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We gratefully acknowledge our generous donors who help us continue to provide Housing, Healing, Hope to our clients.

February 1, 2022 - May 31, 2022

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A Reason to Smile!

Although Medi-Cal and Medicare cover many of the health issues of our clients, these benefits cover only minimal dental benefits. Clients who cannot afford more expensive restorations such as crowns, need their teeth extracted. Few dentists accept Medi-Cal, so clients are unable to even find dentists locally to provide treatment. Delays, and lack of treatment, often result in poor outcomes including clients who are unable to properly chew food.

At Interim, we know that having good teeth and a good smile helps with self-esteem and better nutrition. When clients seek employment,

missing teeth often impact their job prospects.

At Interim, we are committed to helping our clients with dental health as well as mental health. Our Good Samaritan Fund provides dental grants to help clients obtain treatment. Thomas obtained a set of dentures thanks to a grant from this fund; **“I am so grateful to Interim for giving me my smile back!”**

The Good Samaritan Fund also funds other essential needs for clients that can't be obtained through any public benefits. It has paid for school fees, apartment deposits and furnishings, books, and even out of area travel for a client to a loved one's funeral.



Interim, Inc. client Thomas shows his beautiful new smile thanks to the Good Samaritan Fund at Interim, Inc.

If you are interested in supporting our clients in this way, click on <https://interiminc.givevirtuous.org/Donate> and select “apply my gift to “Good Sam Fund.”

OR Scan this QR code to donate!





We're Hiring!

Interim is Hiring! We're looking for employees. We have lots of openings!

- Counselors
- Behavioral Health Clinicians
- Wellness Navigators
- Nurses (LVN, RN)
- Accounting
- And More!

We offer a competitive benefits package to include: four weeks of vacation per year that increases with length of employment; full medical, dental and vision coverage; and a retirement savings package.

Check out our employment page at www.interiminc.org/employment.

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.

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Kudos to our Behavioral Health Workers!

For Mental Health Awareness month, Interim recognized the significant contributions of the mental health workforce in Monterey County. In May, Interim presented the David Soskin Compassionate Service Award and the David Soskin Inspiring Hope Award. These awards were established by Marian Penn and William Soskin in memory of their son, Dr. David Soskin, the late Monterey County Behavioral Health Medical Director. Dr. Soskin, who served for three years as the Medical Director of Monterey County Behavioral Health, was a mentor and teacher to staff, and especially committed to caring for the underserved.



From left: Natalie Saldaña-Rivera, Sylvia Rivera,
Luis Saldana- Ruiz

The Compassionate Service Award was granted to Luis Saldaña- Ruiz, a Social Worker with the Monterey County Health Department. Luis has consistently exemplified Dr. Soskin's deep compassion for the neediest and most neglected members of our community.

Luis didn't set out for social work to become his career. However, as Luis talks about growing up, you learn that caring for others is in his blood. He was born and raised in Puebla Mexico. He fondly remembers spending a year taking care of his ailing grandmother – assisting with cooking, cleaning, errands, and providing care. In 1987, at the age of 20, he emigrated. His transition was not an easy one. His real challenge was the language barrier. Eventually, Luis was able to earn his GED. In 1992, Luis and his wife, who got a job with the County's youth program, moved to Salinas. Luis continued working and attending school at Hartnell College for 5 years, eventually earning an AA in Business Administration. After obtaining his AA, Luis was hired as a clerk for the County. Before the County promoted him to Eligibility Worker I, he had to take the competitive exam 7 times because of his language barrier. As an Eligibility Worker, he realized that in order to truly help his clients, he needed to understand the context of their challenges. They would come to him with stories of domestic violence, poverty, and trauma. He began to take classes that would help him counsel them. It did not take long for Luis to be recognized for his innate skills for helping people who were struggling with complex problems. In 2002, Luis applied and was promoted to Social Worker III in Behavioral Health.

After almost 16 years of working in that position he decided to go back to school and study social work. In December 2021, he graduated with a BA and will be entering the MSW program at CSUMB in the fall. His long-term goal is to become a Program Manager with Behavioral Health.

Luis feels his early life experiences seeded a deep compassion to help those in need and a work ethic that now serves as an example to others, including his clients. He believes that you can achieve whatever you set your mind to – persistent dedication to your goals will bear fruit.

Luis Saldana-Ruiz exemplifies the generosity of a mental health professional who not only supports family and friends, but coworkers and clients alike.

The David Soskin Consumer Employee Inspiring Hope Award was granted to Donna Gonzales, a Wellness Navigator employed by Interim for the Transportation Coaching Program. This award was established by David Soskin's family to acknowledge the importance of people who have lived with mental illness and are working to give back by using their story of hope to inspire others. Donna is dedicated to using her own lived experience and journey of recovery to help people with mental illness to learn to successfully navigate the community transportation system.

Our workforce is what makes our programs successful. There were many nominees for these important awards, including both staff from Interim and Monterey County Behavioral Health. Kudos to the entire workforce!

Thank You to Cate Brennan, Retiring Board Member

Cate Brennan retired from the Interim Board of Directors this winter. Cate was one of our longest serving board members, serving eleven year and eleven months, taking a yearlong break, and then serving again.

During this time, Cate served as Board of Directors' President, Vice President, and Secretary. **“Cate was great at talking to donors as she was truly committed to Interim’s mission. She has a wonderful sense of humor and an amazing understanding of both the criminal justice system and the mental health system. She stayed on the program committee her entire**



tenure and had excellent questions and insight,” recounts Barbara Mitchell, Executive Director.

Cate is a retired public defender from the County of Monterey. She is passionate about social justice and was motivated to serve on the Interim Board of Directors as she understood how many people in the criminal justice system had untreated mental illness.

Farewell to Development Officer Deb Shearer

Deb Shearer, Interim's Development Officer, is retiring at the end of June 2022. Deb started at Interim 6 years ago as the



Executive Assistant. When Jocelyn Brady, the Development Officer, left Interim at the end of 2018, Deb stepped into the Development Officer role. Deb has contributed her skills and enthusiasm to this position. **“In my retirement, I plan to spoil my grandchildren and do some traveling.”** We will miss Deb, but luckily, our former Development Officer, Jocelyn Brady, has returned to Interim to resume her duties as Development Officer. Jocelyn can be reached at JBrady@interiminc.org or (831) 649-4522 ext. 205.

Paths to Recovery - Harm Reduction or Abstinence Based Models - What Approach Does Interim Take?

At Interim, we have found that one size does not fit all in recovery strategies for persons with mental illness and substance use disorders. We have different approaches to meet client's different needs.

The Keep It Real (KIR) program uses a harm reduction approach in its out-patient services. Neil Northey, KIR Program Director, explained that insisting on only abstinence from alcohol or substance use can deter some people from seeking treatment; a Harm Reduction approach is a more effective alternative. Harm Reduction encompasses an array of options for reducing harm caused by substance use or other behaviors including abstinence. Some who practice Harm Reduction are abstinent from substance and others are addressing harm by changing types of drugs or reducing amount used or times used or employ

other methods of reducing harm. In the KIR program, the services are person-centered; staff help clients explore their personal goals, and how a reduction in substance use can potentially help their realization. Clients are taught how different substances may impact different psychotropic medications and certain psychiatric conditions as well as how to reduce the potential for overdose or hospitalization.

Counselors are trained to use Motivational Interviewing to help clients identify and address ambivalence in making changes in substance use. Instead of the counselor persuading the client to reduce their alcohol or substance use directly, clients might be asked open-ended question to verbalize their own reasons why they might consider a reduction in use or to consider how their substance use might prevent them

from having the things they want. Neil explains, in Motivational Interviewing, the clients guide themselves to the life changes that they might want to make.

In treatment, counselors work with clients to create alternatives to alcohol or substance use by building life and emotional coping skills. This starts with a conversation about what need the substance satisfies for the client. Once that awareness arises within the client, they explore what else might replace alcohol or substance use in their life. Success may also look very different from one client to another, depending on their individual goals.

For clients who are interested in and would benefit from a residential treatment program, Interim offers the Bridge House, where clients stay in treatment for up to six months.

Meet the Staff

Neil Northey

Before Neil was hired by Interim, he attended the CSUMB Masters in Social Work (MSW) program and interned with Interim as well as with other local non-profits focusing on homelessness and substance use disorders. Upon graduation, he was hired by Interim for the Wellness and Recovery Academy, a day program which serves dual-diagnosis clients in recovery. In September 2021, he was promoted to Program Director of the Keep It Real (KIR) program.

Interim's KIR Program provides harm reduction outpatient services to adults in Monterey County with co-occurring serious mental illness and substance use disorders. Counseling and education are provided individually and in groups to help clients in recovery from both mental illness and substance use disorders. KIR uses a harm reduction approach. The program also helps with independent living skills

that may be impacted by mental health and or substance misuse as well as guides clients on clean and sober living, successful integration into community life and engaging in satisfying structured activities. Neil oversees a small but mighty staff of 6. The programs served a combined 201 clients from July 1, 2020-June 30, 2021.

In July, Neil will also be focusing on re-opening the Wellness and Recovery Academy, which closed during Covid. Neil loves working at Interim due to our company culture. **"It is person-centered in every aspect, from the service delivery to the consumer to the staff."** He also appreciates the family atmosphere, the deep regard Interim has for its employees, and the recognition of the services that people provide. **"There is a nurturing atmosphere, where forgiveness and mutual respect are emphasized,"** Neil added. The mission of Interim also aligns with Neil's personal values.



For more information about the Keep It Real program call (831) 440-3590. Send Referrals to: (831) 221- 5220 by fax or by email to KeepItReal@InterimInc.org.

Sun Rose Apartment Construction – Building to End Homelessness!

Construction of Interim's new apartment complex in Salinas is progressing! Soon this will be a three-story complex of permanent and transitional housing for 17 homeless adults with mental illness who are very low income. WRD Architects is the design firm, and Kent Construction is the contractor.

Construction started in August of 2021 and is expected to be completed in the fall of 2022. Interim is still raising funds to cover the portion of the costs that must be covered by grants and donations.



Do you have a service club or faith community that would like to sponsor part of the furnishing? Help us to end homelessness in our community! If you would like to donate to this project, contact Development Officer Jocelyn Brady at (831) 649-4522 ext. 205 or jbrady@interiminc.org.



Mental Health Services Recognition Awards - Interim Celebrates Service!

In celebration of Mental Health Month, Interim, Inc.'s OMNI Center put on their annual event, the Mental Health Services Recognition Awards, which recognizes consumers, volunteers, and mental health care providers who are passionate about being of service.

Over 180 people gathered at the Monterey County Fairgrounds for an outdoor event with local food from Kona Jerry BBQ, music from DJ Linda, and awards and recognition for some very dedicated individuals. Peer Outreach and Advocacy Coordinator Kontrena McPheter hosted the event and recognized her team of Interim Success over Stigma (SOS) speakers including Fabian Martin, Wellness Navigator at the OMNI Center, who shared his personal story on behalf of the SOS program.

To a crowd of Interim staff and clients, Katy Eckert, Bureau Chief of Monterey County Behavioral Health (MCBH), declared that **“this is a time of change in mental health.”** Katy shared her



Katy Eckert, Bureau Chief, Monterey County Behavioral Health

perspective on the state of the mental health system and the plans MCBH has for the future.

Interim Board President Diana Rosenthal spoke to the spirit of volunteering, as well as the feeling of fellowship that comes with it. Executive Director, Barbara Mitchell, and Katy Eckert presented the David Soskin Memorial Awards.

The Kristin Hart Memorial Award was

presented by Kontrena.

The Kristin Hart award is presented to a consumer who volunteers and gives unconditionally of themselves to improve the lives of others and is a positive role model in the mental health community.

Kristin Hart was a former resident in our Community Housing Program. A MPC student, she was extremely artistic. She designed the t-shirts that Interim staff and clients used when we participated in the Big Sur Marathon 5K race. She also inspired people to do something for others and reached out to help people in need of assistance. She said that if you reach out to others, you will succeed in whatever you do for yourself and other people.

This year's Kristen Hart award winner was Asher Rodden. He volunteers for the Our Voices peer support program. He is the first person to show up and offer a hand when needed, and volunteers for every Interim holiday meal event.

Interim Welcomed Post Secrets Founder Frank Warren on May 11

On May 11th, Interim welcomed Frank Warren, founder of the Post Secrets project (www.postsecrets.com) for a free webinar. Post Secrets is a growing collection of over a million anonymous secrets mailed to Frank on postcards. Deb Linden, Interim's Board member, moderated the lively webinar. If you missed the event, Interim also recorded its first ever podcast interview with Frank Warren, which can be accessed online at: <https://www.buzzsprout.com/1919384/10517198>.



Thank you to our sponsors: Monterey County Weekly, Community Hospital of the Monterey Peninsula / Montage Health, Monterey County Behavioral Health, Wald Ruhnke and Dost Architects, Markon Cooperative, and the Board of Directors of Interim, Inc.

Stevenson Gives!



The Stevenson School Student Philanthropy Project recently awarded Interim a \$10,000 grant for Sun Rose Apartments following a competitive review process. Interim is grateful to have been a part of this learning experience for these young students!