



Office of Reentry Services

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Evans Lane Wellness & Recovery Center: Launches Plan to Increase Capacity for the Mentally Ill in the Criminal Justice System

By Tracy E. Stephens



Mary is a 44-year old Latina, born and raised in San Jose and mother to seven children. She was referred to the Evans Lane Wellness & Recovery by Mental Health & Drug Treatment Court due to an extensive history of methamphetamine abuse, multiple arrests and mental illness. Mary engaged in treatment for only a few months but had difficulty staying clean and sober, and went "on-the-run." She was rearrested and referred again to the Evans Lane Wellness & Recovery Center. Her Probation Officer wished the program luck, explaining, "she is one of the hardest clients I've ever had to work with." Mary came back into the program, experiencing symptoms of mood swings, anxiety, depression and irritability, although she appeared more committed to staying clean and sober, and working on improving her life.

She worked hard to attend group and individual treatment sessions with nearly perfect attendance, and also began attending Alcoholic Anonymous (AA) and Narcotics Anonymous (NA) meetings, connected with a sponsor and began the reunification process with her children. Over the next six months, Mary showed tremendous growth, impressed Probation by providing only clean tests and remains clean and sober today.

Due to this impressive program she was able to receive a Section 8 Housing Voucher and now lives independently in her own apartment, and has graduated from Probation.

The Evans Lane Wellness & Recovery Center is undertaking an ambitious effort to duplicate this experience on a larger scale with plans to treat approximately 100 additional individuals who live with severe mental illness and co-occurring substance abuse addictions. This in turn will increase the Center's Outpatient capacity to approximately 200 slots.

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Randy's Story

By Irma Salas, Rehabilitation Officer

The Custody Alternative Supervision Program (CASP) is a re-entry program offering inmates transitional case management including the opportunity to reintegrate back into the community and receive services at the Reentry Resource Center (RRC). Services include drug and alcohol treatment,

educational/vocational training, paid on the job training and health resources through the Mobile Medical Unit and Social Services support.

Randy has struggled with drug addiction since his teenage years. -Con't Page 2

Randy's Story (Con't)

Consequently, he has been in and out of custody for the past 11 years.

Despite the fact that Randy was involved in programs in the past, the efforts were not collaborative. Therefore, Randy indicated he never experienced true success and was unable to reunify with his family and continued to abuse drugs.

Randy states that this time what has made the difference is that he was able to work with Rehabilitation Officers and the CASP Deputies at the RRC who assisted him with his case plan and supervision. This provided him with an opportunity to obtain substance abuse treatment, life skills and career development.

"If I had been released from custody without CASP, I would have been released without a case plan and I would have been overwhelmed with all the things I needed to do such as obtain my social security card and identification card. This program released me to a residential treatment center; from there, I went to a transitional housing unit and later moved to my family home. I was able to obtain my driver's license, my social security card and participate in Traffic Outreach Court. The program taught me how to pace myself and the importance of maintaining a healthy balance.

In the beginning, I may have come across as resistant. However, I am serious about my recovery and it is important to me to have my actions reflect that. I am currently a student at De Anza College working on my AA degree in Sociology. My goal is to use my experience to help troubled youth facing similar challenges. In addition, I am in a meaningful relationship with my girlfriend and we are in the process of moving into our apartment. I completed the CASP in mid-November and feel I am truly grounded and I am highly motivated to continue moving forward to fulfill my goals in life."

Meet Diana Sandoval, Sr. Management Analyst



Diana Sandoval is the new addition to the Reentry Resource Center as the Senior Management Analyst. Diana has been a county employee since 1986 where she worked for Health and Hospital System as a medical biller/collector for over 12 years. Upon completing her degree at San Jose State in Health Science she returned to the county to work as a *Health Educator* for School Linked Services. Diana has also worked for Probation, Mental Health, HIV/AIDS and Emergency Medical

Services where she worked with high levels of data monitoring emergency response times and outcomes. She has a Master's Degree in Public Administration enabling her to work in the areas of policy and governmental processes.

She has two grown children and has been married for over 28 years. She and her family currently reside in Gilroy.

What's in a Number?

Reentry Resource Center (RRC)

- ◆ 50 newly released clients come to RRC weekly
 - ◆ 1,600 Visitor Encounters every month
- ◆ 940 clients have received 3,500 clothes items from RRC's Clothes Closet
- ◆ 2,300 clients have received over 26,000 food items from RRC's Food Pantry

Mobile Medical Unit

(September 4-November 12, 2013)

- ◆ 117 New Patients
 - ◆ 87% are men
- ◆ 43% have been out for less than one month
- ◆ 26% have been in the ER since release
 - ◆ 33% come for medicine refill

Sustainability Project at Elmwood

By Jill Boone



A new project at Elmwood is helping offenders develop job skills, while making the campus less stark and more environmentally friendly. The project, which started with landscaping, has grown out of facility operations, where landscaping teams were mostly focused on keeping the weeds down. Now the participants have a chance to be proactive and create weed control through installing cardboard barriers and mulch. This sustainable landscaping process is key to a weed-free and healthy landscape.

That's just the beginning! The project also offers classroom education provided by Milpitas Adult Education, certification and hands-on work experience in landscape maintenance, vermiculture (worms making compost), composting, design and planting. The participants learn about water and xeriscaping and help to repair the recycled water irrigation system. The composting system was built out of old pallets and will be producing compost for use in the facility. Monterey Bay Nursery has donated plants that were past their useful sales life and one of the County's gardeners has demonstrated how to revive them. They now have a mini-nursery where these plants are growing and some are being used in the landscaping projects. A volunteer master composters has come in to share knowledge on composting.

The landscaping project has been running for less than a year and changes continue to stabilize and improve the project and outcomes. The officers who lead the work crews are now all trained in Bay Friendly Landscaping, which helps to reinforce the sustainability practices.

Offenders who have participated have expressed appreciation for the opportunity and some are considering working with plants and landscaping as future employment possibilities.

Next steps may include establishing job opportunities or longer internships for the sustainability project offenders upon their release. The project is also expanding to include recycling, waste and composting efforts and training.

"I completed the CASP in mid-November and feel I am truly grounded and I am highly motivated to continue moving forward to fulfill my goals in life."

Expungement Services

(September 16-November 12, 2013)

- ◆ 170 Referral Received
- ◆ 97 Case Accepted
- ◆ 8 Petitions Pending Court Dates
- ◆ 9 Petitions Filed for Mandatory Relief
- ◆ 3 Mandatory Relief Petitions Granted

Evans Lane Wellness & Recovery Center (Con't)

Gabby Olivarez, the Adult & Older Adult Services Division Director for the Mental Health Department, unveiled a detailed plan designed to increase the Center's capacity by dramatically expanding its infrastructure through a remodeled floor plan and the hiring of additional employees. Crafted by the Center's management team, Mental Health Administration and Facilities and Fleets staff, the plan calls for the redesigning and remodeling of several offices and the lobby area by January 2014. Mental Health Department has put in a funding request to support the expansion. If approved, the increase in allocation will allow the program to meet the needs of a diverse and intergenerational population, with a focus on sustainability, so that the individuals have the opportunity to inherit a thriving community and avoid a return to drug use and crime.



Calendar of Events DECEMBER 2013

December 11th

Reentry Network Meeting
Reentry Resource Center—Auditorium
151 W. Mission St., San Jose
3:00-4:30 PM

December 19th

Community Correction Partnership Meeting
Adult Probation—Orientation Room (2nd Fl)
2314 N. 1st St., San Jose
9:00-11:00 AM

Office of Reentry Services

Reentry Resource Center
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We're on the Web

www.sccgov.org/sites/reentry

Donation Wish List—Men's Clothes Wanted!



The Re-Entry Resource Center is seeking clothes donation for our male clients. Do you have gently used clothes you wish to donate? We are in need of the following items:

Reentry Toiletry Kit Supplies

- Men Deodorant
- Shaving Supplies
- New packages of men underwear
- New Men Socks
- Bifocal Reading Glasses
- Mouthwash
- Ear Swabs
- Bar of Soaps
- New Hair Brushes and Combs
- Men's Coats
- Men's Clothing
- Clothes Rack
- Large Rubber Storage Bins with Lids

To make a donation, please contact Lorena Madrid at (408) 535-4236.