

FALL 2019

# THE JOURNEY

## A YEAR TO CELEBRATE



CELEBRATING 40 YEARS OF WELLNESS

**Transitions-Mental Health Association**

Inspiring hope, growth, recovery,  
and wellness in our communities

[www.t-mha.org](http://www.t-mha.org)



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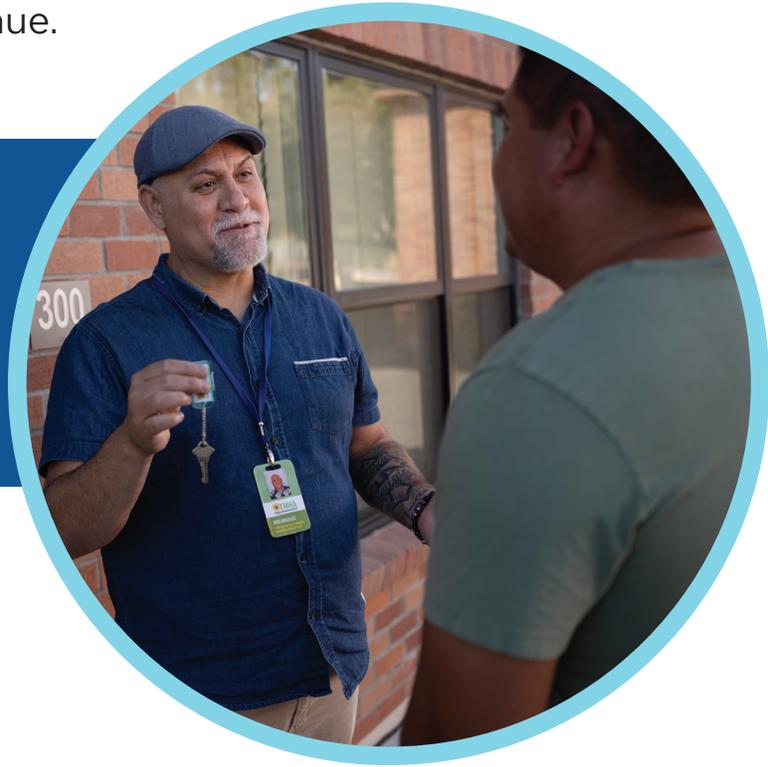
TMHATweets

# BISHOP STREET STUDIOS OPENS ITS DOORS

After 18 months of construction, Bishop Street Studios is fully occupied. 33 TMHA clients have moved in and are now living on the hill above Johnson Avenue.

“ I’ve been giving each resident a walk-through tour of their apartment. At the end I put the key in their hand and say Welcome Home. And that’s when the tears start flowing.”

—Jose, Bishop Street Studios Resident Manager



“ When I got the call and they told me, yes, you do have a place, my first thought was: Thanksgiving dinner. I have a place to cook for my family. All my kids and my grandkids will be here.”

— Liz, Bishop Street Studios Resident

Check out TMHA’s social media for pictures of the grand opening of Bishop Street Studios!

# GROWING GROUNDS GETS A BOOST



The year is ending with wonderful news for our Growing Grounds Enterprises.

Growing Grounds Farm of Santa Maria received a \$150,000 contract this fall with Santa Barbara County's Workforce Development Board. Widespread community support and the advocacy efforts of Supervisor Steve Lavagnino resulted in the first contract the farm has received in 11 years. County funding will be matched with grants and farm sales revenue to sustain this program, which continues to serve 50 TMHA clients each year.

On the heels of this development, all three Growing Grounds businesses were awarded a \$125,000 grant from the Hughes Charitable Foundation.

With new business logos, special sales, and the usual high quality products, Growing Grounds Enterprises continues to be an outstanding employment opportunity for our clients.



## Gratitude

I started working at Growing Grounds Nursery a year ago.

My dog required medication and I needed that helping hand to afford it. Coming to the farm made me super anxious, but I started to realize the staff cared and wanted to help me. One of them told me I would be a good fit for the new Sales Rep job. I've learned that when people say something here, they mean it. It's a great opportunity.

I was homeless for about four years and just moved into Bishop Street Studios. Having a place of my own, where my dog is welcome, where I can do the simple things I'd almost forgotten how to do... it's the best feeling in the world. With TMHA, it's been an amazing transition from having so little to having so much.

— Steve, Growing Grounds Nursery Sales Representative

# HOMELESS PROGRAM OUTGROWS ITS NAME

# 70 NOW

Five years ago, TMHA launched 50Now, a collaboration with the Housing Authority of San Luis Obispo (HASLO) and the County of San Luis Obispo Department of Social Services. The program addresses chronic homelessness with a “Housing First” model. Program staff identify the most vulnerable homeless individuals in the County, place them in permanent housing, and provide behavioral health treatment, case management, and other services that help them stabilize and maintain their housing. Earlier this year, the San Luis Obispo County Board of Supervisors voted to expand the program for a second time.

“Getting 50Now increased to 70Now was my main budget priority because the program is an evidence-based success and proves that Housing First works”, said Supervisor Adam Hill. Supervisor Bruce Gibson concurred. “We know that the coordinated services offered have made a big difference in the lives of our most vulnerable neighbors. I appreciate the efforts of so many caring professionals in making this program so successful.” TMHA extends a heartfelt thank-you to our partners at CAPSLO, ECHO, and Five Cities Homeless Coalition.

**98% reduction of bed days in an incarceration setting**

**97% reduction in citations and arrest**

**91% reduction in hospital day stays**

**89% of clients increased or maintained income in the first 12 months**



I tell people that 70Now is not an uptight situation. They work with folks who've been institutionalized and on the streets for a certain amount of time. They're not there to beat you down or go *No No Bad Bad*. They actually work with who you are, and they are so friendly. They helped me get my Social Security Card, ID, Food Stamps, a phone...they got me to pay rent every month, and they've got me taking my medication. It just makes your mind start thinking different, it changed me a lot. I'm not fighting for my life anymore.

—Angela, 70Now Client

# Easy Riders

TMHA has been collaborating with the San Luis Obispo Police Department and John Klevins is leading the charge. As a member of the Community Action Team, John finds ways to assist individuals with mental health issues. Lately, his efforts have led to a side project.

“SLOPD has a Property Division where stolen and abandoned bikes come in regularly,” he explains. “If they’re unclaimed after 3 months, I take these

bikes to 40Prado and we use them as perks, a real pat on the back. You’ve gone through our program, you’re doing what we’ve asked you to do, you’ve got a job, you’re 90 days clean and sober, you’re taking your meds...here’s a way to easily get around town.”



John Klevins with Jason Barrett SLO PD

**Help this program flourish and our homeless clients succeed.  
If you have a U-lock, a backpack, or a bike to donate, please  
drop them by our headquarters.**



From left to right: Lorena Jimenez, Jennifer McMurrian, Denise Manriquez, Cathie Ortiz, and Gabriela Chavez

## LEAD Leads the Way

LEAD stands for Lived Experience Advocacy Development. Through generous grants from The McCune Foundation, Denise Manriquez at the Santa Maria Recovery Learning Community has established a team of men and women with lived experience of a mental illness who speak to the community and advocate for important changes in local policy.

Over the past four years, LEAD has organized Longest Night Vigils in North Santa Barbara County, successfully advocated for a new bus stop on Foster Road by the County Behavioral Health clinic, and been a key player in organizing TMHA’s first-ever mental health forum with Allan Hancock Community College.

LEAD represents a new generation of community leaders: a group that is deeply invested in the cause of mental health advocacy and accurately and empathically represents its peers in the process.

# Small Program, Big Change



TMHA's Youth Treatment Program has experienced significant changes in the past three years.

The program now operates as a six-bed Short-Term Residential Therapeutic Program, which means the staff works with the highest-level need kids. These are young people who are emerging from stays in hospitals and psychiatric units and need an opportunity to stabilize in a program like YTP.

“With our new license, we can add more therapists to work directly with the residents,” says Program Manager Alley Jensen. “It’s a good group of kids to add in intense services. It helps us get to the core: we’re a therapeutic treatment program, and the goal when you leave is not about how many Netflix series you got through, but how many new skills you’ve built.”

In the last year, YTP has also become an all-female house.

“The house is big, but it was pretty tight when we had to have different genders on each floor,” Jensen acknowledges. “With all girls, we can really spread out in the house.” A recent grant from the Women’s Legacy Fund has allowed Jensen and her staff to purchase the *Be Body Positive Model* curriculum, which provides a whole-person, non-shaming approach to the mystery and miracle of living in a human body. The curriculum is about 15 hours, and will start up in January—just another change to a small program with a major impact.

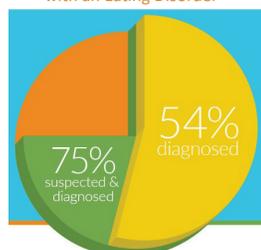
## In This Together

After two years, TMHA’s High School Program has reached over 20 schools throughout the Central Coast, providing training and mental health education to over 3,700 students and faculty. The program helps our young people recognize that they are not alone with anxiety, depression, and other challenges. Just as important, they are discovering they have the power to help one another. 53% of students who experienced TMHA’s *New Perspectives* curriculum reported they now “know how to talk to a friend when I think they’re struggling with their mental health.”

### A NEW PERSPECTIVE ON EATING DISORDERS...

- **What they are:**
  - Highest mortality rate of all psychiatric conditions
  - Highest suicide rate of all mental illnesses
- **What they’re not:**
  - A fad diet
  - About food
  - Weight
  - Vanity

Over Half of the LGBTQ Youth Surveyed Have Been Diagnosed with an Eating Disorder



## CONNECT

- **What if they make me promise to not tell?**
  - Their life is more important than your friendship.
    - Tell a trusted adult **ASAP**.
- **What if they don’t want my help?**
  - Not a safety issue? Offer to be there if they change their mind.



# The TMHA Experience - Quotes from Clients



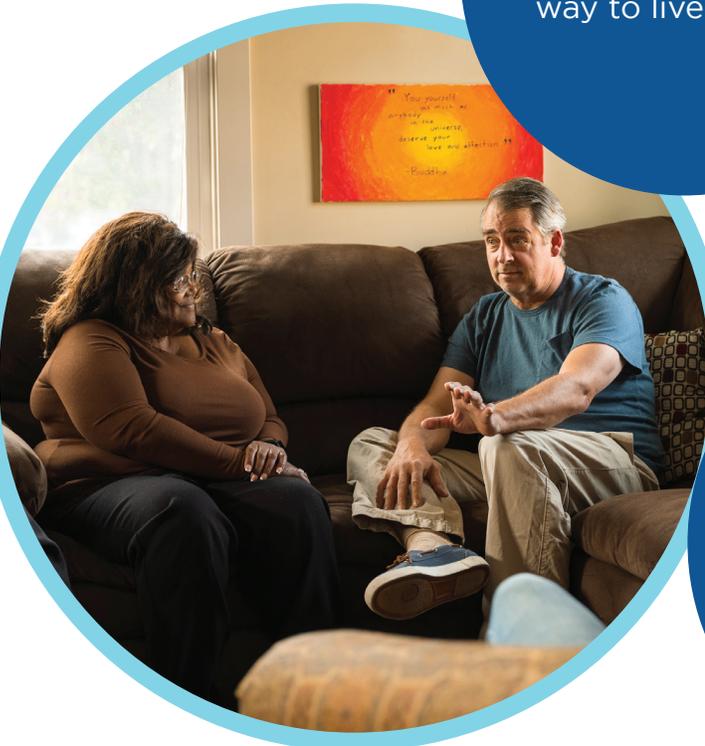
“ I like the empathy and care the staff have for program members and each other. The unity and family feeling is great.”

“ The program has shown me a better way to live my life.”



“ TMHA is great. I would never have a home without TMHA and all the great caring people that work in TMHA.”

\*All quotes from the 2019 Client Satisfaction Survey



Check out TMHA's new video about our Family Services program. You can view NOT ALONE at <https://www.youtube.com/user/TMHAvideo>

# INSPIRING HOPE, GROWTH, RECOVERY AND WELLNESS IN OUR COMMUNITIES FOR 40 YEARS



## HOW YOU CAN HELP...

Donations and in-kind services are both appreciated and vital. Please consider including TMHA in your year-end tax planning, or making a legacy gift. For more information on Planned Giving, please contact Michael Kaplan at (805) 540-6513.

Volunteers are always welcome in our programs and fundraising events. One or two hours of your time can make a significant difference. Please contact Caity McCardell at (805) 540-6557.

TMHA receives funding from Proposition 63, California's Mental Health Services Act (MHSA) through collaborations with the San Luis Obispo County Behavioral Health Department and the Santa Barbara County Department of Behavioral Wellness.

