

SUMMER 2020

# FRIENDS OF INTERIM NEWSLETTER

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### OMNI RESOURCE CENTER AND SUCCESS OVER STIGMA

(831) 800-7530  
Main Office  
831-649-4522  
P.O. Box 3222  
Monterey, CA 93942



Thank you Masks for Monterey County!

# THANK YOU DONORS

Love Our Central Coast, Masks, Goodie bags



Love Our Central Coast Volunteers prepared meals that fed our clients during the COVID-19 crisis.

Thank you Jernell Escobar, DDS Inc. for the generous donation of dental products to Interim, Inc.



Thank you to everyone supporting food donations. The Interim staff has been busy distributing these bags to clients in need.



# A Note from the Executive Director

**While it seems that “normal” life has been suspended or even stopped for many during this time of Shelter-in-Place, Interim, Inc. has been actively supporting our clients by continuing essential services in new ways.**

When social distancing procedures made normal operations of the OMNI Wellness Center in Salinas impossible, peer counselors opened the “Warm Line” and began actively engaging clients one on one via telephone, email and texts. In addition to wellness counseling and working with callers on coping skills to reduce anxiety, staff learned that there were individuals who needed food, toiletries and other essentials, so they began a Food Drive for individuals who do not qualify for other avenues of assistance. More than 90 bags of emergency food have been delivered to clients in need.

Our residential crisis programs at Manzanita Salinas and Manzanita Monterey continue to accept new admissions. This relieves the burden at our local hospitals by moving clients out of inpatient psychiatric beds, freeing hospital resources to serve patients who require a higher level of care.

Our MCHOME team continues to work with the homeless in Monterey County, providing support that includes food and temporary shelter when possible. Our MCHOME staff is working in tandem with IHELP for Men and IHELP for Women, Gathering for Women, the Salvation Army, local faith communities and other homeless service providers by engaging clients sheltering-in-place with regular check-ins to address mental health symptoms during this time. Some of these symptoms include increased depression, fears and paranoia, and by providing accurate information and counseling to these clients, we are able to help them.

For our residents in Community Housing and Bridge House, staff are working “face mask to face mask” with them, providing empathy, professionalism and expertise.



In order to help clients with new hygiene protocols, staff provided additional linens and clothing so that residents could launder more frequently. We have developed new ways for our clients to communicate while they are quarantined by bringing in tablets, cell phones, web cams and other devices to increase avenues for clients to keep in touch with staff, counselors and telemedicine providers. These devices also provide entertainment opportunities for residents who are quarantined under shelter-in-place requirements. We have set up “client stores” to minimize trips out to shop for personal items. We are assisting all clients with food supplies and are setting up new methods of distribution, such as staff dropping things off to programs on their way home.

Staff throughout the agency are finding creative new ways to work. A number of staff have had program reassignments as some programs have been reduced or closed and we appreciate the flexibility of those staff who are working in new assignments. Administrative staff are social distancing by working remotely on alternate days. We

have learned to hold Board of Directors Meetings, staff meetings and subcommittee meetings via teleconferencing. We are definitely doing this together!

Our lives have radically changed in these past weeks, but our commitment to provide housing, healing, and hope to adults with mental illness in Monterey County continues. If you wish to offer financial support, please call **(831) 649-4522 X 205**, or you may donate online at **donatenow.networkforgood.org/interiminc**. We especially appreciate those who can provide an automated monthly gift, which can be set up at the online link above. If you would like donate non-perishable food, toilet paper, paper towels or hand sanitizer to help our clients during this difficult time, we have drop-off sites available in Monterey and Salinas. Please call **(831) 649-4522** for locations.

We are proud of what we do and of our staff who have stepped up to serve others at this critical time. Thank you for your generous support always, and especially now as we navigate this crisis.

# Twenty Interim Clients Move to Moon Gate Plaza

**The much-anticipated opening of Moon Gate Plaza housing complex in Chinatown in Salinas has been a benefit to more than 20 of Interim Inc.'s homeless clients.**

The 90-unit complex, owned by MidPen Housing, includes a community room with a kitchen, a courtyard with community gardens, bicycle storage, a library and a multi-purpose room. Interim has an agreement with MidPen Housing for 20 of the units to house homeless clients with mental illness. The tenants for the remaining 70 apartments were determined by a lottery of qualified applicants. Two other Interim clients were chosen for apartments in the lottery.

One of the first residents was Junior Rangel, who moved in on March 16. He says that his studio apartment on the third floor is safe and quiet. He is getting to know his neighbors. "I like that I have an apartment where pets are allowed. I got a puppy. Her name is Diana and she's a corgi/chihuahua mix. The building has a place where I can walk her and get exercise." Junior moved into Moon Gate Plaza housing complex from Interim's Shelter Cove transitional housing.

Since many Moon Gate Plaza residents have a history of homelessness, some will need to relearn how to budget their income, how to cook healthy meals, and other skills to live successfully in the community. With an office space on the third floor, Interim counselors will provide individualized service plans, assessments, case management and care coordination for these residents.

Daniel Fagan, Leasing Director of MidPen Housing stated, "The partnership between Interim and MidPen has been fantastic for the referred residents. The timely action and follow-up by Interim led to the placement of 20 residents. The MidPen and Interim teams communicate and collaborate regularly to better serve the residents, which in turn will likely lead to stabilized housing for the residents and the community as a whole."

Stable housing is the heart of Interim's services to our clients. Housing, healing and hope are alive at Moon Gate Plaza housing complex in Chinatown.



**Moongate Resident Junior & Diana**



**Moongate Resident Valerie**

# Interim Receives Environmentally Sustainable Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) Donation

**Thomas Rettenwender, MA., M.Arch., models a reusable and recyclable face shield for health care professionals that he and his team designed to provide personal protection during this coronavirus pandemic.**

On April 14, 2020, Thomas Rettenwender, from EcoLogic Design Lab - an Architectural and ecological design and research firm located in Carmel, delivered 20 protective face shields to Interim, Inc. that he helped design and produce for local health care organizations that support Monterey County residents.

With Interim's management team actively preparing and implementing strategies to maintain the high level of care that the agency's clients and residents receive on a daily basis, Executive Director Barbara Mitchell has been eagerly tapping into every resource available. According to Mitchell, "With three residential treatment programs, including two crisis residential programs, about 300 housing beds or units, Interim provides essential services that cannot shut down. The agency needs personal protective equipment (PPE) to protect both staff and clients."

The face shields were a welcomed and much appreciated PPE resource that can be used by the agency nursing staff in the crisis residential



and transitional residential treatment programs, and other staff who may be in close contact with clients who may be ill or in quarantine. For weeks, Interim has been sourcing PPE, both through purchase and through donations from partners such as Monterey County, the City of Monterey and the Coalition of Homeless Services Providers.

Mr. Rettenwender specializes in commercial and residential green building design projects and has collaborated with other environmentalists to create an innovative solution to our global need for reusable PPE that is environmentally safe and sustainable. It is clearly apparent that appropriate PPE is critically important to prevent

the spread of the coronavirus. Rettenwender, however, points out the issue few are focused on right now, "So much energy and waste goes into getting rid of used PPE." As a result, he and his team have used their expertise to create a solution.

Thomas Rettenwender has 20 years of international experience in Architectural Design and has become a leader in providing new solutions for truly ecologically built environments, and is currently lecturer at UC Santa Cruz teaching Ecological Building Design through the Tiny House Design Lab program. In 2019 he founded the Carmel Maker Space to encourage collaboration, creativity and access to emerging technology.

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## Ways to Help Interim, Inc. During the Covid-19 Crisis

Interim, Inc. is OPEN except for the OMNI Wellness Center and the CHOICES Program. Mental health services are classified as essential under the Shelter in Place order by Governor Newsom.

Interim, Inc. is sheltering additional homeless members of the community and needs to provide food for them and most of our clients are on limited incomes which makes it financially difficult to stock up on items.



**We are accepting donations of non-perishable food, travel-size toiletries and cleaning supplies.**

We are collecting canned food, paper towels, toilet paper, travel-size shampoo and toiletries Monday-Friday between 10AM and 4PM. **Please call (831) 649-4522 for donation times and locations.**

# SEES Program Earns Coveted CARF Accreditation

Interim, Inc. has earned a three-year accreditation for its *Community Employment Services: Employee Supports, Community Employment Services: Job Development, and Employment Planning Services*, from CARF International, the Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities.



CARF International is an independent nonprofit organization that provides accreditation services worldwide at the request of health and human services providers. Providers that meet their rigorous standards in the areas of rehabilitation of a disability, treatment for addiction and substances abuse, home and community services, or other health and human services have demonstrated that they are committed to be among the best available.

Idalia Matthews, Program Director of **Supported Education and Employment Services (SEES)** explains: "SEES is surveyed by CARF every 3 years, it gives us

the opportunity to improve our services and to ensure that we are meeting clients' needs. This year's survey took place on March 5th and 6th. Two surveyors from CARF participated. The preparation for the survey takes time and takes a village to make it happen!"

To achieve CARF accreditation the program must demonstrate conformance to the applicable CARF standards as evidenced by observable practices, verifiable results over time and comprehensive supporting documentation.

CARF notes in their accreditation decision that

Interim **"provides quality employment planning, job development and job coaching services to clients who report high levels of satisfaction with the services provided. Interim has strong, longstanding partnerships with Monterey County Behavioral Health Bureau and the California Department of Rehabilitation, which are the foundation for the collaborative approach to service provision. Interim provides a multitude of services to address both the immediate and long-term needs of clients and the community as a whole."**

Congratulations to our SEES Program!

## The OMNI Wellness center is closed, but individuals can contact peers and obtain assistance by calling, texting or emailing

**Residential and treatment programs are closed to visitors to protect the health and safety of our clients.**

We are practicing the "Shelter-In-Place" guidelines as listed in the order from the Monterey County Health Department. Services to our residents and clients is still being performed, as mental health service providers such as Interim are classified as "essential services." Counselors and case workers are working closely with our clients to help them cope with this crisis and navigate services available to them.

If members of the community are seeking a way to assist our residents, we are accepting donations of non-perishable food and personal protective equipment. Many of them are on limited or fixed incomes, which make it financially difficult to stock up on food.

We are collecting canned foods to supplement their resources. If you would like to donate items such as chili, soup, canned meats or fish, peanut butter or other non-perishable staples, **please call (831) 649-4522 for donation times and locations.**



**Open Monday-Friday, 10:00AM to 4:00PM**  
**Phone 831.800.7660 • Text 831.998.7916 • Email [omni@interiminc.org](mailto:omni@interiminc.org)**

## We are thankful for our generous donors!

Your gifts have been especially appreciated during this time of pandemic. Thank you!

### BRIDGE HOUSE AND COMMUNITY HOUSING

Mrs. Sheila Benson

### COVID-19 RELIEF

Community Foundation for Monterey County

### ENDOWMENT FUND

Foss Family Trust

### MCHOME

Carmel Presbyterian Church  
Mr. Charles Gomon  
Mr. and Mrs. Arnold M. Hedlund

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## Interim Welcomes New Board Member



Board Member Mark Shaw

**We are pleased to welcome Mark Shaw of Salinas to the Board of Directors for Interim, Inc.**

Mark is a resident of Salinas and the Vice President of Markon Inc., a fresh produce purchasing cooperative that sells to U.S. and Canadian broadline distributors, which supply restaurants, businesses, schools, and more.

Shaw has been a long-time supporter of Interim, Inc. "My Mom and (Executive Director) Barbara Mitchell go back more than a few years. I love the caring nature and energy Interim and their staff bring to people in Monterey County with mental illness." Having had a family member with a

mental health diagnosis, Shaw feels the desire to help others in similar circumstances.

Shaw is father to three grown children, and has been married for 33 years to Cathy, a registered nurse who retired recently from Natividad Medical Center. When he is able, Shaw enjoys downhill skiing, fly fishing and traveling to visit his children in Italy, Oregon, and Davis, California. Weekends, he spends time in his garden, where he can "decompress from the prior week's work."

We are grateful to Mark Shaw for volunteering his time and support of Interim, Inc.