

All the News Worth  
Chirping About from  
Villa Esperanza Services  
Summer 2016 Newsletter



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



Villa Client Greg Guerrero putting together the daily services schedule at Burke Williams Spa in Pasadena.

## A Chance to Succeed

Written by Margaret Morris; Photography by Yvonne Rodriguez

It's 6:00 a.m. and Greg Guerrero is on the job at the Burke Williams Day Spa in Old Pasadena. He's focused on a computerized scheduling system that maps out the spa activity for the day. Greg is pairing therapists with clients, assigning treatment rooms and ensuring that all of the appropriate supplies are on-hand and ready to provide each guest with a seamless, customized spa experience.

Greg is a Villa client, one of several individuals with developmental disabilities who have been given the opportunity to work at the spa. Through Villa's Employment Services

program, our capable adults receive coaching and support to secure and sustain employment with business partners in the community. The Pasadena Burke Williams Spa is an outstanding example of a local business that is not only providing jobs, but also creating promising futures for our clients.

After seeing a news story on TV, Diane Kim who was General Manager of Burke Williams Pasadena location, was intrigued by the possibility of employing individuals with developmental disabilities. She started brainstorming how this might be possible at the spa. She reached out to Michael Greene, Director

of Villa's Employment Services program. They agreed that a job in the spa's laundry room might be a good fit for a Villa client. At the time, Greg was working on a landscaping and gardening crew as part of Villa's Supported Employment Program that provides jobs centering around our main campus and in the local community. With the assistance of Villa job coach Joseph Umbro, Greg applied for the laundry room position and prepared for what would be a successful interview.

**"The Burke Williams Spa is very proud of Greg and all their employees who are part of the Villa program."**

The spa was getting ready for Greg's arrival. Diane's faith in her staff was the cornerstone of her confidence in hiring someone with a disability. To her credit, there was an existing culture of compassion and caring. The staff not only accepted Greg, they embraced him. As he began his work in the laundry room, he was afforded his most important opportunity: the chance to learn, grow and advance. With Greg's hard work and support from those around him, what could have been just a job became his career. He now runs the department where he started.

While watching him work, Greg's confidence indicates his pride in what he has accomplished. He likes being in charge and being able to take care of what needs to be done. His success at the spa has impacted his personal life as well. Greg is now married and he and his wife are expecting their first child.

The Burke Williams Spa and Diane Kim, in particular, are very proud of Greg and all of their employees who are part of the Villa program. In addition to Greg, client David Schroeder spends his day making sure that the spa's sandals and brushes are kept clean and sanitary. He likes keeping busy and there is plenty for him to do. Fay Gibson works in the women's section of the spa as an attendant, providing clean robes and towels for spa guests. She loves her job there because everyone is nice to her and



**Burke Williams executive Diane Kim with spa employees Greg Guerrero, David Schroeder and Fay Gibson.**

treats her like family.

The collaboration between Burke Williams Spa and Villa's Employment Services highlights the possibilities for mutually successful outcomes in the business community. In 2010, the spa was honored as Employer of the Year by the Pasadena Mayor's Committee for Employment of People with Disabilities. Diane has now been promoted to Vice President, Guest Experience. She humbly underestimates the impact that her leadership has had on the lives of Greg, David and Fay. She insists that they have given more to the spa than the spa has given to them. They have grown as individuals, but the existing staff has also grown through their acceptance and support. She encourages other business leaders to be creative in uncovering employment opportunities that might be a fit for someone with a disability. "Understand that everyone has capabilities. All they need is the permission to use them and the tools to help them grow."

## **Program Spotlight**

Villa Esperanza Services Employment Program assists adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities secure and maintain employment within the community. Villa offers employment training, placement and ongoing coaching. The program matches individuals to jobs that are compatible with their current and potential skills. Positions range from entry-level to skilled, based on capabilities and aptitude for growth.

Opportunities Include:

- Community Integration Program (Prevocational skills training through volunteerism)
- Individual Placement (Working in the community with the support of a job coach or supervisor)
- Group Supported Employment (A group of 3 clients working with a job coach or supervisor)

If you're a local business owner or manager and have a position(s) that you think might be a good fit for one of our adults, we will be happy to provide you with more information regarding our Employment Program. Contact Michael Greene, Director of Employment Services, Pasadena, (626) 449-2919, ext. 161, [MGreene@VillaEsperanzaServices.org](mailto:MGreene@VillaEsperanzaServices.org); or Megan Green, Manager of Employment Services, Thousand Oaks, (805) 446-1939, ext. 112, [MGreen@VillaEsperanzaServices.org](mailto:MGreen@VillaEsperanzaServices.org) or visit [www.VillaEsperanzaServices.org](http://www.VillaEsperanzaServices.org).

## CAPITAL CAMPAIGN

# Celebrating Dimensions Grand Opening

The first milestone of our “hope moves forward” capital campaign was achieved in January when our Dimensions Adult Day Program moved into their new location on East Walnut Street. The freshly renovated building provides a variety of environments to meet the needs of the 70 adults who attend the program. A Grand Opening celebration was held on February 25th. City of Pasadena Councilmember Margaret McAustin and other dignitaries addressed Villa families, friends and clients to honor the occasion featuring a ribbon cutting ceremony orchestrated by the Pasadena Chamber of Commerce.

The new Dimensions building is just the start of the Phase 1 initiative that will rebuild our Villa Street campus into a state-of-the-art facility. Our thanks go out to the generous foundations and individuals who have already donated to the



**Making the cut are Dimensions client Greg Albeck, Villa CEO Kelly White and Board Chair Candice Rogers as clients and others dignitaries share in the moment.**



**Dimensions Program Manager Claudia Cortez and Program Director Michelle Hussen celebrating their new building with Board Member Jay Henneberry and CEO Kelly White.**

campaign. If you would like more information, please contact Gioia Pastre at [GPastre@VillaEsperanzaServices.org](mailto:GPastre@VillaEsperanzaServices.org) or call (626) 449-2919, ext. 118.

## ADVOCACY UPDATE

# Legislative Victory for Funding Increase

Following more than a year of intense advocacy efforts, the state legislature passed a bill increasing funding for Developmental Disabilities Services by \$306.5 million, including a 7.5% increase for direct care staff and a 5% increase for supported and independent living. These increases represent long overdue funding to support services and programs that are vital to

the population that we serve. We extend our thanks to each of you who joined this effort by reaching out to your state legislators and lending your support to the cause. Advocacy will continue to be one of Villa’s key strategies to ensure that legislators are aware of how their decisions regarding funding and other issues impact developmental disabilities services.

## VILLA ESPERANZA SERVICES DIRECTORY

### PASADENA

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626-449-2919

**Villa Esperanza School**  
626-449-2919, ext. 119

**Hjelte-Phillips  
Speech & Language Center**  
626-795-8355

**Occupational Therapy Clinic**  
626-449-2919, ext. 140

**Community Integration  
Program (CIP)**  
626-398-4435, ext. 1

**Employment Services**  
626-449-2919, ext. 161

**Adult Residential Program**  
626-449-2919, ext. 113

**Independent Living Skills (ILS)**  
626-398-4435, ext. 1

**Dimensions Adult Day Program**  
1990 E. Walnut St.  
Pasadena, CA 91107  
626-346-9109, ext. 103

**Adult Day Program (ADP)**  
1757 N. Lake Ave.  
Pasadena, CA 91104  
626-398-4435, ext. 1

### WEST REGION

Under One Roof  
Human Services Center  
80 E. Hillcrest Drive, Suite 206  
Thousand Oaks, CA 91360

**Main Number**  
805-446-1939

**Community Integration  
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**Employment Services**  
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# VILLA ESPERANZA SERVICES

*Where Hope is Hard at Work for Individuals  
with Intellectual/Developmental Disabilities*

2060 East Villa Street

Pasadena, CA 91107

[www.VillaEsperanzaServices.org](http://www.VillaEsperanzaServices.org)



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If you wish to receive the newsletter via email let us know at [info@VillaEsperanzaServices.org](mailto:info@VillaEsperanzaServices.org).



Samantha and Simone at the Villa School's "Light It Up Blue" Pep Rally on April 1st which kicked off a month-long promotion highlighting autism awareness.