



VillaVoice

Providing Love,
Care and Hope for
Individuals with
Disabilities and their
Families since 1961

Villa Esperanza Services Quarterly Newsletter • Volume 7 • Summer 2009

Lifelong Dedication

by Michelle Cox, Director of Development

Villa prides itself on excellent services for individuals with developmental disabilities and the only way to do this is to have amazing staff! Villa is committed to investing in our staff through training, staff appreciation and benefits.

One way we support our staff is through the Donald H. Albeck Education Fund. This Fund serves to encourage Villa staff who seek college and graduate level degrees by providing limited financial assistance for educational development. Many staff have taken full advantage of this opportunity, and our children and adults are directly benefiting.

Meet Maria Carla Sangalang or Lala as we know her. She is Villa's lead teacher in Room 2, one of our middle school classrooms with six students ages 11-14. Lala came to the United States in 2001 and her journey is one of great accomplishment and pride.

Lala attended college in the Philippines and received a degree in what she hoped would land her a job in broadcast journalism. While in college, she volunteered at an alternative school. This was where she first experienced working with children with special needs, specifically autism. After she graduated she was offered a job in the school and took the challenge without hesitation. "Working with these students hit home for me," Lala shares. "My younger sister has severe special needs and I was happy to see children with challenges receiving an education." Lala would later transition to another alternative school where she built the special needs program from one student and herself to 30 students with five teachers.

Lala and her husband moved to the United States to be closer to her family. After her first child was old enough, Lala decided to seek employment and faxed her resume to Villa showcasing her experience teaching special education. "Yeah, I got this call on a Saturday from Vicky (Villa's former VP of HR & Finance and current CFO)," Lala laughs. "I thought, wow,



Villa teacher Lala Sangalang and student Sunny working on the computer.

she's working on a Saturday!" Lala was asked to interview for a job in our education program. That was seven years ago in May!

During the past seven years, Lala has graduated from California State University, Los Angeles with a Masters in Special Education; earned credentials in Mild to Moderate, Moderate to Severe and Early Childhood Special Education. She has also earned the Early Literacy for Special Needs Certification and this summer she will complete her Autism

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Message from the CEO



It has been an extremely busy three months as Villa's new CEO. We congratulate our Board of Directors and the wonderful Villa team for the successful completion of the 2009 fiscal year. We are very proud to announce we finished the year with a balanced budget.

We thank outgoing Chairman, AnnMarie Flaherty for her years of leadership and welcome Wendy Petry as our new Chairman of the Board. Villa's Board recently held their annual retreat focusing on the completion of the 2006-2009 Strategic Plan. Due to the State budget crisis, the Board

voted on a one year extension of the current plan with an emphasis on advocacy, building board capacity and fundraising. In early 2010 we will begin our next 3-year strategic plan with the goal to remain fiscally and programatically strong through these challenging economic times.

As we move into the 2010 budget year we see no reprieve to the State funding issues. Villa's programs have already experienced reductions from 3%-10%. The State of California budget cuts are threatening direct care services for individuals with developmental disabilities; impacting organizations like Villa. We are proud of our leadership role in speaking out against these cuts. We have been extremely active in our advocacy efforts including letter writing and visits with legislators.

As a co-sponsor of the Coalition of Service Providers in Southern California we recently held a public meeting on these issues where over 400 people attended. Marty Omoto, Disabilities Advocate from California Disabilities Community Action Network spoke. California Senator Carol Liu attended and also spoke.

Villa continues our commitment to advocate and protect those that cannot speak for themselves. We encourage writing and visiting your legislators and telling YOUR personal story. If enough of us speak up, we are confident the legislators will listen. We realize the difficult situation the state is in and we continue to provide solutions about where to make cuts so that individuals receiving services are not severely impacted.

Our leadership team continues to take a proactive approach in the anticipation of these cuts and, therefore, have made provisions in the upcoming budget. We will continue growing program revenues where we can and strengthening our donation efforts while watching our expenses.

The next year will be difficult and we will continue to be proactive in anticipating changes along the way. With this approach Villa will continue to lead the way in excellence.

Please feel free to contact me with any questions or concerns at 626-449-2919, ext. 112 or kwhite@villaesperanzaservices.org. We greatly appreciate all of your continued support.

Kelly White
Chief Executive Officer

The State of California budget cuts are threatening direct care services for individuals with developmental disabilities; impacting organizations like Villa.



Kelly White as emcee of the meeting regarding the State budget.

ADVOCACY UPDATE

The continued threat of additional 7.1% cuts effective in September, 2009 in our Regional Center funded programs is more real than ever. This would include Residential; ILS; ADP; Dimensions; Transportation and anyone receiving one to one support services in these programs.

- For those attending Villa's Dimensions or Adult Day Program state legislators have mandated an additional 5 days of program closures totaling 15 days for the year. What this means is a participant will have to remain home during those days. Villa residents who participate in these programs will need to stay home, and Villa will have to staff the homes with no additional funding.
- If you are receiving services through our CMOC and ILS program, the hours for In Home Support Services (IHSS), that assist people in their homes with their health and home care needs, will be cut.
- Villa's residential clients will be impacted by the elimination of Medi-Cal coverage for adults to see certain specialists- including physician, dental, podiatry, psychiatry, etc. As a result clients' health may be compromised. It will take longer to receive services since the Regional Centers will have to pay, and there will be a diminishing supply of doctors that will be willing to see our population. This could potentially become a health and safety issue.
- Villa's School recently received news that we will sustain a 3% cut in funding instead of the anticipated 5%. Summer school has been cut back from the typical 30 days to 20 days, by most of our school districts.



Kelly White with Marty Omoto

We encourage you to write or visit your legislators and tell YOUR personal story. For more information or a listing of your legislators visit VillaEsperanzaServices.org and click on Advocacy or call us at (626) 449-2919.

LEADERSHIP NEWS



Outgoing Chairman AnnMarie Flaherty, passes the gavel to incoming Chairman Wendy Petry.

Villa is pleased to announce the election of five new members of the 2009-2010 Board of Directors — Rob Berry with Good, Swartz, Brown & Berns LLP; Nancy Cook, retired police officer with Hermosa Beach; Paulette Geragos, Community Volunteer; Joe Gorman, of Council for Shepard Mullen; Bina Lal, retired medical physician.

Thank you to our retiring Board Members for your 6 years of dedicated service to Villa — Vrajesh Lal, Maryann McKinley, John Taylor and Jeannie Vaughn.

We are pleased to announce Nikki Cavalier has transitioned to Vice President of Senior and Community Services. Nikki now oversees Villa's Adult Day Program located at Westminster Presbyterian and our Care Management Outreach program.

DRESSED TO THE NINES!



Latosha dressed to impress!

Villa's ADP participants dressed to impress at their elegant formal affair. Ladies adorned their favorite gowns while the men dressed in their finest suits and tuxes. Complete with corsages, great music and decorations the event was a huge success bringing smiles to everyone.

VILLA'S RESIDENTS — SUMMERTIME FUN

Residents have been on a roll at the bowling alley; they are practicing for Special Olympics. The Cal Tech Y volunteers also spent the afternoon with some of our residents at the lanes.

Taking a break from June gloom or the July heat, Villa residents enjoy a workout and fun with the Nintendo Wii, thanks to the 2008 8th grade class from Mayfield Junior School. The favorite is bowling!

Other activities this summer include Dodger games, the Pasadena Police Officers Variety & BMX show, 4th of July at the Rosebowl and an all time favorite – one week at Pilgrim Pines Summer Camp in Yucaipa.

END OF SCHOOL

Our School's annual Recognition Ceremony was on Friday, June 19. Each classroom performed and each student received recognition for their school accomplishments. Congratulations to all our students.



Jackie with friend Vanessa performing at the recognition ceremony.



Jorge showing off his pottery.

GOT ART?

Villa's Dimensions participants sure do! Thank you to the Green Foundation for providing funding to allow our adults to attend art classes at the Armory Center for the Arts in Pasadena. The 10 week class included painting and pottery. To view their finished pieces join us for the art opening Sunday, August 9 at the Armory!

EMPLOYMENT SERVICES

Thank you to Sysco Foods and Waxie for underwriting Villa's Pasadena Employment Services annual picnic.

We are proud to announce that Manna, the Conejo Valley Food Bank, has hired a second Villa work crew to help with food donations. Villa partnered with Manna in 2007. A win, win for the community!

Through the support of the Tri-counties Regional Center, Villa is launching an Integrated Work Program. This program, offered in our West Region, focuses on adults interested in working but may need to enhance their job skills. The idea is to provide individuals with volunteer experiences and other skill building activities that will translate into a work setting. For information call (805) 446-1939.



Picnic-goers James Wilson, Jackie Stone and Kathryn Trimble.



Usha, Villa Job Coach, enjoying lunch with Susie Nack.

Lifelong Dedication (Continued from page 1)

Certification. All this, as well as being a wife and mother of two adorable young children. She is grateful for all the support Villa provides; not only to her but to all the staff. “The Albeck Education Fund has been a tremendous help for school.”

Lala’s experience and vast education is reflected in the success of her students. She incorporates reading and writing into all subjects covered during the day. Math is also an important focus. “Each year my class learns to bake and then we go door to door at Villa’s offices and sell the treats. This works well because students are using their verbal communication and social skills; they are responsible for taking money and making change, which strengthens their math while learning a job skill.” The money collected from the social enterprise supports classroom field trips to such places as The Getty Center, Aquarium of the Pacific, Natural History Museum and many more.

“It is imperative we have qualified, compassionate and patient staff like Lala,” says Casey Gregg, Vice President of Children & Youth Services. “There are some really challenging days where our students can be very tough and that’s what makes our teachers even more amazing.” Some of Lala’s students are taller and twice her size with a variety of behaviors that she and her assistants, Annabelle Santos and Cheyenne Gonzales, manage. Lala says, “When parents tell you their child, once combative, is now excited about coming to school; or that their attitude is now a positive one, you know you are making a difference.” She proudly shares “We (Villa) really are pioneers in our field.”

Each year Lala’s classroom dynamics change when new students join her class. She adapts her teaching style to meet the needs of each child or in her words, “It comes down to the student, they come first. My current class is extremely diverse in their levels of education and behaviors. Based on this, it works best to do more one on one instruction. In past years, I have done more group teaching.” Lala, as well as Villa’s other 8 teachers, develop education plans based on the interests of each student. “If you teach concepts around the students’ interests, they are more likely to retain the information, as with anyone.”

Lala’s training has supplied her with the knowledge and techniques to work with a wide range of students. Her passion, with an endless supply of patience, drives her to continue. Since Lala has been in the U.S. Villa has been the only place she’s worked. I asked her “What keeps you at Villa?” “The kids,” she shares. “Villa is my second family.”

Villa is proud of ALL 254 of our employees, especially the 68 working in the children’s program and the 150 working with our adults. Each is dedicated, hard working and amazing. We salute each of you — Thank you for all of your hard work, it shows!



Lala congratulates Tony on his year-end accomplishments.

INTERNATIONALLY KNOWN!



Sherna Pinnock, Villa’s Curriculum Specialist touring with Nestan and Ketil.

Keti Natriashvili and Nestan Tsitsishvili, Ph.D. of the Institute of Public Affairs and Rural Development Program from the country of Georgia toured Villa this past June. The visit was prompted by a pilot program they are conducting in their country. The group is working with three orphanages in rural areas and establishing educational programs for these children; one of which has children all with special needs. Villa was recommended by educational institutes like Penn State as well as UNICEF based on our excellent programs.

TRAINING FOR EXCELLENCE

Villa’s “Training for Excellence” provides staff at all levels training of the highest caliber and prepares them to be future leaders in the field. A variety of topics are covered over the course of a year including Instruction, Behavior Analysis, Team Building, Autism, Person-Centered Thinking and many more. Thank you to The Braitmayer Foundation, California Disability Services Association, Patron Saints Foundation and the Weingart Foundation for funding such training.

ALBECK EDUCATION FUND

Villa wishes to thank all those who contribute to the Albeck Education Fund. If you are interested in donating to this fund please contact us at gpastre@VillaEsperanzaServices.org, (626) 449-2919 or donate online at www.VillaEsperanzaServices.org.

VILLA VOLUNTEERS!

Jane Moore is a Villa Volunteer and we celebrated her service at the 2009 Spirit of Volunteerism Luncheon presented by the Volunteer Center of San Gabriel Valley. She has a weekly poetry group in our Dimensions Adult Day Program. Her creativity has given our adults an outlet for their ideas as well as a place to showcase their accomplishments. Thank you, Jane!

Villa's CMOC staff Terri Reed and Cheryl Franco were also acknowledged at the event for delivering Thanksgiving meals to those less fortunate. Thank you ladies for all the wonderful work you do!



Honorees Cheryl Franco, Jane Moore and Terri Reed.



AMEX employees ready to work.

Thank you American Express for spending a day beautifying Villa. 16 Amex employees funded and built a new fence and planted flowers around the campus.

CALLING ALL VOLUNTEERS

Villa is looking for volunteers to share their passions or specialized talents with our participants. Areas of interest include yoga, music, tai chi, exercise, gardening, knitting, ceramics and more! Contact Alex Paschal at apaschal@VillaEsperanzaServices.org or (626) 449-2919, ext. 162 if you are interested. Thank you.

Thank You, Danke Schön, Grazie, Salut  — We can't say it enough!

SHOWCASE HOUSE



PASADENA
SHOWCASE
HOUSE
for the Arts



Gwendolyn Meier, Villa's music and speech therapist, playing guitar with student Eve.

Pasadena Showcase House has awarded Villa's Education Program with a \$10,000 grant to provide music therapy for children with special needs.

CALIFORNIA COMMUNITY FOUNDATION



Glenn and Sandy solving a puzzle at ADP.

The California Community Foundation awarded Villa with a two-year \$100,000 grant, to support Villa's Adult Day Program (ADP) with an emphasis on expanding our programs and services for adults age 60 and over who do not have developmental disabilities. The grant will supplement program fees to allow low income seniors to attend the program free of charge.

CVS CAREMARK CHARITABLE TRUST



CVS store managers Michael Noyes and Juan Bermudez presents a check to Villa's Kelly White, Starla Affatati and Casey Gregg.

Villa received a \$25,000 grant from the CVS Caremark Charitable Trust, the private foundation created by CVS Caremark Corporation, in support of Villa's Hjelte-Phillips Speech & Language Center.

CITIES OF CALABASAS, THOUSAND OAKS & WESTLAKE VILLAGE



Villa's landscape crew hard at work.

Thank you to the cities of Calabasas, Thousand Oaks and Westlake Village for supporting individuals with developmental disabilities. Grants totaling \$9750 will be used to purchase equipment and to support Villa's job development team who are establishing relationships with local employers and seeking out meaningful employment opportunities for adults with disabilities.

A HOOT'N HOLLER'N GOOD TIME

The Berkshire Barn was full of 260 cowgirls and cowboys supporting Villa's Blue & White Western BBQ. Decked out with hats, boots and buckles, the corral was jumping with "Jail Time" for those wanted wranglers, horseshoe tossing, apple bobbing and live music. The event raised \$90,000 for Villa's programs. The event hit the trail May 31 at the home of Julie and Kevin Abbott in La Canada. NBC 4 News Anchor, Colleen Williams served as Town Sheriff with awards presented to Joe Skeehan, Skeehan & Company and Elaine Hall, Founder of The Miracle Project/Coach E! in Autism: The Musical.

Sponsors for the Western BBQ included BILA, Wells Fargo, Skeehan & Company, Comerica Bank, East West Bank, Mijares Mexican Restaurant, Union Bank of California and Whittier Trust Company.



(Clockwise from top left) Kelly White and Marybeth Rehman-Dittu flank honorees Joe Skeehan and Elaine Hall; cowgirls LaVonne Lawson and Donna Secundy; jail time for Kelly White; Roza with daughter Sharon Kuppermann at the chuckwagon; Board Chairman Wendy Petry with Van Duncan; Villa's Damion Lee with wife and daughter; host Julie Abbott, committee chair and Board member Marybeth Rehman-Dittu and Town Sheriff Colleen Williams.

Villa Esperanza Services, providing Love, Care & Hope for individuals with disabilities in Los Angeles and Ventura Counties.

MAIN OFFICE

Villa Esperanza Services
2060 East Villa Street
Pasadena, CA 91107
Tel 626-449-2919
Fax 626-449-2850
email: info@VillaEsperanzaServices.org
www.VillaEsperanzaServices.org

ADDITIONAL PROGRAM SITES:

Adult Day Program (ADP) & Care Management Outreach Collaboration (CMOC) Main Office

Westminster Presbyterian Church
1757 North Lake Avenue
Pasadena, CA 91104
Tel 626-398-4435
Fax 626-398-4707

Care Management Outreach Collaboration (CMOC) Satellite Office & Independent Living Skills (ILS)

Under One Roof Human Services Center
80 East Hillcrest Drive, Suite 103
Thousand Oaks, CA 91360
Tel 877-446-4900
Tel 805-446-4500

Dimensions Adult Day Program

2031 East Villa Street
Pasadena, CA 91107
Tel 626-449-2919
Fax 626-449-2850

Employment & Transition Services

756 Lakefield Road, Suite F
Westlake Village, CA 91361
Tel 805-446-1939
Fax 805-446-1959

Hjelte-Phillips Speech & Language Center

435 North Craig Avenue
Pasadena, CA 91107
Tel 626-795-8355
Fax 626-449-2850

School Campus & Occupational Therapy Clinic

2116 East Villa Street
Pasadena, CA 91107
Tel 626-449-2919
Fax 626-395-0174

Adult Residential Homes:

In Pasadena...
Allen House
Brown House
Chester House
Dominion/Morehart House
Murphy House
Stahl House
Villa Apartments
Wagner House
Wynn House
In Thousand Oaks..
Norgaard House



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Brothers John and Michael at Blue and White

Villa's going green!

If you wish to receive the newsletter via email
let us know at info@VillaEsperanzaServices.org

Calendar of Events

Monthly Tour of Villa

2nd Friday of Every Month • 11:00 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.

Call today to reserve a space (626) 449-2919, ext. 128

School Parent Association Monthly Meeting

3rd Monday of Every Month

12:30 – 1:30 p.m. at Villa

Call Casey Gregg, School Principal

(626) 449-2919, ext. 117

Angel Frames: A Collection of Very Special Art

Free Public Opening – Sunday, August 9

2:00 – 4:00 p.m.

Armory Center for the Arts

22nd Annual Tournament of Hope

Esperanza Island Paradise

Monday, September 28

Glendora Country Club, Glendora

For more information about our events,
please call Vanessa Voors at (626)449-2919, ext. 168
or send an email, VVoors@VillaEsperanzaServices.org.

P.S.

“We are so fortunate to have an excellent program for children on the spectrum in our community”
— Sunita Batra, Director of Special Education, San Gabriel Unified School District