

Spring 2021

FRIENDS OF INTERIM NEWSLETTER

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Thank you

Friends of Interim

These past few months our friends have supported our clients in amazing ways!

Goodwill Central Coast provided new socks and underwear for our residents and many of our homeless outreach contacts. **Girl Scout Troop 32560 from Salinas** wrapped these Christmas gifts, which included a gift card to a local retail store, and a card for a free meal at Carl's Jr. Thank you to Carl's Jr. owner Gary Vick of Salinas, who donated more than 300 Carl's Jr. gift cards.

The wonderful staff of **Coastal Roots Hospitality**, and the chefs of **Montrio Bistro and Tarp's Roadhouse** in Monterey, and the **Rio Grill** in Carmel prepared individually packaged holiday meals at Thanksgiving and Christmas—**over 800 meals!**—which were delivered by wonderful volunteers to our residents and homeless clients. Many answered the call for financial help and sent donations to support these holiday activities for our clients.

We couldn't have done it without your support!

The response to our **Monterey County Gives! Campaign** in partnership with the **Monterey County Weekly** newspaper and the **Community Foundation for Monterey County** and the **Monterey Peninsula Foundation** was record-breaking as well. **Thank you to more than 140 donors** who responded to our call to help fund our upcoming new construction of Sun Rose Apartments in Salinas. Our fundraising goal of \$25,000 was exceeded, and we expect to begin construction this spring!

Thank you also to those who have donated bicycles, coats, warm jackets, and other in-kind gifts to help our clients this year. Your support helps our clients whose very low income doesn't provide funds for needed items of this type. Thank you for coming alongside adults with mental illness in Monterey County in all these wonderful ways!



Client Spotlight: Camille Baldo



Camille Baldo, 43, of Salinas is currently thriving and passionate about continuing her education. However, her future has not always appeared so bright. Before Camille found Interim, she dealt with struggle and hardship.

"My life before Interim, I got battered by a boyfriend, ran away to the Air Force and then got scared there and ran away from the Air Force so the judge brought me to the mental health ward. That was just after high school. So I've pretty much always known Interim the entire time of my diagnosis," she says.

When Camille first crossed paths with Interim she was living in poverty and desperately needed a place to live. Interim moved Camille into their Shelter Cove transitional housing and helped Camille get her life in order. Interim has been an integral part of Camille's life ever since then.

"I've always relied on Interim," she says. *"Since the beginning of my diagnosis, I learned about*

Interim, and they've helped me the entire time. They helped me go to school, they helped me go to work, they helped me in generous ways: board and care housing, meals, they did advocacy for me when I was homeless to bring me back into their services again, and honestly, without Interim I wouldn't have anything I have now."

While at Interim, Camille was treated with Dialectical Behavior Therapy (DBT). With the help of DBT, Camille learned how to more adequately cope with the grief that she experienced as a result of familial loss and an abusive relationship. Over time and with the tools she gained from Interim, Camille began to realize that she was supported and did have a purpose in life. She started to believe that she had a reason to live, stopped believing she wouldn't succeed, and began participating in her life again.

Camille is currently looking forward to resuming her education post-pandemic. She previously earned an Associate Degree in general studies but is unequivocal in her desire to learn more.

"I'm going to take advantage of as much school as I can get," she says. *"I'm not sure if I want to go into the psychology program or if I want to do the CNA [certified nursing assistant] program. I've been hoping for the CNA for a long time. I was really hoping for a job as a behavioral health aid. I'm applying for that coming out of COVID, I don't know if they are hiring now but I plan on applying for that after COVID."*

Camille's ultimate goal professionally is to work in holistic care. She hopes to save up

enough money to one day attend the Holistic Arts Institute. Camille is particularly passionate about holistic care.

While the pandemic has been difficult for many people, Camille has utilized some of the techniques that she learned from Interim involving meditation and breathing to help her manage the increased isolation. She also continues to participate in as well as helps to facilitate group support sessions that are currently being held online through Zoom.

Camille is grateful for the services that Interim has provided to her over the years and believes that the more she allowed Interim to help her, the more benefit she received in return.

"I'm turning the age that I am and looking back and realizing who was really there for me and why. The whole time I saw Interim stepping up over and over again to get me back right, so I'm really thankful for Interim and what they've done for me," she says. *"They were always a care facility the whole time."*

It is important to Camille that others who could potentially benefit from Interim's services are made aware of this possibility. Before the pandemic, Camille volunteered with a hope and recovery group; she and other group members would inform patients at the mental health inpatient unit of the services that Interim provides to the community.

Throughout her life, Camille has faced adversity, but with her perseverance and support from Interim, Camille is now flourishing and optimistic about the future.

The Heart of Interim

Judith Gonzales began working for Interim as a Counselor II in Community Housing right out of college in 2005. In 15 years, she has moved straight up the ranks to Assistant Program Director, and then to her current position of Program Director of Salinas Community Housing.

A good portion of Judith's job satisfaction comes from seeing the progress that the clients make where she works at Lupine Gardens and the many other Interim programs. "When people love what they do, it really shows in their work. The clients see that you love your work and that you are there to help them fulfill their goals, while at the same time challenge them a little bit, too." They see how

their successes impact Judith, which in turn creates the reciprocal experience of feeling good about themselves, their lives and what impact they all have in the world.

In spite of thinking that maybe "she was not what they were looking for" when she first interviewed with Interim, Judith listened to her mother's advice to be positive and keep trying. Each time Judith has been faced with the opportunity to take on more responsibility she has questioned if she had the experience for the position. Fortunately, due to her strong desire to continually challenge herself, as well as her enjoyment in seeing her clients succeed, Judith remembers her mother's advice and goes for the gold.



Interim Spotlight

Kara Carthel started as a nurse at the University of Washington, where she utilized the continuing education benefits to go to graduate school and earn her degree as a Doctor of Nursing Practice.

When asked why Kara chose to become a Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioner (PMHNP) who specializes in treating psychiatric patients, she shared that healthcare is part of her family culture. Her mom and sister are nurses, her brother is a Physician Assistant, and her sister-in-law is a Nephrologist.

In Kara's opinion, all nurses are psychiatric nurses. Nursing is psychosocial and brings a holistic aspect into medicine that looks at the whole person's health. Kara was an ICU nurse for 10 years, where she used her skills to help save lives but also support the emotional side of healthcare for patients, caregivers and everyone involved. Kara was drawn to becoming a PMHNP because it takes the holistic element of nursing into the role of prescriber.

Kara moved to Monterey County from Seattle, where she worked at the Harbor View state hospital. There she treated the most vulnerable people in the community who lacked sufficient insurance or were indigent. This community is where Kara feels she has the greatest impact. She was drawn to Interim when she read the mission of the organization and felt it matched her desire to help people live their happiest and best life. She knew she was in the right place when she saw that Interim's goal was to provide a better quality of life to those whose struggle had been hard and long.

Kara will have been with Interim one year in February 2021. Since COVID started right after she was hired, Kara quickly pivoted with the agency to help meet the monumental task of preventing and treating COVID in staff

and residents at Interim. She immediately made it her focus to help secure Personal Protection Equipment and work with management to develop a strategy for keeping all of the departments in Interim appropriately supplied.

Now that we are one year into the pandemic and the systems are in place, Kara is focusing more on taking over psychiatric treatment for the MCHOME homeless clients and clients in the Assertive Community Treatment program. Her caseload is full but she and the LVN who supports Kara, are working on setting up Interim clients with follow-up routines to check on their medication management and maintain the highest level of healthcare. Along with all of the clinicians and staff they work with at the multiple Interim programs, they are a great team working to meet the needs of many.

Kara has recently conducted a 2-hour talk via Zoom on psycho-pharmacology for the Interim clinicians that have direct contact with clients. Kara was pleased with their level of interest and enthusiasm. "These folks wanted to know what side effects to look for and what it looks like when things go wrong, as well as identify what to bring to my attention." Overall, she was really impressed with the number of clinicians attending and their desire to provide the best care for clients.

With COVID dominating the whole first year of Kara's career at Interim, she feels that the agency's teamwork has been critical to its success. Kara is impressed how everyone able to continue working has jumped on board to



do all they can. From Maintenance creating plexiglass barriers, to cleaners taking extra precautions to maintain safe environments, to all of the clinicians who have taken on increased workloads, everyone's prime objective has been the safety of clients and staff.

When asked if she had ideas of programs or services, she would like to see Interim develop in the future, Kara said she has a "Wish List." One wish is to provide medication management for homeless people. Injectable medications are usually the best option for homeless individuals given the chance of oral meds being stolen or lost while living on the street. Medicaid or Medicare does not always pay for lost oral medication, which causes patients to have to live with more acute symptoms. Kara helped organize a program at her last job where they could hold on to oral meds for clients and allow them to come in every 2-3 days to get just what they need for a few days. This system helps to ensure they take the medications appropriately and even if they lose medication, the loss is limited. The end result was more effective management of symptoms for those at risk of having to go without medications or live with sub-optimal treatment.

With all of the issues that Interim's clients face, Kara worries about the effects of isolation right now on this vulnerable population. Her advice to her clients is to continue to do the things that they know are working to keep them safe, and just know that every day is one day closer to normal.

WAYS TO GIVE

Our **MCHOME** outreach workers engage homeless clients throughout the county, assisting them in acquiring food and shelter. Your gift of \$300 will help subsidize a month of rent in an apartment that we lease to homeless individuals.

Due to the pandemic, many of our clients are isolated and struggling. Can you sponsor a delivered lunch or dinner for a group of Interim residents? Your gift of \$200 will provide a delivered meal for 20

people. A gift of \$500 will help a client gain needed dental care not covered by public benefits. A gift of \$40 per month will pay for cellular phone service to help an isolated client connect to support services and treatment. Any donation helps!

For gifts and donations, please call the Development Office at 831-649-4522.

There are other ways to share your time, talent and treasure with Interim's clients, including payroll deductions, gift of stock, IRAs, charitable annuities, and charitable remainder trusts, to name a few.

Please contact our Development Department at 831.649.4522 x205 for more information.

Learn more at interiminc.org/get-involved

How To Talk To a Loved One About Getting Mental Health Treatment

Are you wondering how to talk to a close friend or family member about getting mental health treatment? If you have someone who you believe may need mental health treatment, there are things you can do to try and convince them to seek help. And you can learn how to talk to a loved one about getting mental health treatment.

Interim Inc. offers tips on how you can talk to a loved one about getting mental health treatment.

FAMILY AND FRIENDS ARE FIRST RESPONDERS

You should see yourself as a type of “first responder” for your loved one. Teachers, employers and even medical professionals that interact with your loved one aren’t likely to do anything to intervene if it

appears they need mental health treatment. As their friend or family member, you are their first line for help.

THE IMPORTANCE OF EARLY INTERVENTION

Early intervention is key to improving your loved one’s quality of life. The longer a mental illness goes untreated, the shorter the intervals between the troubling episodes and behavior that’s drawn your concern. As the intervals shorten, the relapses increase in severity; and as their mental illness becomes more severe, the more resistant it will be to treatment. Intervening as early as possible will change the course of your loved one’s life, putting them on a positive trajectory.

TALKING TO YOUR LOVED ONE

Prepare your loved one for this conversation by letting them know that you want to have a talk. Let them know it’s because you love them, and that the topic is very important. Make sure they know it’s nothing negative or scary. Set a date and time, and choose a neutral location where they will be most comfortable.

Keep the conversation in the context of your relationship with this person. Make sure they know you’re not rejecting or



judging them, but that you love them and are concerned. Don’t attempt a diagnosis, such as “I think you’re bipolar”; leave diagnoses to the professionals.

Talk about your feelings and be specific when you’re describing concerning behavior. Instead of vague statements like “you need help,” or “you’re acting strange,” give specific examples. “It frightened me when you were yelling the other day,” or “You missed work four times in the last two weeks.”

THE GOAL OF THE TALK

Your goal in talking to your loved one should be for them to get a one-time evaluation. Offer to make the appointment, to pay for it, and/or to drive them.

Talking to someone you love about seeking mental health treatment is difficult and awkward, but it is important. Be prepared for them to have an angry response, and if they do, maintain your composure and stick to the theme of your love and concern. It may take multiple attempts to get your loved one to seek help. Don’t be nagging or harassing, but do be persistent.

If you or a loved one are in need of mental health treatment, a licensed mental health professional can help. Reach out to Interim Inc. today to find out how.



Thank You to Our Generous Donors!

Listed below are donations received between November 1, 2020 and January 31, 2021. Your gifts help provide housing, healing, and hope to Interim's clients. Thank you!

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BOARD MEMBER PROFILE

Sheila Holmes



Interim board member Sheila Holmes never expected to be working just as hard in retirement as she had in 50 years as a Registered Nurse, 25 of those at Community Hospital of the Monterey Peninsula.

Holmes retired in 2004 and was appointed to the Monterey County Mental Health Commission, where she first learned more about Interim. She wasn't looking for a job, but she was so impressed with the quality of all the programs and staff that when she was offered a job as a nurse with Interim in 2008, it was hard for her to refuse.

"That was the last thing on my mind being newly retired," she said. "But I was curious so went in for the interview and again was impressed by

the administration and teamwork so I accepted. I loved working with the clients and learned so much from them. I'm so grateful to Interim for the experience I had there."

She said she probably worked "more than full time," as an Interim nurse, but that goes with the territory: "If someone needs help, you're there." She said it was the "best decision I made" and that she "returned to the job, not the paycheck."

Originally from San Francisco, she went to nursing school in Utah, moved to Denver and eventually she and her family returned to California in 1978. She remarried in 2014 when she was in her 70s to her current husband Bill. She has three grown children, two sons and a daughter; her youngest son was a client and helped immensely by Interim. "He made a lot of progress in Interim, it was a good, stable time for him."

Then in 2018, while she was attending an Interim banquet, Executive Director Barbara Mitchell asked her if she would like to join the Board of Directors.

"I was tickled to death about that," said Holmes. "It's a very complex working board, we're always very involved. In fact, I've never been so busy in my life! Each board member brings their own talents and connections to what Interim needs."

Even though she spent 50 fruitful years as a nurse, joining Interim was a monumental step for her.

"I needed Interim in my life. I didn't know that until I got there," she said. "It was life-changing for me and my family and I love to be a part of it. It's wonderful and I'm grateful for the experience."

OUR MISSION

Interim's mission is to provide services and affordable housing, supporting members of our community with mental illness in building productive and satisfying lives.

OUR VISION

Interim, Inc. envisions a world in which people with mental illness are able to live, work, learn, and participate fully in the community.

Since 1975, **Interim Inc.** has been providing housing, healing, hope for adults with mental illness.

Learn more at interiminc.org   