SYBH staff, who are we?

This issue of the SYBH newsletter is dedicated to our staff. For over 45 years, hundreds of staff have walked our halls and pounded pavement in support of one thing—the well-being of those living with mental health and substance use disorders.

As you turn the pages, you will meet a few of our staff and read about what they do, learn about the best parts of their job and see their thoughts on the recent program retreats.

Pride and dedication are common themes when I speak of my job. I came from working in the private sector as a medical biller for 20 years. Wherever I have been or whatever I have done, I am always committed to do my job to the fullest, to be loyal to my peers, and to be outstanding in my performance.

Some of my duties as a Medical Clerk II in the Quality Assurance (QA) Office, include assisting with the addition of new staff into our Electronic Health Record, Anasazi and scheduling trainings, verifying monthly staff exclusions, providing clerical support with certifying new provider sites and recertifying current provider sites with the Department of Healthcare Services, and providing communication between Youth and Family Services and outside counties when SYBH receives a foster or adopted child who is in need of behavioral health services.

At our QA retreat in October, we did ice breaker activities, a personality color test, and had a little arcade fun after lunch. The three values we agreed on that reflect the QA program were fun, accountability, and teamwork. This experience helped me to learn more about my coworkers and showed how well we all get along.

Make sure to check out the retreat photos on page 6. During the retreats, values were chosen by each program that reflected their group.

-Trisha Hull
ABOUT US...Who I am and what I do at Behavioral Health!

**ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES**  
Patrick Larrigan

Staff analyst, Patrick Larrigan participates in the budget process and audits, completes cost reports, revenue and expenditure reports, and grants, processes private contracts with agencies and crafts all staff reports that go to the Board of Supervisors for approval. He also acts as the SYBH safety representative.

“I like working with all of the great people in Behavioral Health. Even though I do not provide my services to the clients, my job allows the rest of Behavioral Health to provide the services.”

Earlier this year, administration had the opportunity to attend a Leadership retreat to learn about more about staff retreats and bring back the knowledge they gained to each Program Manager in order to accomplish the retreats among each program. Patrick was lucky enough to enjoy both the Administration and Administrative Services retreats and said, “I know that our group had a great time. It was interesting learning about coworker’s personal lives and not just their work lives. We have a very dynamic and fascinating group of people in Administrative Services.”

**HMONG OUTREACH CENTER**  
Mai Vang, LCSW

Mental Health Therapist III, Mai Vang works at the Hmong Outreach Center (HOC) in Olivehurst. Some of her job duties include: providing direct clinical service to the community, supervising line staff, providing supervision and field education to MSW student interns, conducting agency-wide staff training, participating in cultural competence and quality assurance, developing and implementing prevention and early intervention programs.

“The best part of my position is the range of duties and different levels I get to work at. Working with the Hmong population can be complicated because of their differing view and understanding of health and wellness. Being able to work in the differing programs, at the different levels (program developer, supervisor, direct services provider, quality assurance, program evaluation, etc.) allows me to get the insight, and gives me the ability to tackle the complex issues that come with my job.”

The HOC recently had their program retreat with SYBH Adult services, “I don’t get to see and mingle with other people in my department very often and so it was really nice to get out of my niche and be with others”. Mai adds, “I really felt that I got to experience and relate to my colleagues at a different level. Just being in a different environment really helps us to connect in a way that creates more unity.”

**SUBSTANCE USE DISORDER SERVICES**  
Judith Guthrie, LAADC

Prevention Services Coordinator, Judith Guthrie supervises the clinical staff for the Options for Change and Choices Programs. While maintaining compliance with the State of California and Sutter County policies and procedures, Judith collaborates with other Sutter and Yuba County agencies to bring excellent service to the community.

“I think the saying, ‘it takes a village to raise a child’, applies to our participants. It has been a real joy in my work and personal life developing the relationships we have with our community partners and joining together to make a difference where we live,” says Judith.

“I believe the recent staff retreats are important. In our division, clinicians are spread throughout the community and the only time we see each other to exchange ideas is at our staff meetings, every other week. The retreat allowed the time and atmosphere to really see how my colleagues shine. I left feeling really proud of who I work with and what we do.”

**PSYCHIATRIC HEALTH FACILITY (PHF)**  
Janine Bergkamp

Medical Clerk II, Janine Bergkamp has been with SYBH for over 16 years at the Psychiatric Health Facility’s (PHF) nurses station. In those years, Janine has become the first point of contact for many staff and consumers. Some of her duties include: staff and nurse support, completion and filing of forms, ordering supplies, answering the front desk telephone, and “lots of paperwork”.

“The nurses and mental health workers are so kind, compassionate, and patient. What most people don’t realize is that when we are all home with our families, Monday through Sunday, 7 days a week, 24 hours a day, they are here working and caring for the consumers.”

In the short amount of time since PHF Program Manager, Kendra Davis has joined SYBH, Janine has seen an absolute change in morale on the floor and behind the scenes. “There is a sense of positivity and strength in her leadership that all staff recognize and appreciate more than ever.”
LATINO OUTREACH
Cecilia Esparza

Peer mentor, Cecilia Esparza wears many hats at the Latino Outreach Center. Among her daily reception duties, she transports consumers to appointments and out on outings, and provides Spanish-language interpretation for consumers when necessary.

Cecilia enjoys the positive work environment, interacting with the consumers, and working with the Latino Outreach’s awesome staff.

“During our retreat, I really enjoyed the team building activities and the fun activities we all shared. We did a scavenger hunt competing against staff from other programs out in the community. It was a little challenging and intense because it was a timed event, we had so much fun!”

CASE MANAGEMENT
Lou Moua, ICI

Intervention Counselor, Lou Moua works in Transitional Aged Youth (TAY) and Children’s System of Care (CSOC). His position is unique in the way that he provides counseling through the Substance Use Disorder program for adolescents and young adults. “There are many perks to working at TAY and CSOC”, says Lou. “I had always hoped to work with adolescents and young adults, helping them realize in the age range of thirteen to twenty-three years of age, that the choices they make will shape the person they will become. Our Program Manager, Karleen Jakowski has done a wonderful job in caring for our Youth and Family Services staff. Having a Program Manager who believes in her staff encourages me to want to come to work every day and do my job.”

“The Youth and Family Services staff retreat was excellent. We were able to have our retreat in a beautiful country setting. Being offsite from the main building (Behavioral Health) and me being a semi new employee I had some concerns/anxiety about meeting with the rest of the Youth and Family Services staff. By the end of the Staff retreat all of my concerns and anxiety had vanished. I felt that the retreat helped all of us (TAY, CSOC, and Youth Services) to draw closer as the Youth and Family Services Program team.”

PREVENTION & EARLY INTERVENTION
Cory Quinn, ICI

Cory Quinn is an Intervention Counselor in Prevention and Early Intervention (PEI). Some of his duties include teaching classes in schools designed to build social emotional learning skills, prevent bullying, and reduce substance abuse.

He thoroughly enjoys being out in the field at multiple schools and meeting the students. Cory says, “It’s very motivating seeing those ‘a-ha’ moments when the youth connect what they are learning with real life solutions to some of the challenges they are facing”.

PEI recently completed their program retreat with the SUDS program. “I thought it was fun, informative, and a great way to get to know people in the department that I don’t see on a regular basis. Having that opportunity to get together was a great morale boost.”

MEDICAL RECORDS
Sara Wolfgram

Sara is a Medical Clerk II in the Medical Records Office at SYBH. She ensures that Psychiatric Emergency Services (PES) write-ups are accurate, signed in a timely manner, and coded correctly for billing. Among her day-to-day duties she scans documents into the electronic health record and answers questions from PES staff regarding documentation.

Medical Records recently participated in their retreat. Sara’s favorite part was coming together outside of the office with coworkers and learning things about people who she doesn’t interact with on a daily basis. “Our values were all very similar and we got to team-build in a lot of different fun activities”.

NURSING
Kathy Farley-Reilly, LPT

“Nursing is more than just administering medication, it’s knowing your clients and their families,” says SYBH Adult Services nurse, Kathy Farley-Reilly. Kathy makes sure that the doctors orders are followed, does medication ordering, and supports the client’s goals while educating them on their medications, and supporting their independence by teaching recovery.

“This job is not boring,” says Kathy, “it is challenging and different every day. I love the people that I work with and the clients are interesting, exceptional at times, inspiring, and exasperating.” Kathy adds, “Working with Dr. Singh and registered nurse, Sheela Zachariah is the best. They are fair, intelligent, and kind. All the nurses feel like family to me as well”.

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SYBH Medical Director, Hardeep Singh, MD, stated that “Psychiatry is my official role, diagnosing and treating patients with mental disorders, although I would rather say I am someone who tries to understand and empathize with the pain and suffering of other homo sapiens as myself.”

When asked what the best part of his job is, Dr. Singh replied, “Oh that’s easy! I get paid for talking to people, how fun is that!”

In November, the Adult Services program joined forces for an epic day of team building and fun at their program retreat. “Great idea—for once members of Genus Psychiatry being able to freely mingle with other subgroups and discover that we all actually belong to the same species. We all serve the same function of trying to understand and help other humans. I think we should do more of these, who knows, we might discover other similarities between various subgroups. And that will surely lead to more cohesion.”

Janet Nakagawa, Account Clerk III can be seen most days splitting her time between the Adult services building and the Youth and Family Services modular. Janet assists both programs on behalf of the Business Office. Many of her duties include posting insurance payments and denials, sending out insurance claims, and submitting refunds to insurance companies. When working at Youth and Family Services, she assists consumers with verifying their insurance, registration, and setting up payment arrangements as needed.

Janet explains that after 12 years of service at SYBH, the best part of her job is, “having great co-workers to work with, being able to work together as a team, and learning something new everyday.”

At the recent program retreat, the Business Office staff along with Administration, Medical Records, and Reception did team building exercises. “It was interesting how we all started in our own little groups and by the end of the day we were with different groups.”

Susan Williamson, LCSW is a Mental Health Therapist in the Quality Assurance (QA) office. “I have only been working in the QA office for 1 ½ years; however, as of this month, I celebrate my 10 year anniversary with SYBH.”

“As a member of the QA team, my responsibilities include auditing charts and reviewing documentation from contracted individuals and organizations. I facilitate trainings in an effort to keep SYBH staff updated on the Department of Health Care Services and changes in documentation and service delivery. I have the wonderful privilege of participating in the state triennial audits! I know this all sounds quite boring. It could be, but it’s not, primarily because of my very witty and fascinating office mates, Trish and Kristine along with our fearless leader, Rick Bingham (best boss ever!). We make an effort to create a fun work environment with a required daily dose of laughter. That’s why I love my job and it is definitely not boring.”

“Prior to moving to QA, I worked as a social worker in the Psychiatric Health Facility (PHF) for 2½ years. Before working on the PHF, I worked in Psychiatric Emergency Services (PES) for 6 years working holidays and some weekends on the PHF during that time. I loved working in PES and on the PHF, so much so that I sometimes fill in for open shifts in PES and I occasionally work on the PHF with the weekend psychiatrist. The staff in PES and on the PHF are awesome to work with. Love you guys!”

Mental Health Worker I, Eva Campos provides direct patient care on the inpatient unit. Her many duties include assisting with showers to simply helping patients put their socks on, or interpreting for Spanish-speaking consumers. She advocates for many patients that can’t fend for themselves or won’t because of their cultural/religious beliefs or simply because of the stigma of having a mental illness. On several occasions Eva has assisted in feeding patients by hand when they were too decompensated to feed themselves.

“I genuinely enjoy the one-on-one interaction with the patients even when they are not well. I love the diversity of patients and that I never know what to expect when I start my shift, hence the reason I am still on inpatient after 11 years. I always feel I have a responsibility to provide each patient with the best inpatient care during their stay. The patients are very thankful and appreciative of all the effort that has went into getting them well and back into the community. However none of this would be possible if we didn’t have the best team ever working collaboratively to get each patient well. I speak for many of the staff, there is no better feeling than seeing our patients do well after discharge and seeing them succeed on their journey of mental wellness. Hands down any success story supersedes any bad day at work and makes the job that much more rewarding.”
Mental Health Therapist, Choua Yang, LCSW works in Urgent Services, where she completes triages and assessments. She also sees clients for individual and group therapy.

“The best part of my position is learning something new every day. Every case is different, so working with a multidisciplinary team is helpful as I gain insight and knowledge from other team members to better assist clients in getting their needs met.”

“The staff retreat was a great experience and it gave me the opportunity to meet other staff members whom I may have little to no contact with. A value that was brought up at the staff retreat was “trust”, in which I felt was accomplished as we completed team building activities and got to know each other better on a personal level.”

Youth and Family Services program manager, Karleen Jakowski, LMFT, is responsible for the oversight of the continuum of care for children and youth at SYBH. This includes Youth and Outpatient services, Urgent Youth services, the 0-5 Full Service Partnership (FSP) Program, Children’s System of Care (CSOC) FSP, and Transition Age Youth (TAY) FSP. She is also the liaison between SYBH and Victor Community Support Services of Marysville.

“It is an honor to serve the most vulnerable children, youth, and families in our community. My commitment to provide the highest quality service to those who need it most is what drives me and makes my job so fulfilling. The icing on the cake is that we have the most incredible, dedicated and hardworking team of professionals working together to serve our community. My team is amazing and I am so proud of the work they do every day. I am grateful to work with a supportive and visionary administration team. I love being able to collaborate with our community partners because it truly takes a village and we could not do the job we do if we didn’t have the partnerships that we have in Sutter-Yuba.”

“Our retreat was really wonderful. Youth Services and CSOC/TAY were merged when I joined SYBH into one program. This retreat was really the first time that we had an opportunity to come together as a larger group and connect. Our goals were to get to know each other a little better and do some program development. We accomplished these goals through some fun team building exercises and through our values exploration activities. We were in a beautiful location (thank you Gayle), had delicious food and most of all, got the chance to connect with one another and find shared values that drive our work together. We are grateful for the opportunity to spend such a great day together and I am definitely looking forward to building on the momentum created in our retreat to continue to bridge my two teams together.”

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In November, SYBH hosted a luncheon to acknowledge all of the hard working and dedicated peer mentors who have become a part of our family. The turnout was fantastic. Gifts of appreciation were presented to peer staff and each were thanked individually by their supervisors and fellow colleagues. Here are a couple of snapshots from the event:

The superhero themed lunch included an amazing dessert table!

SYBH staff, agency-wide came to celebrate the accomplishments of the peer staff and shared their stories and appreciation.
SYBH awards staff with Longevity Awards and acknowledges them individually for their appreciated years of service with Sutter County. Here was this quarter’s Recipient:

Medical Office Supervisor, Debbie Greathouse has been a presence at SYBH for 40 years. When she started, her office was on Ohleyer Road and they would bring patients to the psychiatric ward of the County General Hospital that used to occupy our current building. She has worked in both inpatient and outpatient settings. Debbie currently supervises Reception, Transcription, and Medical Records. She assists clinical staff with scheduling and in many other ways. She was a key player in our implementation of telemedicine. Thank you Debbie for your loyalty, integrity, and all of your hard work! You are so appreciated!

Quality Assurance Award for Excellence
Staff Analyst, Megan Ginilo

The QA office chose Megan because of her constant positive and supportive attitude to all things “quality”. She volunteers for projects and prepared an entire section of the DHCS protocol to present at the triennial review in October 2016. She has been a tremendous help on Performance Improvement Projects (PIPS), especially with statistical data when requested. She also acts graciously as a liaison between SYBH and peer staff. And with everything she does, it is always with a smile. You are so amazing Megan! Thank you for sharing your wonderful abilities and joyous attitude!

“We Believe You Soar Awards...”

At the January 19th SYBH Quarterly All Staff meeting, the Administrative Staff issued the “We Believe You Soar” awards. Awardees were nominated by their peers and voted on by Administration based on their teamwork, leadership, service excellence and commitment. This quarter's Awardees are:

October: Tara Silva
Due to Tara's commitment and integrity of her job, she is the first person to stop an unnecessary commitment to the state hospital, saving the client the trauma of state hospitalization and saving the county thousands of dollars to house someone at the state hospital. Forensics is incredibly proud!

November: Donna Brown
Donna is a truly valuable asset to any team! Donna is honest, dependable, and incredibly hard-working. Her knowledge of co-occurring disorders is a huge advantage to the entire team! Donna is passionate about her work and is always willing to go the extra mile!

December: Xay Vang
Xay has been an exceptional member of the SYBH since his hiring. He has immediately jumped into numerous tasks to help out fellow programs and team members. He has done all of this with flexibility, a positive attitude, integrity and commitment to his job. He has demonstrated outstanding leadership.
Last spring the Behavioral Health administrative team invested in a leadership and team building process to better understand our strengths and values related to the work we do. Through a process of value identification, we quickly realized we shared values specific to leadership, service, and community. Values such as integrity, honesty, compassion, humor, teamwork, service, and dedication were consistently endorsed as most important to our leadership team. Last fall, our outpatient programs conducted similar leadership and teambuilding activities and the inpatient unit will follow suit in the very near future.

As I read through staff profiles contained within this newsletter, it occurred to me many of our teammates share these same values. Patrick Larrigan summed up the coordination between administrative and clinical services as relying heavily on teamwork in order to consistently serve the members of our community. Janine Bergkamp acknowledged the compassion our mental health workers and psychiatric nurses in our Psychiatric Health Facility demonstrate 24 hours per day, seven days per week, and 365 days per year. Susan Williamson’s role in quality assurance clearly exhibits a high degree of integrity and honesty to ensure we are operating in compliance with rules and regulations. The values of service and dedication are consistently demonstrated by our teammates who serve our most vulnerable populations in the emergency room, correctional facilities, and in the community. Last and certainly not least, I have observed humor to be prevalent throughout our division on a daily basis. At any given point in time, one can hear laughter echoing throughout the hallways.

I look forward to synthesizing the values uncovered from the retreats to create a list of shared values throughout our division. It is a pleasure to work with a group of highly dedicated and service oriented individuals. I believe our best is yet to come!

Q & A: WHERE DO YOU SEE YOURSELF IN 10 YEARS?

We asked some random SYBH staff where they saw themselves in 10 years and these were their responses:

- “Ten years from now I see myself surrounded by loving family and friends, being a loving wife, mother, daughter, sister and friend, and happily working for SYBH. I also see myself continuing to learn and master new skills which will help me grow as a person as well as professionally.”
  - Erika Estrada, Medical Clerk II

- “In ten years, I will be working as a psychologist or something related in the mental health field, along with playing music.”
  - Yeng Vang, Resource Specialist

- “In ten years I hope to have completed my Masters in Psychology. I have been thinking about going back to school but after being out for a few years now it’s been pretty difficult to go back. But it is something that is definitely on my list to accomplish. On another note…..I would love to visit NEW YORK! (on my bucket list).”
  - Monica Carranza, Medical Clerk II

- “In ten years I hope to be about nine years into licensure as a Marriage and Family Therapist and be working in Forensics in some capacity. We’ll be close to celebrating 20 years of marriage, which we want to celebrate by taking a 2 week vacation to Tahiti. Maybe in 10 years we’ll have enough saved up!”
  - Kitrice Rosa, Forensic Mental Health Specialist
IN MEMORIAM

In 2016, SYBH lost two dedicated and loyal colleagues.
We invited their friends to leave words and share some stories.
This quarter’s issue of the SYBH Newsletter is dedicated to Claire Nichols and Taj Fields.

Claire Nichols is dearly missed by the SYBH family. Claire provided over 35 years of dedicated services to Sutter County. Throughout her career, Claire worked in many different accounting and payroll-related positions at SYBH. She retired on December 4, 2015. Claire was respectful and compassionate in her dealings with both clients and personnel.
Many of our staff have very special memories of Claire. Instead of one author for this tribute, we felt it important to have many staff contribute their heartfelt words and sweet memories.

"I loved sharing stories with Claire, she listened so intently"
"Fierce and awesome!"  "Claire looked beautiful in payroll purple"
"Claire was a socializer- loved being with her friends, family and co-workers"
"She loved to laugh"  "She loved being with her friends and family"
"Four words make me think of Claire: Faith, Family, Friends and Bingo!"
"She was the unofficial staff counselor"  "Claire was a comforting person, who always was there to listen"

Several years ago a quiet natured, unassuming, and respectful young man named Taj Fields was hired at SYBH in the Psychiatric Health Facility as a Mental Health Worker. Taj quickly began exhibiting the qualities of a person who cared and was always giving of himself. He was well received by consumers and coworkers alike. To fellow coworker, Robert Ahu he became a good friend sharing common interests.
"Right off, I could detect an aura about Taj that made him approachable. As my new trainee, I didn’t know how good friends we would become. He dared to step into my realm and started wearing Aloha shirts,” says Ahu.

Over time, Robert and Taj began a friendship beyond the walls of SYBH. Taj shared his love of boxing with youth in the community as a way of “giving back” which was important to him, using his knowledge of the sport to help guide young people to “do better” and strive for success.

In 2016, Taj became a team member in Adult services as a Mental Health Worker in the Sunrise Room. The avid 49er football and Giants baseball fan could be heard and seen through the halls on Live Oak Boulevard laughing and joking around with staff making friends in every program.

A proud man of his many accomplishments, Taj will be remembered as putting his family first, giving back to his community, having a “no shortcuts, do the work”, work ethic, and a wonderful sense of humor.

"For you my friend, for that man that you are, you have earned every blessing that heaven can bestow on you and your family”. –Robert Ahu

It's hard to forget someone, who gave you so much to remember.
Thank you for everything you have left us to remember Claire and Taj. We miss you.