



# THE LOOP

A COLLECTION OF STORIES FROM AROUND CALIFORNIA

JULY 2022

ISSUE 110

VOLUME 9



Hello and welcome to our July newsletter! July is a month of Independence and celebration.

We hope you are having a great summer! Summer is in full swing and with it comes long warm days filled with opportunities. We have been busy this year providing all the amazing services to all the communities that we serve. We are always looking for ways to fill in gaps in services as we know how crucial it is to have support as we work towards leading healthier lives. We have been given the opportunity to implement a new and exciting program for families that is featured in our program spotlight, [Celebrating Families!](#)

As we hit the mid-year mark, we would like to take the time to reflect on all of the hard work of our team. We continue to make huge strides in working towards ending Veteran and chronic homelessness with all of our housing programs. Our life skills sessions at our [Day 1 Families Program](#) are well attended and we will be incorporating additional topics. Through additional funding, we will be expanding our hot meal and pantry program at [The Living Room](#), providing much needed resources to our brothers and sisters living with HIV/AIDS and/or those who are affected. These are just a few examples of the amazing work we are doing and we look forward to continuing to grow our services and expand our reach!



*Mary Ann Knoy*

Mary Ann Knoy, Vice President,  
WestCare California

With the first half of the year behind us, I'd like to take a moment to thank our amazing teams for continuing to bring their passion, talents, and commitment with them each and every day. Over the last six months, we have experienced the ebbs and flows of the COVID-19 pandemic coming and seemingly going, yet, we have remained steadfast and have risen to any challenges that may have come as a result.

I would also like to commend our Treatment and Rehabilitation programs. Firstly, I'd like to thank the staff of our [Martin Luther King Residential](#) facility for their dedication, positive attitudes, and the amazing teamwork that everyone has continued demonstrating during these difficult times while dealing with staff shortages.

Secondly, our CARF-accredited [Fresno County Adult Outpatient](#) services have expanded to now be offered at the [Holy Cross Health & Wellness Center](#). For our brothers and sisters on the streets, this brings treatment even closer to them if they should need it.

Meanwhile, the [SAMHSA Youth and Family TREE](#) program is fully staffed and is on its way to meeting its goal of serving 100 unduplicated individuals by the end of the year! To our amazing staff providing care to adolescents and families in Kings County – thank you.

Most recently, our new Kern County Behavioral Health Medi-Cal contract began on July 1, allowing us to expand our outpatient treatment services offered at our [WestCare Bakersfield](#) campus. We look forward to the additional lives that you will change!

Without our combined efforts, this important work that we do just simply wouldn't be possible. So, thank you for your decision to come to work every day and help us in our mission of Uplifting the Human Spirit of all of those that we are so fortunate to serve.



*Cleadus Shelton*

Cleadus Shelton, Vice President  
WestCare California



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## Program Spotlight: Celebrating Families!

By MaryAnn Knoy, Vice President of Administration

This month, we implemented one of our newest programs serving families in Fresno County. **Celebrating Families!** is a nationally recognized 16-week educational program for families participating in **Fresno County's Department of Social Services CalWORKS** and **Welfare to Work** programs. Celebrating Families! works with family members ages three through 18+, to strengthen recovery, break the cycle of addiction, and decrease risk factors while incorporating addiction recovery concepts with healthy family living skills. In this unique program, the entire family participates in educational groups and activities in order for the parents and children to come together and model healthy family interactions.

Celebrating Families! offers different ways to create and learn with hands-on activities and video demonstrations. The goal of the program is to increase positive parent/child relationships; increase parenting knowledge and skills; increase family communication skills; and encourage family-focused activities. Each session begins

with a family meal. This mealtime allows families to enjoy a meal together as well allow parents and children to apply what they have learned during their classes and begin to learn how to interact with one another in a positive and healthy manner. All program sessions are geared to teach each family member alternative coping skills, anger management techniques, healthier communication styles, appropriate boundaries, goal setting, and alcohol and drug education. At the end of the session, everyone comes together to discuss the evening's topic and what that would look like in their family, how would they implement that in their family, and to really start a meaningful conversation.

Earlier in the month, the new Celebrating Families! team attended a three-day training on the curriculum and learned side-by-side with the instructors on how to facilitate the sessions. We are excited to assist families in strengthening their bond as they work towards living healthier lives!



## 6.17 - The Living Room Holds its First CLEAR Group!

**The Living Room** recently began hosting **CLEAR, (Choosing Life, Empowerment, Actions, and Results)** a multi-session group held every Friday for adults that are living with HIV/AIDS or are at risk of HIV transmission. The 16 sessions are designed to increase behaviors that promote healthy living; effectively face the challenges of daily living; promote positive feelings, thoughts, and actions; and develop daily routines to stay healthy. The topics covered include but are not limited to: healthy decision making, stress management skills, understanding behaviors, setting and achieving goals, practicing self-care, and reducing stigma.





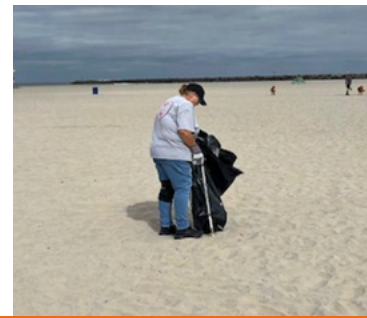
**6.22: WestCare California Uses Airtime to Share Our Great Work!**

In June, our Vice President of Administration, MaryAnn Knoy; Deputy Administrator, Jenny Gonzalez; and Program Director for The Living Room, Carlene Mendez, lent their voices to record PSA's on behalf of our [Treatment & Rehabilitation](#) services, [San Joaquin Valley Veterans](#), the [2022 Fresno AIDS Walk](#), and [The Living Room](#)! These are currently planned to air on [K-Jewel 105.5 FM](#) in Fresno! Thank you to their amazing team for allowing us to come in and share about the important work that we do!



**7.4 - The Women and Children of MLK Residential Celebrate Independence Day!**

The women and children at [MLK Residential](#) had an eventful Fourth of July this year! They celebrated the day by painting, holding a tether ball match, and playing BINGO! They also got the opportunity to enjoy a firework show with some hotlinks and hamburgers! To our amazing staff at MLK Residential who helped make another holiday a memorable one for those that we serve – thank you!



**7.5 - The Women of CCTRP – San Diego Clean Up and Give Back!**

Some of our women served at [CCTRP \(Custody to Community Transitional Reentry Program\) - San Diego](#) recently volunteered with the [San Diego River Park Foundation](#). Four members of the program's [Resident Advisory Board \(RAB\)](#) volunteered with the "Green Team" to clean up the Dog Beach Estuary in Ocean Beach after the festivities of the 4th of July weekend. They were told that if prizes were being given out for the hardest working team, their team would have won! They were very motivated and excited to share about their experience with their peers. Thank you for Uplifting the Human Spirit and representing us in such a great way in your community, ladies!



**7.7 - Kitchens for Good Graduation**

Four of our women served at [CCTRP – San Diego](#) recently graduated from our longtime community partners, the [Kitchens for Good](#) culinary arts program! The Kitchens for Good program combines education, social enterprise, and sustainability to positively impact the economy, community and environment. All four graduates also completed successful interviews with the [Rise & Shine Hospitality Group](#) and received job offers. They were congratulated by WestCare staff as well as representatives on behalf of [CDCR \(California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation\)](#) and parole! For more information on Kitchens for Good and their mission, please visit: [kitchensforgood.org](https://kitchensforgood.org).





### 7.15: Drag Queen BINGO

For the first time since the pandemic began, **Drag Queen BINGO**, a longtime fundraising event for the **Fresno AIDS Walk** officially returned and set a new record for funds raised on behalf of the event and its cause, **The Living Room!** The night of BINGO and fun was held with a packed house at The Red Lantern in Fresno. At the end of the night, over \$1,500 was raised in support of the walk! In addition to games of BINGO, live drag performances were held featuring Bopha Apsara, Serena DeCarlo, Rosio De La Rosa, and Lucy Yale! The event was emceed by longtime supporters of The Living Room, Mizz Diva Licious of Stolengoodz and Angelina Los!

On behalf of our staff and those that we proudly serve, we'd like to send our most heartfelt thanks to everyone who helped make this year's Drag Queen BINGO event our best one yet! From the talented queens that performed to our amazing emcees, everyone that attended to show their support, anyone who helped put the event together, and the wonderful staff at The Red Lantern - thank you so much for helping make this event so special!

For more information on this year's Fresno AIDS Walk to be held on Saturday, November 5 at Woodward Park's Parkview Shelter, please visit [www.fresnoaidswalk.org](http://www.fresnoaidswalk.org).



### Kudos: Dayatra Latin, Director of Operations, WestCare California

We'd like to send special thanks to **Dayatra Latin**, our Director of Operations for WestCare California. On a recent visit to our **CCTRP** program in San Diego, "Miss Day" spent time in the kitchen with our women cooking breakfast, lunch, and dinner. Some of those delicious, homemade meals included: spaghetti and garlic bread; chicken and rice pilaf; mac and cheese; pot roast and mashed potatoes; soup and salad; and homemade chili verde. Everyone loved having her so much that special thank you notes and cards were posted on her office door in Fresno! Thank you for uplifting us through your love of food, Dayatra!



### Kudos: Lydia Marizette, Case Manager - HDAP, Housing Services

We'd like to send a heartfelt shout-out to Lydia from our **Housing Services** team for making complimentary shaved ice for her coworkers at our Gateway Administration/Housing office in Fresno on a 99-degree July day! Thank you for Uplifting the Human Spirit with your kindness and this refreshing treat!

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Get in touch with our Marketing Department to learn more about what is happening in WestCare California at [marketing@westcare.com](mailto:marketing@westcare.com)