

**The Art of Hillview**

**“Daydreaming”**

By Stephanie Marrero

At the urging of her caseworker, Hillview client Stephanie Marrero created this painting to submit to the annual Art Showcase. “I hadn’t painted in a long time,” she says. “I forgot how much I love it and how healing it is.”

Stephanie uses art as a way to process experiences. “Whatever I’m feeling ends up displayed on the canvas,” she says. While creating this painting, she felt content and purposeful.

A full-time mom of a seven-year-old son, Stephanie has been receiving



services at Hillview for about a decade. “This is an amazing place,” she says. “They really care. Hillview is a place where I can feel my most authentic self.”

**President/CEO:**  
Eva S. McCraven, Ph.D.

**Director of Community & Public Relations:**  
Sande Weiss

The mission of Hillview Mental Health Center is to provide comprehensive, compassionate and culturally sensitive mental health services to adults and youths in the East San Fernando Valley. Along with challenges of mental illness and substance abuse disorders, our clients suffer the burdens of poverty. Hillview’s approach addresses all of these concerns: We offer a full range of outpatient behavioral health and substance use disorder services while working with government and community agencies to meet practical needs such as housing, employment and transportation. We help our clients assess their needs, goals and strengths to empower them to live as independently as possible as participating members of the community.

Hillview Mental Health Center, Inc., is a nonprofit corporation that serves as a gateway to recovery, independence and health for nearly 2,000 East San Fernando Valley residents each year.

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**Better Access and Outcomes For Those in Need**

*Message from Eva S. McCraven  
President and Chief Executive Officer*



People with mental illness benefit more from the psychiatric care, counseling and case management we provide when they receive other kinds of assistance simultaneously. Housing, for instance, reduces the risks of exposure, injury, theft and substance abuse. Medical care can discover and treat high blood pressure, diabetes and heart disease, all of which are more prevalent in those with serious mental illness.

Hillview Mental Health Center maintains strong relationships with community and government agencies that provide an array of services complementing those we offer. In 2014, along with Valley Nonprofit Resources, we spearheaded formation of the Northeast San Fernando Valley Health Neighborhood, a group that strengthens and enhances those relationships. After formation of the alliance, Valley Care Community Consortium joined with us to coordinate how

our largely poor, minority and disadvantaged populations access services. Within a year of the group’s founding, the Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health Service Area 2 came on as a cosponsor of our Health Neighborhood.

The initial group of 30 member agencies now includes more than 90 behavioral health, primary care and other nonprofit service providers. Representatives gather monthly at Hillview to learn about one another’s services, discuss community needs and identify gaps.

In May, the Northeast San Fernando Valley Health Neighborhood held a Community Resource Fair. The event featured 75 exhibitors and attracted more than 175 visitors. Hillview cosponsored the fair, which was held at the Vaughn Family and Community Center in Pacoima. Los Angeles city councilwoman Monica Rodriguez’s office provided financial assistance that funded refreshments and supplies. Health fair offerings included a free mobile health clinic, a mammography clinic, educational workshops and a

folklórico dance performance.

The goal of the Health Neighborhood was to create a communication system for referrals to health and social services agencies as well as a communication system for follow-up and care collaboration as needed by those receiving the referrals. Concurrently, we learned an organization called One Degree (1degree.org) has already created an online directory designed to help people access health, mental health and other necessary resources. Thanks to One Degree, the coalition moves ahead with information sharing between participants, widening the span of interagency referrals and follow-up communications.

We will continue to look for ways to enhance communication and coordination among service providers. We know that these are essential to good services and the betterment of the health of our community.

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A nonprofit corporation serving the  
East San Fernando Valley since 1966

**HILLVIEW**  
Mental Health Center, INC.



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## Recovery, Resilience and Reintegration

**H**illview Mental Health Center offers a full range of programs to promote recovery and independence among our clients with severe mental illness. The Recovery, Resilience and Reintegration (RRR) program works with people 18 years of age and older who have progressed in their treatment and are moving toward reintegrating into their communities.

Participants receive psychiatric care, individual psychotherapy as needed and case management to help them find stable housing, form mutually supportive peer relationships and take advantage of other local resources in their communities.

The RRR program has two tiers. Tier 1, formerly called Field Capable Clinical Services, provides a higher level of care to approximately 375 people. Participants meet frequently with their psychiatrist, psychologist and case manager.

"Tier 1 clients receive field services, meaning that case managers can accompany them to medical visits and appointments at agencies such as the SSI office," says program manager Nahall Emadi, LCSW.



Tier 1 clients can take advantage of Wellness Center group therapy programs, offered Monday through Friday between 9:30 a.m. and 2:30 p.m. Groups address a range of concerns, including self-esteem, stress management and coping skills. Interests in reading and crafts are also discussed.

"Tier 2, formerly called Wellness, involves approximately 650 participants who are living independently and managing their own day-to-day activities," notes program director Shuka Jahromifar, Psy.D.

Tier 2 clients socialize and participate in activities in the Hillview Clubhouse. Under the guidance of coordinator Marie Bohui, the Clubhouse offers classes and groups Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. to noon, as well as daily low-cost lunches and monthly excursions.

RRR sponsored Hillview's recent Art Showcase. The artworks featured were created by Hillview clients who participate in Tier 1 and Tier 2 programs.

## Art Flowers at Hillview

In recognition of Mental Health Awareness Month this past May, Hillview held its annual Art Showcase featuring creative work by clients and staff.

"Art is a medium that can challenge the stigma around mental health," says Julie Jones, Vice President of Clinical Administration. "The Art Showcase allows all of us to see our clients in a different light, as complex human

beings with stories to tell."

This is the 15th year for the event, which over time has grown in both the number of participants and the forms of art submitted. The 2019 Art Showcase featured paintings, drawings, sculpture, piano and guitar performances, and a poetry reading.

"There was such extraordinary art," says Jones. "It was really inspirational."



## Performance Recognition Awards



Hillview President Eva McCraven, second from left, presented recognition awards to Adrian Palma, Sarah Sluder and Darryl Harvey.



Hillview recently introduced a program to recognize individuals who provide outstanding service. Management staff nominates candidates, who are voted on by executive staff. Performance Recognition certificates come with gratitude and gift cards. The inaugural group includes the following:

**Adrian Palma** - As maintenance technician, Adrian keeps Hillview in running order. Sam Stone, his supervisor, appreciates how quickly Adrian adapted to Hillview culture and that he's such a helpful person.

"I like the people and the teamwork we've built at Hillview," says Adrian. "The people here have helped me become a better employee." Outside of work, Adrian enjoys following the Dodgers.

**Sarah Sluder** - As housing coordinator, Sarah helps clients through the complex process of finding suitable places in which to live. Her supervisor, Dr. Shuka Jahromifar, lauds Sarah for exceptional performance, noting that she is always eager and open to taking on new tasks.

"I like that I can see a tangible result by getting clients into housing," says Sarah. "I also appreciate the support I get from case managers. It illustrates how Hillview approaches everything as a team."

On weekends, Sarah likes to go to the beach, hike and camp along with her fiancé and her dog, Tank.

**Darryl Harvey** - Darryl is a community health counselor with the AB109 program, which serves individuals transitioning from jail or prison. His supervisor, David Richards, praises Darryl's calm, respectful and polite manner as well as his ability to meet clients where they're at.

"I try to keep them engaged so they don't isolate," Darryl says about the clients. "I'm constantly reaching out to them and I think that makes a difference." When not at work, Darryl enjoys the company of his wife and two children as well as extended family.

## Transitioning to Independence

Leon Wilson White spent much of his childhood in foster care, hospitals and group homes.

"It was rough," he says. "I was struggling."

He came to Hillview when he turned 19, receiving psychiatric care and case management, and learning to live semi-independently in housing provided by Hillview.

As he gained skills, Leon transitioned to the Full-Service Partnership program. He learned basic skills that no one had taught him

before: how to budget and write checks; how to clean house and do laundry; how to shop for groceries and prepare meals.

With assistance from Hillview, Leon found an apartment in downtown Los Angeles about two years ago and now lives independently.

Leon continues to receive support from Hillview. He takes public transportation to meet with his psychiatrist and case manager, and participates in groups and

activities at the Club House.

"Hillview helped get me ready for the future. They gave me the skills to think more positively about life and about myself," he says.

Leon enjoys sports and participates with Special Olympics in basketball, flag football and hockey tournaments around California. He shares his apartment with Doty, his cat.