



THE LOOP

A COLLECTION OF STORIES FROM AROUND CALIFORNIA

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As 2021 ends and we embark on 2022, it's fitting to acknowledge the challenges and successes that we experienced in 2021. One can't help but feel the excitement in anticipation of what is ahead of us in 2022. The accomplishments that we experienced last year could not have been possible without every one of you. Rest assured, our achievements are not driven by leadership alone, as it takes everyone doing their part to Uplift the Human Spirit. We are best when we stand together while celebrating our successes and taking responsibility for our shortcomings. When we combine our strengths, knowledge, and passion - We are WestCare!

This past year, we witnessed the emergence of new leadership and structure, and while change is good, it is not always easy. I am excited thinking of the possibilities ahead of us with Mary Ann Knoy as the Vice President of Administration and Cleadus Shelton as the Vice President of Operations. Then seeing who they selected to work beside them with Jenny Gonzalez and Robert Church in their respective roles as Deputy Administrators, it's apparent that greatness is ahead. Since coming together, this team has brought forth some fresh new ideas to improve, support, and strengthen services for staff, our consumers, and the communities in which we operate to improve how our organization functions. The prospects of what this team has in store for California are exciting, and I have complete faith in what we will accomplish under their leadership.

As we reach the two-year mark since our lives have been changed by the COVID-19 pandemic and the recent surges in cases due to the omicron variant, we recognize that this isn't over. As an organization, we are steadfast in our commitment to the safety of our staff, consumers, and community, and we can only do that by following our COVID-19 protocols. Ultimately, we want everyone to be safe, sensible, and join us in being a part of the solution to ensuring the continued health of ourselves, those we serve, and our families.

It is difficult not to express my eagerness when looking ahead at the upcoming change to our system of care with the adoption of California Advancing and Innovating Medi-Cal, also known as CalAIM. CalAIM advances several key priorities by leveraging Medi-Cal as a tool to address the complex challenges facing California's most vulnerable residents such as homelessness, insufficient behavioral health care access, children with complex medical conditions, the growing number of justice-involved populations who have significant clinical needs, and the growing aging population. This paradigm shift recognizes the opportunity to provide non-clinical interventions focused on a whole-person care approach via Medi-Cal that targets social determinants of health and reduces health disparities and inequities. Another significant change we will see with CalAIM is payment reform which hinges on the outcomes of services instead of the services themselves. Additionally, Medi-Cal managed care plans will be required to improve the coordination of services provided by community-based providers like WestCare.

As we venture into the new year, I see nothing but new opportunities for success and a year that brings peace, love, and happiness to you and your loved ones!



**Shawn Jenkins, Chief Operating Officer,
WestCare Foundation - Western Region**



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Program Spotlight: CCTRP - San Diego

WestCare California, Inc.'s **Custody to Community Transitional Reentry Program (CCTRP)** program, in collaboration with the California Department of Corrections (CDCR), is a residential program focused on reducing recidivism through targeted and evidence-based interventions. The program serves up to 112 high-risk female offenders who are in the last two years of their sentence by providing a place for them to reside within the community rather than in an institution. The aim is to prepare clients to successfully re-enter the community with a focus on gender-responsive and trauma-informed services.

WestCare assists with the development of educational and vocational skills and links women to health care and education. The women begin work on family reunification, payment of restitution, resolving child support issues, and beginning community living.

The CCTRP – San Diego program is currently seeking lightly used or like new donations of:

- Commercial microwave
- Ironing boards (2)
- Volleyballs
- DVD player
- Scrabble board
- Badminton set

If you would like to donate to support the program and the women that they serve, please contact CCTRP – San Diego by calling 619-359-8266 Ext. 21002.

"First, I would like to thank the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (CDCR) for giving me the option to come to WestCare. This program has given me many tools that have helped in my transition from prison to becoming a functioning, productive member of society again.

I am so excited to have this opportunity to share with others that change is possible. I recently woke up to a wonderful email from my criminology professor, a retired federal parole agent, telling me how proud she is of me and inviting me to lunch.

I was not always a criminal, but I made some poor choices in my life. I had gotten divorced and was looking for a way to supplement my alimony. A friend's girlfriend had asked me to transport drugs as means to supplement my income. Sadly, I became addicted to the product I was moving and I went from an IT analyst to a drug addict and then to prison.

Through the wonderful counseling and therapy at WestCare, I gained the confidence to become a well-rounded individual that knows how to set boundaries and express themselves in a healthy way. The vocational classes WestCare provides are invaluable. I cannot speak highly enough about their vocational program. It taught me how to interview confidently, interact with others, and write a resume.

I believe that it should be mandatory for everyone in similar situations to come to WestCare. The dedication the staff has put into my treatment is invaluable. I am now able to set both personal and professional goals and achieve them. I am currently working on my Bachelor of Science in Administration of Justice and have a 4.0 GPA, a valid driver's license with no blemishes, an insurance card, 720 credit score, debit and credit card, and medical insurance. After the recent passing of my stepfather, I became a great support system for my mom, which is a wonderful feeling after all the grief I once caused. I continue to maintain a healthy relationship with both my children and ex-husband. I can honestly say being a client at WestCare has changed me for the better. The program gave me the tools to become a more fortunate and contented person." - Mary K. Lee



A Testimony featuring Mary

Kudos to our Facility Monitors

"I would like to recognize the entire team of facility monitors at CCTRP in San Diego. They are the glue that holds our program together. Whether they are dealing with client issues, driving, organizing medication books, or running passes - these ladies are on it! They stay late, come in early, and never complain. Their commitment to their fellow staff and the clients that we serve is outstanding, and I am not sure that they are truly aware of how invaluable they are to the program. Our program would not be the same without the passion and dedication that they bring to our site. Thank you!"

- **Stephanie Bertrand**, Program Director,
CCTRP – San Diego

Pictured above from left to right: Dianna Henderson, Nancy Wiley, Magdalena Luna, and Carolina Sanchez

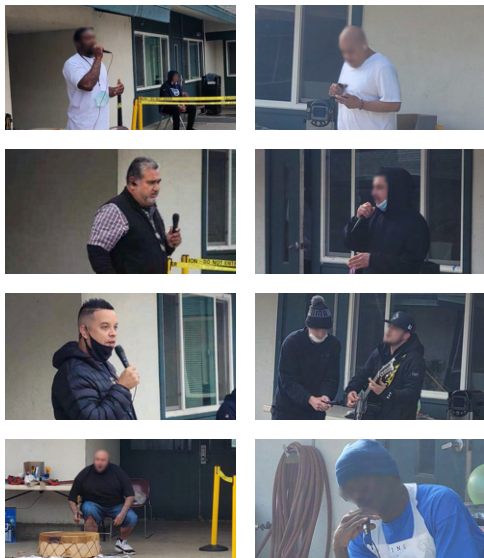
Not pictured: Najmo Abdi, Nefiso Abdi, Eden Ice, Wanda Morgan, and Nicolette Wong



Kudos to SJVV – Stockton and STOP Area 1: North Highlands!

Thank you to our Northern California SJVV (Left) and STOP (Right) teams for sharing just a glimpse of what their holiday celebrations looked like! We appreciate you and all that you do for our Veterans and parolee populations, respectively!

Stories from our California Programs



11/25 - WestCare's Got Talent at MLK Residential

This past Thanksgiving, the staff of our **MLK Residential** program in Fresno kept the spirits of their men, women, and children served high while they were away from their family by hosting a longtime tradition of theirs - the WestCare's Got Talent, talent show!

In all, they had 12 performances on behalf of their staff and clients including live music, poetry, magic tricks, and Native American drumming! All who entered received a prize for their participation. Longtime driver and participant in this MLK tradition, Mario Salinas, treated everyone on hand to his amazing singing voice while MLK driver, Robert Motely and MLK Unit Clerk, Hassan Driver, each shared their personal recovery stories.

Before and after the event, a game was held with six clients, who would try to pop each other's balloons that were tied to their ankles using only their feet. Between performances, members of the audience including staff and clients were able to take the mic and explain what they were thankful for.

Thank you to all who organized the event, performed, or attended! Our family is truly gifted, and it is always a pleasure to see what hidden talents we each have to share!



12/22 & 23 - A Season of Giving for Those Who Have Served

In December, our **San Joaquin Valley Veterans (SJVV)** team in Fresno had a few busy days of giving back to our Veterans and their families! On December 22, their staff delivered meals from Boston Market to program participants. This was made possible by their Supportive Services for Veteran Families (SSVF) funding, which allows them to provide meals to ensure that no Veteran goes hungry. SSVF Program Coordinator, Yadi Renteria, commented, "We are thankful for this opportunity as we have been able to partner with the Boston Market to coordinate meal preparation for over 60 Veteran households!"

On December 23, Lead Veteran Advocate, Christina Valtierra; Case Manager Savannah Corbin, and Outreach Specialist, Raymond Gonzales, delivered meals to Veterans residing at the **Renaissance at Parc Grove** affordable housing community. In total, 30 households received a warm breakfast prepared by our amazing community partners with the **Fresno Housing Authority**.

Additionally, **Pacific Gas & Electric (PG&E)** continued a longtime tradition of theirs! For many years, their team has bought Christmas gifts for two Veteran households. PG&E allows our team to identify households and submit a list of needs and wants from these families. In the past, they provided these gifts to families that had stable housing. However, this year, our team advocated for their homeless families served who are currently sheltered in hotels. Their funding was extended allowing them to shelter all Veteran households while they work on identifying a permanent housing solution. In the end, Christmas came early on December 23 for two Veteran households under the case management of Journey Veteran Advocate, Yvette Morales.

Thanks to our donors and amazing community partners, SJVV was able to give these families the joyous Christmas that they deserved!

12/21 - Noble Credit Union Shares Holiday Cheer with Those in Treatment

Every month, the **Noble Credit Union** conducts "Random Acts of Kindness" in which they make a special delivery of donations to Fresno area non-profits! In December, our **MLK Residential** facility was chosen! As part, they visited the facility bearing a collection of board and card games to help keep the men, women, and children that we serve entertained and create new memories as they receive care from our programs! We'd like to send our heartfelt thanks to Maria Walton and Sam Johnson from Noble Credit Union for making this gift possible!



2021 Years of Service Recognition



We'd like to take this moment to recognize the following individuals, whom as of December 31, have reached milestones of five years or more of continuous service with our organization! Thank you all for your loyalty to our organization and your unwavering commitment to Uplifting the Human Spirit!

To our 126 staff who received a special card, lapel pin, and message on behalf of our Chief Operating Officer of WestCare's Western Region, Shawn Jenkins, for their service of one day to one year - thank you for choosing WestCare! In time, we hope to be able to celebrate your future milestones with our family of services!

31 Years of Service:

- **Shawn Jenkins**, Chief Operating Officer, WestCare Foundation – Western Region

20 Years of Service:

- **April Gonzalez**, Case Manager, STOP Area 3: Fresno
- **Jenny Gonzalez**, Deputy Administrator, Administration
- **Mario Salinas**, Driver, MLK Residential

15 Years of Service:

- **Kyle Berry**, Project Manager, Maintenance
- **Derrick Bressel**, Program Director, Fresno Day Reporting Center
- **Francisco Gonzalez**, Maintenance Supervisor, Maintenance
- **Patti Johnson**, Case Manager, STOP Area 1: North Highlands
- **Robert Motley**, Driver, MLK Residential
- **Geraldine Ramirez**, Contract Compliance, STOP Area 3: Fresno

10 Years of Service:

- **Herbert Cruz**, Medical Director, Administration
- **Norma Gonzalez**, Family Service Specialist, MLK Residential
- **Lashon Hamilton**, Data Entry Tech, Data Systems
- **Sydney Hoetker**, Case Manager, STOP Area 3: Fresno
- **Charles McDowell**, Driver, STOP Area 3: Fresno
- **Lee Noel-Story**, Community Service Representative, STOP Area 1: North Highlands
- **Melissa Rhea**, Director Research & Evaluation, WestCare Foundation
- **Kathryn Tkac**, Certified Substance Abuse Counselor, MLK Residential
- **Terry Walker**, Quality Assurance Assistant, Administration

5 Years of Service:

- **Andrea Borge**, Case Manager, STOP Area 1: North Highlands
- **Curtis Combs**, Case Manager, Veterans Plaza GPD
- **Tina Diaz**, Certified Substance Abuse Counselor, CCTRP - Stockton
- **Brittani Eriksen**, Certified Substance Abuse Counselor, CCTRP - Stockton
- **Tracy Hayes**, Data Entry Tech, Data Systems
- **Abrahn Hicks**, Facility Monitor, CCTRP - Stockton
- **Robin Horton**, Transportation Coordinator, STOP Area 1: North Highlands
- **Paula Jimenez**, Clerical, CCTRP - Stockton
- **Eric Ju**, Facility Monitor, CCTRP – Stockton
- **Charlene Mei Chun Ju**, Program Director, CCTRP – Stockton
- **Thao Lee**, Counselor Tech III, MLK Residential
- **Nakesha Lee**, Data Entry Tech, Data Systems
- **Lynette Lewis**, Cook, CCTRP - Stockton
- **Theresa McCracken**, Case Manager, STOP Area 3: Fresno
- **Nancy Montano**, Benefits Specialist, Admissions and Outpatient
- **Alma Paredes**, Certified Substance Abuse Counselor, CCTRP – San Diego
- **Terri Reason**, Administrative Assistant, STOP Area 3: Fresno
- **Melissa Rivas**, Case Manager, STOP Area 3: Fresno
- **Anamaria Rodriguez**, Personal Service Coordinator, MLK Residential
- **Jason Rowe**, IT Analyst, WestCare Foundation
- **Valentina Sanchez**, Counselor I, MLK Residential
- **Aneisa Shelton**, Facility Monitor, CCTRP - Stockton
- **Earl Sparks**, Personal Service Coordinator, MLK Residential
- **Karen Trexler**, CBT Facilitator/AOD Counselor, Fresno Day Reporting Center
- **Deja Velasquez**, Employment Vocational Specialist, MLK Residential
- **Ramona Velasquez**, Counselor III, MLK Residential
- **Angela Wheeler**, Bookkeeper, CCTRP - Stockton

2021 Leadership Award Recipient: Rudy McDaniel, Program Director, STOP Area 1

We'd like to send a belated congratulations to Rudy McDaniel for being one of eight recipients of the 2021 WestCare California Leadership Award as selected by Shawn Jenkins, Chief Operating Officer (COO) for our Western Region! Congratulations, Rudy and thank you for your unwavering leadership, guidance, and support of your staff and those that we serve!



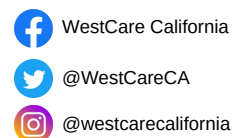
Kudos to Katie Broadway-Beers, M2M Counselor, MLK Residential

Congratulations to Katie, who was chosen this past December by our MLK Residential's Women's and Men's units in Fresno as their Staff of the Week! Thank you, Katie, for your commitment to Uplifting The Human Spirit in all that you do!

Continue the Journey Online!

Follow WestCare California on social media to read stories, follow our team's journey, and how we're growing throughout the state of California!

#WestCareCA



Connect with us in California

Get in touch with our Marketing Department to learn more about what is happening in WestCare California at marketing@westcare.com