

ParentCare Celebrates 20 Years of Changing Lives in East County



Vista Hill is proud to celebrate the 20th anniversary of the Don Allen ParentCare Family Recovery Center, a remarkable program that has literally changed the lives of thousands of substance-abusing women and protected future generations of children (see timeline, page 4).

From a program that began at Grossmont Hospital over a concern about the rising number of newborns testing positive for drugs and alcohol, ParentCare has grown under Vista Hill into a wide-ranging, highly effective program that addresses problems on multiple fronts. The program was named in honor of Don Allen, who championed the program when it was in danger of losing its funding early on.

“Twenty years is a tremendous milestone because it shows just how vital and embedded ParentCare has become in our community,” says Vista Hill CEO Robert Dean. “We can be proud that this safe and supportive enclave for women and families in recovery is regarded by many in the county as a model treatment program.”

ParentCare specializes in substance abuse recovery services to pregnant and parenting women, newborn infants and young children in East San Diego County. The families served at ParentCare are at high risk for child abuse, domestic violence and homelessness, and many have a dual diagnosis of mental illness and substance abuse.

“By providing drug treatment and supporting ongoing sobriety, ParentCare gives families the opportunity to make critical lifestyle changes and create a safe, nurturing home environment for their children,” Dean says. “ParentCare also plays a critical partnership role with County Child Protective Services, drug and family courts, and local hospitals.”

In becoming a leader in the development of family-centered recovery services, ParentCare is helping prevent child abuse and reducing perinatal drug and alcohol (continued on page 2)

Infant/Toddler Teacher Jessica Renniger interacts with one of the wonderful children who attends the Lipinsky Family Therapeutic Learning Center.

Three programs, new to Vista Hill, will significantly expand the organization's ability to help San Diego children, teens, women and families. See page 4.

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and more . . .

Special Gift Couldn't Come at a Better Time!

Even in a tough economy, there is some good news! In December 2008, a generous gift of \$100,000 was gratefully received from The John M. Sachs Family. The funds will be used for current needs at ParentCare, SAFIR (Supporting Adolescents and Families in Recovery), and Stein Education Center. "We were elated," say members of the Friends of Vista Hill staff and Board. "This magnificent boost could not have come at a better time." Thanks to you, Carole and family members.

ParentCare Director Proud of Role in Helping Women and Families

"What I love about my job is seeing how the extremely troubled women who arrive at ParentCare learn to transform their lives

and those of their children in the most amazing and positive ways."

You only have to be around Angela Rowe, LCSW (Licensed Clinical Social Worker), for a short time to know that those words from the director of Vista Hill's Don Allen ParentCare Family Recovery Center truly come from the heart. Angela is another great example of the remarkable Vista Hill staff members who have the passion and commitment to serve those in our community with the most difficult combination of challenges.



Angela also happens to be one of those rare individuals who knew very early on what she wanted to do with her life. The native of Diamond Bar near Los Angeles was just 14 when her church youth group began volunteering to assist the developmentally disabled at a Pomona facility.

"I had never been around people with such tremendous challenges, including not being able to communicate," Angela recalls. "It was just so heartwarming to be able to help these people that I decided this was what I wanted with to do with my life."

Angela came south for her education, earning a bachelor in psychology at San Diego State University and then

staying on to obtain a masters in social work. Angela discovered the exact type of work she wanted to do during her graduate school internship at UCSD's Perinatal and Parenting Case Management program.

ParentCare (continued from page 1)

exposure to unborn children. ParentCare ensures that pregnant women give birth to babies who are free of toxicity from drugs and alcohol, and that children grow up in healthy, drug-free families.

"The most important statistic is that 99 percent of the pregnant mothers enrolled at ParentCare since 1999 have given birth to drug-free babies," Dean says. "If you look at the fact that ParentCare has been doing this for two decades, you realize just how positive an impact the program has had on the community."

In addition to its intensive recovery program for women, which includes critical services such as a psychiatrist, registered nurse, parenting classes and transportation, ParentCare offers clients access to the Geisel Activity Center and Sober Living Apartments, a drug-free affordable housing complex which has become an important adjunct to the ParentCare Center.

ParentCare also includes the Lipinsky Family Therapeutic Learning Center, a specialized day care program providing a supportive environment where

the clients' children develop self-esteem, socialization skills, and ultimately improved learning readiness; and Mother Hubbard's Cupboard, an emergency food pantry for current and alumni clients who are short on nutritious food for their families.

And just last fall, ParentCare took over from UCSD a Perinatal and Parenting Case Management and Street Outreach program that will enable Vista Hill to help hundreds more pregnant women with substance abuse problems (see story page 7).

“At first I was turned off by the idea of working with pregnant women who were abusing drugs and alcohol. I couldn’t understand how they could do that to their unborn child. But as I began to learn and understand what led these women to where they were in their lives, and that with help they could change what they were doing and actually deliver healthy babies, I knew I had found a really rewarding niche for my career.”

That’s why Angela was excited that her very first job opportunity after getting her masters in 1998 was at ParentCare. Her dedication and skill have enabled her to progress steadily from case manager to counselor to program manager and finally ParentCare director, a position she was promoted to when Judy Williams retired in 2003.

Today, Angela oversees a multifaceted operation that has provided substance abuse recovery services to pregnant and parenting women, newborn infants and young children in East San Diego County for the past 20 years. Ironically, Angela now oversees the same program she interned with at UCSD (see story page 7).

Somehow Angela is able to balance her busy career with a strong family life with her husband, an IT manager, and her daughters, ages four and eight.

“I’m really fortunate in my life,” Angela says. “I have a great family at home, and I have a great family at work in our tremendous team of ParentCare staff who work so hard and with such dedication to change the lives of women and families who otherwise might fall through the cracks in our society. Sometimes I’ll see a woman making real progress and I’ll stop and think, ‘we’re really making a difference in her life.’ That’s a wonderful feeling that makes you realize just how special your job is.”



Thirteen classrooms at the Stein Education Center’s main campus are being remodeled to improve opportunities for student learning and independence. Longtime Vista Hill supporters Darlyn and Chuck Davenport provided \$50,000 in matching funds and overall \$150,000 was raised to support the

Stein Center Classrooms Remodeled

project. Special thanks to all our wonderful donors who made this important remodeling project possible:

Darlyn and Chuck Davenport, Marilyn and Jim Brown, Mission Federal Credit Union Community Foundation, Betty and Bob Beyster/Beyster Family Foundation, Friends of Vista Hill Board of Trustees, La Jolla Debutante Committee, Sharon and Jerry Stein, Valerie and Harry Cooper, Margaret Jackson and Neil Hadfield, Kimberly Heller, Samuel I. and John Henry Fox Foundation, Arthur and

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Remembering Two Friends

A Note About Margaret Whittemore...

She died at age 98, an RN, a widow and nobody’s fool. She was lots of fun and had many friends. She was pretty, interesting and interested in everything. In August on her 98th birthday, she hosted a lovely luncheon at the French Market Grille in Rancho Bernardo where she lived. She left 7.5 percent of the residue of her estate to Vista Hill for which we are most grateful; First American Trust is handling this work.

About Fanya Jackson...

She had just turned 100 and had been in ill health for quite some time. Her gold business card from previous years pictured a tall ship and the words “S & F Jackson Antiques—closed Monday.” Samuel and Fanya Jackson ran their store at 3785 Fourth Avenue in San Diego “near Robinson,” as the card said. She was a tiny lady with a spitfire personality. Generous funds from her estate were gratefully accepted by Vista Hill and the Jewish Community Foundation.



Don Allen ParentCare Family Recovery Center Timeline

1980s Rising trends of “positive tox” (drug-exposed) births noted throughout San Diego County.

1989 With support from the St. Germaine Auxiliary of the Child Abuse Prevention Foundation, “ParentCare” project is launched at Grossmont Hospital. Social workers provide counseling, parenting skills training and case management services to “high risk” mothers.

1993 The ParentCare Family Recovery Center becomes a program of Vista Hill.

1994 - 2000 Underwritten by Hasbro Children’s Foundation, ParentCare Reunification Project assists mothers and their children in foster care to reunite.

1996 “Therapeutic Learning Center” (TLC) is licensed by the State of California to provide on-site specialized childcare to young children of ParentCare clients.

1999 ParentCare moves to a new facility on Williams Avenue in La Mesa. Alliance HealthCare Foundation and generous individuals, including Cynthia Shott, provide assistance for program development and facility enhancements.

1999 ParentCare is named in memory of Donald K. Allen, who championed the program.

1999 ParentCare is awarded a contract with San Diego County Alcohol and Drug Programs to provide intensive outpatient substance abuse treatment to women in East County.

1999 - 2003 With support from Alliance HealthCare Foundation and San Diego County, the ParentCare “Fathers in Recovery” program provides gender-specific substance abuse treatment for men.

2000 A Lemon Grove apartment complex is acquired and renovated to create a sober living environment for ParentCare clients with support from the Weingart-Price Fund.

2000 Audrey S. Geisel and the Dr. Seuss Fund purchase the adjacent property as an activity center for resident families. In 2006, Mrs. Geisel provides another major gift to retire the apartment complex mortgage.

2003 On-site Reproductive Health and Nursing Services are launched with support from The California Wellness Foundation.

2003 Endowment to help sustain ParentCare services is initiated with assistance from the Parker Foundation and the Lipinsky Family Foundation.

2006 Bridges Adult Intensive Outpatient Program (IOP) of the ParentCare Center is launched with support from Alliance HealthCare Foundation, reinstating evening programs for working fathers and mothers with substance abuse problems.

2005 - 2007 Major supporters are recognized with naming of the Lipinsky Family Therapeutic Learning Center, the Carole and John Sachs Multi-Purpose Room and D. James Martin Building (next door).

2001 - 2008 Major donors, including Grossmont HealthCare District, Dalebrook Fund, Masserini Trust & French Fund, Price Charities, Junior Seau Foundation, St. Germaine Children’s Charity the San Diego Women’s Foundation, the Rivkin Family Foundation, the William H. Donner Foundation, the Lebensfeld Foundation, Donald and Darlene Shiley, Estate of Thomas C. Frank, Renée Bannasch, Kimberly Heller, Margaret Jackson and Neil Hadfield, support expansion to provide on-site psychiatric services for dually diagnosed clients; Mother Hubbard’s Cupboard emergency food pantry; transportation support; parenting skills training; rent “scholarships”; and follow-up evaluation and support services.

2008 Perinatal and Parenting Case Management and Street Outreach Program becomes part of the ParentCare service array.

Three Major New Programs Come to Vista Hill

Three programs, new to Vista Hill, will significantly expand the organization’s ability to help San Diego children, teens, women and families.

1 >> Vista Hill was awarded the contract to operate the county’s Juvenile Drug Court* —one of San Diego’s most effective programs for helping youth offenders become alcohol and drug free, thereby avoiding further involvement with the legal system (*see page 5*).

2 >> Vista Hill’s Learning Assistance Center (LAC*) was recently awarded a contract to work within the Escondido Union School District and the Escondido High School District. This Intensive Outpatient Program provides clinical staff to work in specially-tailored classrooms to meet the needs of students with some of the most challenging psychiatric difficulties (*see page 6*).

3 >> The Don Allen ParentCare Family Recovery Center acquired the contract to operate the County’s Perinatal and Parenting Case Management and Street Outreach Program* that helps women stop their substance abuse and deliver healthy, drug- and alcohol-free babies (*see page 7*).

*Funded by the County of San Diego

Vista Hill Awarded Contract for Juvenile Drug Court

The county's Juvenile Drug Court—one of San Diego's most effective programs for helping youth offenders become alcohol and drug free, thereby avoiding further involvement with the legal system—is now a Vista Hill program.

Vista Hill started this County of San Diego contract on January 1. Services will be provided to 150 youths, age 13-18. The program intensively supervises juvenile drug abusers who are non-violent, but have repeated failures with drug-abstinence efforts.

"We're really pleased to add Juvenile Drug Court to Vista Hill's extensive services for young people," says Claudette Allen, director of Vista Hill's Early Intervention and Treatment Services. "It's another way we can have a life-changing impact on young lives, especially at an age when they're still so impressionable and reachable with the appropriate support and services."

In Juvenile Drug Court, youths appear before the judge weekly and are tested for drugs regularly. Youths are first assessed by counselors to determine the appropriate level of counseling, treatment and compliance monitoring. There are incentives for positive behavior—including graduation celebrations and having their records expunged—but also a series of sanctions for those who fail to comply.

Juvenile Drug Court grew out of drug treatment courts that were developed in Florida in the early 1990s as an alternative to traditional criminal justice prosecution for drug-related offenses.

Allen says Juvenile Drug Court not only helps the offenders, it reduces crime and saves the community countless resources.

Incarcerating drug-using offenders costs between \$20,000 and \$50,000 a year, compared with the cost of \$2,500 to \$4,000 per person annually for a comprehensive drug court system. "We're helping kids get clean and sober and onto a path towards a successful adult life," Allen says. "We're also reducing the chances they'll ever be involved in crime again while saving taxpayers hundreds of thousands of dollars each year. It's a program that saves our community socially and financially, not to mention reducing the family's mental anguish, trauma, sadness and loss, which unfortunately accompany addiction."



Superior Court Judge Amalia Meza says working with the Drug Court team has been one of her most rewarding experiences.

"Through a collaborative effort, we provide juveniles close supervision with rewards and consequences to empower them to achieve sobriety, change their behavior and ultimately take control of their lives," Meza says. "I think Drug Court is one of the most successful programs we have in Juvenile Court."

16-year-old Ana G. receives congratulations from Judge Amalia Meza after her recent graduation from Juvenile Drug Court.

Joining in the celebration were the rest of the Drug Court team, from left: Deputy Probation Officer Douglas Ryder, Program Coordinator Oscar Ascencio, Deputy District Attorney Michele Linley, Public Defender Daniel Ybarra, Juvenile Recovery Specialist Roberto Madrigal, Marriage Family Therapist Helena

Wilson and Juvenile Recovery Specialists Graciela Avalos and Rommel Java.

New Vistas is published twice a year by the Friends of Vista Hill Foundation, 8787 Complex Drive, Suite 200, San Diego, CA 92123. Vista Hill is a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit organization dedicated to providing excellence in behavioral healthcare programs for the people of San Diego County.

www.vistahill.org

LAC Program Expands in North County to Reach More Students

New program is more intensive and now includes elementary, middle and high schools

Thanks to its strong relationship with several North County school districts, Vista Hill has expanded the Learning Assistance Center (LAC) program to help even more students with learning disabilities and mental health issues.

Vista Hill recently won a contract to operate Intensive Outpatient Programs for the Escondido Union School District and the Escondido High School District for four years. With money provided by State funding under the youth mental health legislation AB 2726, LAC has created classrooms specifically tailored to meet the needs of students with some of the most challenging disabilities.

Many of these children had previously “failed” academically and socially. Ordinarily, they would require treatment at a special off-site facility. With our multi-disciplinary team we can combine mental health services (provided by the VH therapists) and educational classes (taught by the district special education teachers) in order to treat students on their comprehensive school campus. This makes it much easier to eventually transition them into mainstream classes.

The expansion includes two classrooms at Del Dios Middle School and one classroom at Orange

Glen High School. Each classroom serves 14 students, and the program is also open to other school districts in inland North County.

LAC Director Dave Taylor, Ph.D., explains, “What’s great is that we now have an asset which can help these students from kindergarten all the way through high school. That kind of continuum of treatment is going to make a dramatic difference in the lives of students and their families in the years to come.”

For years, LAC has provided school-integrated mental health programs countywide, in partnership with area school districts. LAC works with 600 families in Ramona Unified, Borrego Springs Unified, Warner Springs Unified, Spencer Valley, Julian Union Elementary, Julian Union High and Escondido Union Elementary. It offers uniquely designed school- and home-based mental health interventions for students at risk for out-of-home placement; thus keeping children safe and successful in their own homes, schools, and community.

LAC helps enhance individual student potential. Through successful coordination with parent, teacher and LAC clinician, a student’s ability to succeed is maximized.

New Project at Whittier School (San Diego Unified School District)

Youth with developmental disabilities and mental health needs are being served by Vista Hill through a one-year demonstration grant from the San Diego Regional Center. This is a unique collaboration in which Vista Hill is proud to participate. For details visit www.vistahill.org



LAC is a clinic without walls. Staff have cell phones, laptops, and cars. They go to the students. Tracy Lane, program specialist for the Escondido Union School District, and Dave Taylor, Ph.D., director of Vista Hill’s Learning Assistance Center, interact with students at one of the LAC classrooms at Del Dios Middle School.



Shannon Jackson, program coordinator, talks with new client.

Vista Hill Expands Services with Perinatal and Parenting Program

It is a sad fact that every day throughout San Diego County there are thousands of pregnant women who are endangering their unborn children because they are abusing drugs and alcohol.

That's why it's good news that Vista Hill has added a new program to find and help these women stop their substance abuse and deliver healthy, drug- and alcohol-free babies.

The Don Allen ParentCare Family Recovery Center is taking over the Perinatal and Parenting Case Management and Street Outreach program that UCSD had been operating for a number of years.

"This program is a perfect complement to the services we're already providing at ParentCare," says Vista Hill CEO Robert Dean. "For years our family recovery program has been serving women who came to us through the courts and other referrals. Now we've added this new program that will allow us to go out and find women who may

not even be aware of the danger to their unborn babies."

The Perinatal and Parenting Case Management program, which is funded by the County of San Diego Department of Health Services Alcohol and Drug Programs, has several components:

>> The largest component provides 18 months of intensive pre- and post-birth counseling to 350 pregnant women who are referred from health clinics and substance abuse programs.

>> In the Street Outreach program, case managers search the streets, homeless shelters and jails for substance-abusing pregnant women. More than 150 women will be served each year in this component.

>> An adolescent component partners with local schools to reach about 25 pregnant girls a month and provides a parenting skills class for 30 women.

ParentCare Director Angela Rowe says the program is effective because the case managers go out into the community where these women live. After an

initial screening to determine their needs, case managers create a specific treatment plan that provides a variety of services, whether it's referring them to prenatal care, substance abuse programs, advising them on how to get their general education development (GED) diploma, find a job or access any other resources they need to stabilize their lives, stop "using" and learn how to protect their unborn children.

"These are women who are really struggling and who likely have never even thought of getting perinatal care," Rowe adds. "They often don't have any family support and are usually on their own. They even need help with basic necessities like a crib and baby clothes after they deliver.

"We've found that if we can just get the women to understand what's at stake with their unborn child, and then provide them with intensive support, they're pretty good about making the necessary changes," Rowe says. "The proof comes in the fact that more than 85 percent of the babies born to the women in the program are free of drugs and alcohol.

"We're really excited about this new program which will help so many more pregnant women give their babies a healthy start in life. It will also save our community countless dollars in health care costs associated with addicted babies and their futures as at-risk children."

Legends & Legacy at the Hard Rock Hotel Brings in \$190,000 for Vista Hill Programs

Vista Hill CEO Robert Dean introduced Darlyn and Chuck Davenport, winners of the IMBY award (In My Back Yard), by flashing a photo of the outstanding volunteer couple with Elvis himself. The Davenports have been actively supporting Vista Hill and other local organizations for many years, and the standing ovation showed that the audience was very appreciative of their philanthropic endeavors.

Special underwriter Audrey S. Geisel was enthusiastically acknowledged along with Elaine Lipinsky, Virginia Napierskie, the Thomas and Theodora Lynch Fleming Foundation, Ingrid Hibben, San Diego National Bank, Vista Hill Board of Directors, and an anonymous donor. An additional underwriting gift of \$25,000 from Darlene and Donald Shiley was announced at the event, much to the audience's pleasure.

Two generations of Vista Hill supporters served as Honorary Co-Chairs: Jan and Dave Mullin and their daughter and son-in-law,

Rachel and Pino Ficara. Jan and Rachel took part in a new Vista Hill video which was shown to give guests an idea of the breadth of the services which Vista Hill offers the community in the areas of mental health, substance abuse and developmental disabilities. Carol LeBeau, Friends of Vista Hill Advisory Board member, narrated the video.

Cecil Steppe, Vista Hill Board Chair, served as sincere and energetic auctioneer/cheerleader by encouraging the entire group to get into the fund raising mood. He then called on Super Diamond to take the stage, and the dance floor was immediately alive with dinner guests as well as those who had come just for the Encore Party (dessert and entertainment).

Tom and Julie Karlo, VH supporters, helped with the bidding. Tom is the new General Manager of KPBS.



Elaine Lipinsky (Friends Board member and former IMBY Award winner) with Vista Hill CEO Robert Dean and Elaine's nephew and great bidder Daren Lipinsky.



On most days you can find Darlyn and Chuck Davenport working at the Windmill Thrift Shop to benefit Vista Hill and Senior Communities.





Above (L to R) ❶ Laura Bradley and Fred Applegate came in theme garb; they are opening their home for an upcoming Patron Reception. ❷ Supporters Valerie and Harry Cooper had a great evening; Valerie is a Friends Board member. ❸ Former IMBY Award winner Ingrid Hibben and Victor La Magna had fun at the Hard Rock. ❹ Jeff Dunigan, former IMBY Award winner Audrey Geisel and Karen and Kit Sickles enjoyed the festivities. ❺ Friends Board Member Tamara Alter and husband Rick danced up a storm.

Dinner was arugula and endive salad with duck, goat cheese, red onions and figs dressed with an orange sesame vinaigrette; yuzu, kefir lime and ginger marinated Chilean sea bass with mushrooms, sesame soy beurre blanc; sea salt filet mignon, creamy polenta with goat cheese and fall root vegetables; and assorted, delicious, sweet treats.

Co-Chairs Heidi Dorman and Robin Gitman led an energetic committee: Tamara Alter, Alana Asmussen, Renée Bannasch, Lynn Cihak, Connie Conard, Valerie Cooper, Liz Copley, Carleigh Gold, Cherie Halladay, Nicole Hamilton, Vicki Hamilton, Carlee Harmonson, Marilyn Johns, Andrea Karrow, Elaine Lipinsky, Debra McGinty-Poteet, Marie Miehl, Ann Mound, Rachel Peniche, Susan Roth, Angela Rowe, Terri Shives, and Beckie Van Houten.

Below left (L to R) Rachel Czerminski, Debra McGinty-Poteet, Walt Czerminski and Marilee Pacelli with Cher and Madonna. Debra and Walt are FVH Board members; Debra was the top ticket seller for this year's Gala!



Long-time supporters Darlyn and Chuck Davenport, shown here with the King, were honored with the IMBY (In My Back Yard) award at the 2008 Gala. Darlyn is a Friends Board member.

And don't miss Barbie, 50 and Fabulous! This year's Fashion Show on Wednesday, April 29, at the Manchester Grand Hyatt promises to have even more boutiques for your shopping pleasure. Barbie Spinazzola serves as Chair; Barbie Brown serves as Honorary Chair. Call Rachel Peniche at 858-514-5153 for more information. It's going to be great fun!

Heroes and Hemlines

Heroes and Hemlines, Vista Hill's 17th Annual Fashion Show, paid tribute to San Diego's local and civic leaders who truly make San Diego "America's Finest City." Chair Connie Conard, Mayor Jerry Sanders and his wife Honorary Chair Rana Sampson walked the runway during the Parade of Chairs (those who had led the Fashion Show committees in years past.)

Patty Busse, a former substance-abusing ParentCare mom who is now a counselor at ParentCare, gave the group a history of her long struggle and successful recovery. Carol LeBeau, KGTV Channel 10 News Anchor and Friends of Vista Hill Advisory Board member, was celebrity emcee providing her personal comments as well as inserting humor along the way.

Silent auction and boutique shopping were inventive and fun; and guest models, including Sheriff Bill Kolender and others from police and fire departments in San Diego County brought cheers from the crowd of 500 guests. Gretchen Bergman was the Fashion Show's creative director. More than \$50,000 was raised for Vista Hill programs.



Fashion Show Chair Connie Conard (left) and Honorary Chair Rana Sampson (right) are escorted by Mayor Jerry Sanders.

We are lucky to have the voluntary services of so many wonderful present, past and honorary fashion show chairs: (left to right) Barbie Spinazzola, Debra McGinty-Poteet, Lael Kovtun, Connie Conard, Dee Ammon, Diane Keltner, Sally Thornton, Maggie Watkins, Rana Sampson and Mary Alice Brady.



Betty Beyster (left), shown here with her daughter M.A. Beyster, is a great friend to Vista Hill.





Pictured here are two art admirers who purchased Scott Minion's work. Scott attends the SEC Zion Adult Program.

Adults at Stein Center Show Artistic Ability

Several volunteers along with help from Darlyn and Chuck Davenport and Mail Boxes Etc. have made art projects come alive for the Stein Education Center (SEC) adult constituents. From watercolors to oils and from papier maché to an erupting volcano cake, the special creative abilities of many special individuals have been brought to the forefront with great pleasure and joy.

"We are thrilled to watch our constituents as they discover their own artistic talents," says Joanne Tsurodome Garcia, director of the SEC Adult Services Programs. "They are proud of themselves, and so are we." The watercolors were displayed and sold at the Vista Hill Fashion show as well as at the North Park Art Festival.

A Dream Come True

Friends and family of the late Steffi Strauss helped open the new teaching kitchen at Stein Education Center Chula Vista in May 2008. "This is a dream come true for us," says Mary McIntosh, coordinator of the school, "and we are so thankful for Steffi's generosity."

Vista Hill CEO Robert Dean expressed thanks to the Strauss family in behalf of the organization and explained, "A teaching kitchen is critical for our students as they develop independent living skills." Dean and the guests noted special design touches which would have pleased Steffi, who made provision for Vista Hill in her will.



Pictured (left to right) are Steffi's brother, parents, son and sister: Steve Strauss, Iris Strauss, Daniel Weiss, Matthew Strauss and Tamara Alter.



Dedicated Stein Employees Honored

Three devoted Stein Education Center staff members were given the annual Helping Hand Award for their commitment and service. Receiving the honor were (from left holding their certificates) Devanaliz (Day) Thomas, recreation assistant from the Recreation Program; Robert Lenton, teacher assistant at the South Bay Campus; and Joann Collins, community training specialist at the San Diego Adult Program Site. They pose with (from left) Vista Hill CEO Robert Dean; Chayo Chavez, recreation program director; Joanne Garcia, director, Adult Services; and Stein Education Director Joan Richards, Ph.D.

VISTA HILL UPCOMING EVENTS 2009

Women's Council on Mental Health Spring Luncheon

Wednesday, March 4, 2009

Hyatt Regency La Jolla at Aventine

Guest speakers Claire and Mia Fontaine, co-authors of "Come Back." Co-chairs are Susan Straub and Lynn Nelles; honorary chair is Audrey S. Geisel. Honoring ParentCare's 20th Anniversary; proceeds benefit ParentCare.

18th Annual Vista Hill Fashion Show Luncheon

Wednesday, April 29, 2009

Manchester Grand Hyatt

Barbie, 50 and Fabulous! Barbie Spinazzola serves as chair and Barbie Brown serves as honorary chair (see page 10).

Women's Council on Mental Health Summer Luncheon

July 2009

In collaboration with The California Bi-Polar Foundation; Lynn Hart Muto serves as Chair. David Sheff, author of *Beautiful Boy*, and his son Nic Sheff, author of *Tweak*, will present. Specific location and date TBA.

20th Annual Vista Hill Gala

Saturday, November 14, 2009

Hard Rock Hotel San Diego

Liz Copley and Patti Holmes are co-chairs; Rachel Ficara and Jan Mullin serve as honorary chairs.

Please contact Events Coordinator Rachel Peniche 858-514-5153
or rpeniche@vistahill.org for additional information.

If you are receiving more than one copy of *New Vistas*, please call Beckie Van Houten, database manager/development associate. This will help us save postage and better serve you. Call 858-514-5152. Thank you!

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