

Hope Services SOUTH DISTRICT Newsletter- Summer 2016

Gilroy, Hollister, Monterey and Salinas

Director's Message—Kristi Alarid

Dear Family Members and Caregivers,

Some amazing employment opportunities, program changes, and community service activities have been happening in Hope Services' South District.

If you have been to the Gilroy program site lately, you will really have noticed changes! In preparation for the new Employment, Media and Community Connections (EMCC) program's classroom needs, there have been renovations to the interior of Hope Services' Gilroy building. Rollout date for the EMCC programs in Gilroy and Hollister was July 1, 2016. Everyone is excited about the new opportunities, whether in our new classroom settings or out participating in meaningful community activities! Refer to the EMCC launch article inside for details.

There have been new and expanded employment opportunities secured for Hope Services' participants at the Gilroy and Salinas Walmart Stores, Specialized Bicycles, and a grant-funded new grounds maintenance contract at Tatum's Garden in Salinas. Read about the

addition of another school garden program in Salinas and a native plant propagation project with Monterey Peninsula Regional Park District. Join me in supporting and thanking these businesses and organizations for hiring Hope Services' participants' and recognizing their ability to perform quality work.

Hope Services' program participants and staff continue to be actively giving back to their community in many ways. It isn't too late to mention that Steve Garcia, Hope Services' South District Community Liaison, was named Advocate of the Year by the Department of Rehabilitation at their annual awards meeting.

The South District has had a remarkable year so far, and I am so happy to share all this good news in the Summer Edition of the South District Newsletter. Grand Openings of the Gilroy and Hollister EMCC program sites are planned for late August. More information will be provided in the near future.

Wishing you the best,

Kristi Alarid

Garden Club Receives Award from Monterey Park Elementary School



Hope Services was recognized at the Monterey Park Elementary School's Volunteer Appreciation luncheon.

Staff and participants of Hope Services' Community Integration and Training program were invited to attend Monterey Park Elementary School's Volunteer Appreciation Luncheon. They were recognized by Principal Brian Hays, teachers, students, parents, and fellow volunteers for their continued contributions to the school's inclusive garden and nutrition program.

Principal Hays graciously spoke about how Hope Services' staff and participants have enriched the student's knowledge about how food is grown. Decorated poster-sized Thank You cards were designed and presented to Hope Services attendees by Mr. Kimzey's Fourth Grade Class.

Six years ago, Hope Services staff and clients revitalized the school's long-dormant garden, and now maintain it year-round. Under the guidance of Greg Dinsmore, Manager of Day Programs in Monterey County, the plot has evolved over the last two years into a fully inclusive garden club that promotes the integration of students with and without disabilities. Together, students plant and grow vegetables while learning about nutritious foods. Hope Services and California State University Monterey Bay interns collaborate to provide to the students grade-level curricula and "take-homes" from their garden.

South Launches Employment, Media and Community Connections Programs



The EMCC program provides technology training in video editing and production.

South District is excited to announce that Hope Services began its new Employment, Media, and Community Connection (EMCC) Program at its Gilroy and Hollister locations on July 1, 2016!

The EMCC Program will align with Hope Services' mission by providing exciting opportunities for participants to learn, socialize, and receive services that will improve the quality of their lives. The EMCC program assists participants to develop more

independence and promotes integration in the community by facilitating participation in employment and volunteer activities. At the Gilroy and Hollister programs, on-site classes are tailored to individual interests. Some of the technology training choices include computer use, electronic media, and video production. One class will provide training that promotes personal advocacy using curriculum developed by individuals with intellectual disabilities.

Gilroy Facility Undergoes Full-Scale Renovation



The renovation includes a 'café', a patio, small classrooms and new furniture in the lobby, offices and boardrooms.

To accommodate the new Employment, Media and Community Connections (EMCC) program design at the Gilroy site, soon to be completed facility updates inside and out have created a multi-use environment. There are individual classrooms dedicated to the various education modules. A revamped patio area will serve as an outdoor classroom when weather permits. The technology classrooms offer computer workstations and big screen televisions, and includes a media greenroom with video production equipment.

A participant-run, in-house café business, where snacks and drinks can be purchased, is in the process of being set up inside the building.

As a first step, the participants decided to name the new enterprise Café Connections. Joy Rice, Program Coordinator, who initiated the café concept said, "This fall the participants will learn to manage the café!"

"The renovations allow Hope Services to offer participants more options for learning. Also, they have access to video production training in the new greenroom. This is a good thing for Gilroy participants," Rice said.

Look for future announcements on late August grand openings for the Gilroy and Hollister programs. All family members, caregivers, and clients will be welcome to attend.

Clients Maintain Inclusive Playground in Salinas

Inclusive playgrounds are becoming commonplace in communities, as they recognize the need for safe places for children with or without disabilities to play.

Tatum's Garden, Salinas' first inclusive playground, located in Sherwood Park, is maintained by seven Hope participants from Community Integration Training will provide light landscaping and grounds maintenance, ensuring that areas are safe and clean.

Tatum Bakker, for whom Tatum's Garden is named, was born with Spina Bifida. Her parents, Shawn and Amanda Bakker, are the visionaries behind the effort to bring a fully inclusive and accessible playground to the community.

The 20,000 square-foot park features a garden theme, which includes a celery

slide, a grapevine climber, and a spinach spinner. The park has wheelchair-accessible pathways, sound- and sight enhanced play components, and full-support swing seats.

In San Jose, Hope participants maintain the Rotary Playgarden located in Guadalupe Park. The playground features both inclusive and traditional play components.

Morgan Hill also has an inclusive playground in the works, funded through the San Andreas Regional Center. The Morgan Hill Inclusive Playground Project hopes to break ground early next year.

Community Liason, Steve Garcia, says, "We are hoping to be a part of the grounds crew at the new Morgan Hill inclusive park just as we are in Salinas and San Jose."



Hope maintains the grounds at Tatum's Garden and Rotary Playgarden.

Salinas Celebrates Earth Day Building School Garden



Hope's Community Integration Training Program in Salinas demonstrated how to bring a community together and provide lasting benefits in celebration of Earth Day. In a combined effort, local businesses, nonprofits, and students built a community garden located at University Park Elementary School.



Hope participants build and prepare the garden.

All building and garden supplies were donated by the Capitola Orchard Supply Hardware store. With support from California State University Monterey Bay interns, high school students, Boy Scouts, and Salinas Valley Chamber of Commerce, the project launched with a day of building the 500 square-foot garden structure, followed by clients planting a variety of fruits and vegetables.

Hope Services' Day Program Manager, Greg Dinsmore, has been involved in community garden projects for more than six years.

"The school garden will ultimately be used

towards inclusion and integration of adults and children with disabilities, as well as an outdoor classroom where Hope staff, CSUMB student interns, and teachers will educate students about healthy eating, where their food comes from, sustainable practices, and many other health and environmental benefits," Dinsmore said.

Participants will maintain the garden throughout the year. College interns, participants, and staff, will facilitate activities that will educate students, with or without disabilities, on the importance of nutrition and healthy food choices.

"The plan is to expand on the garden club concept and share it with other elementary schools. This model has potential to promote Hope Services' mission to improve the quality of life for individuals with developmental disabilities by instilling inclusion in young children," Dinsmore concluded.

Participants Join E-Waste Pick-Up on Fremont Street

Hope Services' participants joined in a City of Seaside's North Fremont Street Business District's annual Earth Day clean-up event. Participants set up a collection station on the Fremont corridor. Community residents and local businesses brought their e-waste to the site. More than 1,236 pounds of e-waste, and 40 buckets of litter were collected and responsibly recycled. Since the e-waste program began five years ago, participants have collected

an astounding six million pounds of e-waste creating a positive environmental and social impact on the community.

"It was phenomenal, a great turnout from the business community of Fremont Street," said Monterey District board member, Mary Alice Fettis. "Everyone had their buckets, and there was a wonderful camaraderie."



Hope collected more than 1,236 pounds of e-waste.

Hope Donates Student Goods to Food Bank



Hope and CSUMB students collected clothing and food items.

Hope participants and California State University Monterey Bay student service learners participated in the Zero Waste Move Out event on the college campus. The yearly event is an opportunity to collect gently-used clothing and non-perishable food items left behind in student

dorm rooms.

Hope participants collected more than 8,400 pounds of clothing and 500 pounds of non-perishable food items. The collected items were donated to the Monterey County Food Bank.

Day Program Manager Greg Dinsmore, said, "Zero Waste Move Out is an important event because we collect items students leave behind. The collected items are donated to local organizations to benefit people in need. Also, we reduce the amount of trash in the landfill. We are proud that Hope was able to contribute to the Zero Waste Move Out event at CSUMB."

Hope Receives Grant for Dune Restoration Project

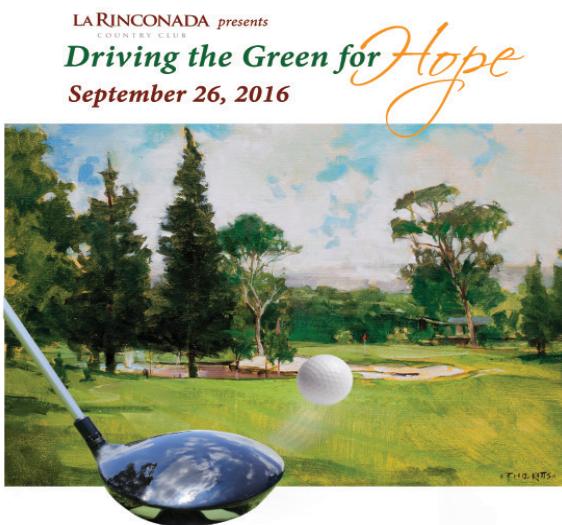


Hope Services' participants will harvest seeds and transplant them early next year.

Hope Services' South District was awarded a \$35,000 grant from Monterey Peninsula Regional Park District in December for a native plant propagation and dune restoration project. The grant funds will be used to employ participants from the Portola Center CIT and Seaside

CAN programs for the project. Staff and participants will learn how to collect and sprout seeds, and beginning in early 2017, plant the seedlings in local Monterey County dunes. The Pebble Beach Company dedicated a portion of their greenhouse for the restoration project.

Upcoming Events



We are looking for sponsors to help raise funds at our only fundraising event of 2016. Your sponsorship will support our employment programs for people with developmental disabilities, helping Hope clients become self-sufficient and integrated into the community. Sponsorship packages come with numerous benefits, including golf, dinner, and recognition on our press releases. For more information on how to sponsor the golf tournament or dinner, please contact: Angela Mazza at (408) 284-2862 or email amazza@hopeservices.org.



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Family Corner



Shanna Webb-Communications & Outreach Coordinator

More than 64 years ago, Hope Services started because parents wanted more for their developmentally disabled children. They understood the importance in advocating for their loved ones. The purpose of the Hope Family Alliance is to create a cohesive group of parents who

are engaged either through volunteerism, event planning, and/or advocating for people with developmental disabilities. We know that when parents are actively engaged in the Hope community, they build strong networks with other parents who have the same concerns. We know that when parents have the support they need their quality of life improves.

Our goal is to create inclusive social events, including dances, mixers, speakers, and volunteer opportunities for family members and caregivers to participate in.

If you would like to learn more about becoming a part of Hope's Family Alliance, please contact Shanna Webb at (408) 284-2887 or email swebb@hopeservices.org.

Hope Family Alliance — Linking participants families, and caregivers to create a network of support, resources and advocacy.

Family Alliance Information Center — For more information about the Hope Family Alliance and the Family Alliance Information Center, visit: www.hopeservices.org/news-and-resources/hope-family-alliance/.

Hope Services South District - (Gilroy, Hollister, Monterey, and Salinas)

Kristi Alarid, Director
8855 Murray Ave, Gilroy, CA 95020
(408) 842-0334

