wellness story and strategies



with others. She is part of the Crisis Intervention Training team that teaches police, first responders and others how to communicate and help someone in a mental health crisis. She has been off conservatorship for seven years, and after 25 years of having others manage her money for her, is completely responsible for her own finances.

"For me, it's 20% medication and 80% how I take care of myself. I live a pretty good life. I'm never going to be cured, but I'm learning to help other people and stay out of my own way. If you're thinking of coming in off the streets, my advice is be honest and give it a chance. Give yourself a chance! Give yourself the opportunity to be better."

Growing Our Own!

Collaboration with CSUMB MSW Program Helps Fill Workforce Needs

Ten years ago, California State University Monterey Bay (CSUMB) opened a graduate program to train masters level social work (MSW) students. This program came out of a collaboration with Monterey County Behavioral Health and local non-profits. For many years, the lack of trained mental health professionals had impacted the Central Coast. With the passage of the Mental Health Services Act (MHSA) in 2004, the County saw an opportunity to invest funds available through the Workforce Education and Training program of the MHSA to help get an MSW program off the ground.

According to CSUMB, "A group of devoted community partners in the California's Central Coast tri-county

area (Monterey, San Benito, and Santa Cruz) worked together to promote the development of the CSU Monterey Bay Master of Social Work program. The program was designed to tackle the chronic shortage of social work professionals and its impact on the vulnerable and under-served populations in the area."

"Spearheaded by Dr. Wayne Clark of the Monterey County Department of Health, the community partners secured funding through the workforce development of the California Mental Health Services Act and collaborated with CSUMB to implement a MSW program in an effort "grow our own" prepared and professionally trained social workers. Many of community partners remain actively involved in the MSW program's field education, curriculum, accreditation process, fund raising, etc. creating a strong and supportive partnership between the community and the university.

Interim was one of the most enthusiastic supporters of this

plan as we were always in need of employees trained to provide professional services. Interim also had many BA level staff who wanted to improve skills and gain higher education, but who couldn't afford to leave their employment in order to go to graduate school. The MSW program could meet the need both for new employees, and to help with advancement of the current workforce. The proposed plan included a strong emphasis on working with diverse students to produce a multi-cultural, bi-lingual workforce. In addition, since the school would be a three-year evening program, students could continue to work while going to school. The school emphasized a curriculum that focused on our region's need for workers skilled in behavioral health and child welfare.

The results of the collaboration have been impressive, both for Interim and for the community.

Since the school opened in 2009, 234 students have graduated from the

Growing Our Own! (continued)

MSW program and 122 are currently enrolled. Interim has provided field work experiences for 34 MSW interns. Currently eight MSW program graduates are employed by Interim and an additional six are doing fieldwork placements.

Amie Miller, Director of Monterey County Behavioral Health is an enthusiastic supporter.

“The CSUMB LCSW program is an invaluable resource and we have a continual need for social workers to help the most vulnerable members of our community. I have been impressed with the programs evolution over time as it remains focused on equity.”

Wayne Clark, former Director of Monterey County Behavioral Health, remembers the efforts required to get the program open. “The number of graduates from the MSW program is now in the hundreds, the number of persons they have assisted is in the thousands, and the impact that

the Masters program will make in perpetuity, makes the initial risk and investment more than worthwhile. It is with great pride that I have played a part in this terrific community and University effort.”

Julie Altman, currently a professor former chair of the school of Social Work is also an Interim Inc. Board member. She brings a unique perspective. “I feel very blessed to have been involved with this gem of a school of social work for the past five years of my 30-year academic career. Never have I seen such a productive transaction between academic and community partners as I have here. As a professor and former chair of the department, the thing that most impresses me is the commitment of our students to learn all they can about social work before they go out and practice it. Our partnership with Interim, Inc., with all its great support and learning opportunities, is of great benefit to the students who are placed

there, and, I hope, to the organization in turn.”

Karina Ramires, an MSW intern, and new Interim employee illustrates the importance of the program to the local community.

“Growing up in Greenfield, California, I have seen the disparities in social services, recreational programs, mental health services. I mean the list can go on. However, entering the MSW program, I made a statement in my application that read, “after graduating from the MSW program, I hope to specifically serve South Monterey County....” Recently employed through Interim, Inc. with the ACT Team serving South Monterey County, my vision from two years ago has transpired. I believe I only play a small role in an individual’s recovery (they create the change!) I am there to support and motivate. I believe in recovery! Indeed, empathy, hope, and understanding are crucial in this type of work.”

Developing the Next Generation of Professional Social Workers

For the last 10 years, Maureen Lavengood, LCSW has provided field work supervision for Interim’s Master’s of Social Work (MSW) interns.

As a founding board member of Interim, and as the former Director of Children’s Behavioral Health for Monterey County, Maureen has a unique perspective on the collaboration with CSUMB.

“Some thirteen years ago I was a member of the team that envisioned the development of a local MSW program at CSUMB in order to meet the staffing needs of local agencies and better serve the underserved within our community. As the MSW program is now in its 10th year, I am proud and happy to report that this goal has been achieved. The workforce reflects our community and agencies have greater access to well-trained staff.

Once the program was up and running, I wanted to continue to



support the program and have input into development of the next generation of professional social workers. I was delighted when Interim

Inc. offered me the opportunity to supervise the interns placed with their agency. It has been my pleasure to supervise over 30 interns placed at Interim. For many of the students, this placement is their first experience in the field of social work and first encounter with individuals with serious mental health issues. Together we have shared mutual learning experiences, I have been able to share my many years of social work experience both at the clinical and programmatic level and my vision of the role of social workers at the individual service level. Additionally,

I have been able to challenge each student to recognize how their role reaches into the community and their need to knowledgeable of the policy issues that affect their clients and service delivery and assume an advocacy role as part of their profession.

In turn, the students who reflected our local community and represented the ethnic, linguistic and socio-economic status for which the program was established provided their perspective and understanding of community needs. Often these discussions were the most valuable aspect of our supervision sessions and frequently a learning session for supervisor and intern.

As I reach the end of my career, I am confident that a competent and high-quality workforce will be serving our community and the MSW program, along with its ongoing Community Advisory committee, will strive to meet the local needs.”

1975 — INTERIM embarks on its mission

1976 — Monterey Halfway House opens; Community Housing opens “Pink House”

1977 — Salinas Halfway House opens

1978 — Green House opens

1979 — INTERIM launches SLO Transitions; Vocational Services opens

1980 — Sunflour Cookie Company opens

1981 — SLO Transitions becomes independent

1982 — Monterey Halfway House becomes Monterey Satellite House; Salinas Halfway House adds crisis beds

1983 — Community Outreach Program begins; Central East opens

1985 — Central West opens; Pajaro House opens; “Our Voices” Social Support Group opens; Salinas Halfway House becomes short-term crisis house; Co-Op Housing begins; apartments open Orange Drive

1986 — Catalyst Apartment Project begins; Pearl Street Apartments purchased

1987 — Pearl Street Apartments open; administrative offices moved to Pearl Street; Central Apartments open; Elm House (Peninsula Transitional Program) opens

1988 — Construction begins for Casa de Perla project

1989 — Casa de Perla opens

1990 — Casa de Paloma opens; Catalyst Apartments open, “Our Friends” Social Support Group opens

1991 — Acacia House opens

1992 — INTERIM Centre opens

1993 — INTERIM Applies for Federal Surplus Property at Fort Ord

1994 — Mariposa Apartments open

1995 — Casa de Los Robles opens; Elm House changes to dual diagnosis program, becomes the Bridge House

1996 — Property purchased for Horizons Project; INTERIM receives title to 13 units at Fort Ord for Shelter Cove; Supported Employment and Education Services opens

1997 — First housing portion of Shelter Cove opens; Shelter Cove Community Room construction completed

1998 — Shelter Cove grand opening; Horizons Project grand opening; Bridge House grand opening

1999 — Groundbreaking for Manzanita Project; SEES obtains CARF accreditation

2000 — California House leased; Cominos House leased; Manzanita opens; second English Village Fete; Soledad House project completed

2001 — California House purchased Soledad House opens; MCSTAR Program begins

2002 — NAMI (National Alliance on Mental Illness) Monterey County and INTERIM partnership forms; MCHOME Program begins; California House opens; SEES contracts with DOR; Preventative Health Care Program opens; Sandy Shores property closes escrow

2003 — Cominos Property purchased for Lupine Gardens; Little Cominos House opens for MCSTAR; Family Outreach Program begins; Hoedown for Housing held; MCHOME expansion

2004 — Sandy Shores grand opening; MCSTAR moves to Fort Ord

Instilling Hope For 45 Years

Since 1975, Interim Inc. has upheld its mission to help those in the community with mental illness build productive and satisfying lives. Our legacy is built around hope and humanity, compassion and caring, respect and resolve.

LEARN MORE AT interiminc.org/45-years

2005 — Lupine Gardens groundbreaking; Hoedown for Housing and 30th anniversary celebration

2006 — Lupine Gardens Apartments and Intensive Support Services completed; Lupine Gardens grand opening; Agency contracts for five new programs under MHSA (Prop. 63); fourth annual Hoedown for Housing; Shelter Cove Renovation completed; four MHSA Programs open: MCHOME Program housing doubles from 25 to 50; Lupine Gardens Intensive Support Services; OMNI Resource Center; Transitional Age Youth Vocational Services (TAY VOC)

2007 — MHSA funded program opens; Dual Recovery Services expanded; Pearl Street Apartment renovation Open House; MIOCR program housing component opens at Soledad House; fifth annual Hoedown for Housing

2008 — Consumer Advisory Council created; Our Friends consolidated into Our Voices and OMNI; Casas del Sol purchased for Sunflower Gardens

2009 — Sunflower Gardens groundbreaking, April; Stamp Out Stigma program created; Coastal Treats Cookie Company begins business with the Sandy Shores/Shelter Cove community

2010 — Sunflower Gardens opens, June; Therapy Dog program begins at Bridge House; Mobile Dental Hygienist program opens at OMNI Resource Center; Hoedown for Housing and Interim 35th Anniversary Celebration

2011 — Received grant for MCHOPE; MCHOME housing moved to Lexington Ct.; start of Rockrose Housing Project

2012 — Let’s Make New Friends with Friendraisers MCHOPE opens

2013 — MCHOME moves to the Integrated Health Clinic in Marina; new contract with CSU-Monterey Bay on the Chinatown Learning Center

2014 — INTERIM enters into partnership with CHIPSA-Wesley Oaks; Pajaro Street Wellness Center (PWC) opens; OMNI, SEES, DRS, Breakthrough/NAMI consolidate into the PWC; expansion of NAMI Family; support program Rockrose Gardens opens

2015 — INTERIM celebrates 40 years; NAMI program expands to Salinas; TAY Vocational Services reopens; Peer Health Navigation and Advocacy Program added; PEER Partners for Health Program added; Success Over Stigma Program expanded

2016 — NAMI Monterey County becomes independent of INTERIM; CHOICES DTI program added; Pajaro Wellness Center Annex opens

2017 — Construction at Bridge House in preparation for expansion of short-term crisis services to Monterey; groundbreaking and construction of New Bridge House at Shelter Cove to allow Dela Vina site in Monterey to become Manzanita Monterey

2018 — New Bridge House opens

2019 — New Program Assertive Community Treatment (ACT) Welcoming and Engaging Team brings community based mental health services to consumers who are underserved or unable to access treatment.

Volunteering on Christmas Day at the OMNI Center

Volunteering on Christmas Day at the OMNI Center this year was more than I had bargained for.

This was another year where my family and I had planned to “keep it real” and not overspend, overindulge and underappreciate what we already have, most importantly, healthy family connections, and more than enough to meet all of our basic needs. Like many other people, I’ve had “Serving food to those less fortunate” on my bucket list for quite a while. As a relatively new employee to Interim, Inc., which happens to be the largest agency in Monterey County that helps adults with mental illness who are at risk of being, or currently are, homeless, I saw my opportunity.

With my uncle in town for Christmas, I signed my family of five up to be volunteers at the OMNI Center’s Christmas Lunch. Two of my family members were fully on board to join me and eager for the experience. The other two were less than excited at the prospect of dealing with their social discomfort with those suffering from homelessness and or mental illness. I couldn’t judge, given it wasn’t that long ago that I would have been equally as uncomfortable. The fear of being homeless can be so overwhelming that at times avoiding those we see who are on the streets almost becomes a survival technique. Needless to say, I knew in my heart that if we all just showed up there would be a good outcome for each of us.

Lisa Corpuz, OMNI Administrator for the Pajaro Wellness Center in Salinas, who organizes all the programs and events for OMNI, sent out the final volunteer schedule the week prior. All volunteers were invited to come an hour early for a brief training and homemade Christmas lunch. My group of five arrived and signed in with Kontrena McPheter, Peer Outreach & Advocacy Coordinator for Success Over Stigma (SOS), who greeted us with our prepared name badges that listed our volunteer position. We then met with our



Mark Dougher, Jennifer Harty, Bryan Harty, Bryana Harty, Adele Harty.

station leader for a briefing on our job for the day, and then moved on to enjoy our pre-volunteer shift Christmas lunch – delicious!

I had never served food for a large crowd before, so this was a new experience for me. I imagined a large group of people passing through the food line with volunteers all placing food on the guest’s trays. While that’s a good plan, OMNI clearly likes to do things with a little extra style. There were long tables, set with tablecloths and pre-wrapped napkins and utensils, throughout OMNI’s Pajaro Wellness Center. The more than 25 volunteers were all dressed in aprons, gloves and hair nets, and positioned in the serving line, food running, drink running and kitchen workstations.

As guests arrived, each were seated at a table and served by a food runner who had gone through the line and collected the scrumptious lunch of turkey, ham, green beans, sweet potatoes, mashed potatoes, cranberries and roll all prepared by volunteers. The drink runners would then go and offer each guest their choice of water, coffee or juice; all of this followed by a slice of berry or pumpkin pie.

The efficiency of the operation was tremendous. This was clearly not OMNI’s first rodeo. In roughly

one hour, nearly 200 lunches were served. It went by so fast, I expected to see another wave of people coming through. What I did see was a community of people; neighbors, clients, volunteers and staff, all enjoying each other’s company and an excellent meal in a welcoming environment.

You could tell that everyone felt good about being there, including all five from my household. As my family and I left that day, the family member most fearful was the one who said to me, “I want to do this again next year.” It was clear that it not only made them feel good to connect with others in this way, but it made them feel good about who they were being as that day unfolded. This experience was about so much more than helping the homeless or just doing something nice for others once a year to prove that you’re a good person. It was about connecting with other human beings and sharing the energy that is created when people come together on equal ground. We were all there because we wanted to be, even if it didn’t start out that way for a few of us. Once you engage in this type of experience you can’t help but experience the joy of being your best self. It’s impossible to walk away from it and not say, “I want to do this again.”

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