

SPRING 2025

Connecting

A newsletter for the friends and supporters of L.A. CADA

From Darkness to Purpose: My Journey Through Recovery

By Matthew Brennan, Homeless Services Program Coordinator

Fifteen years of addiction led me to a place I never imagined—living in the L.A. River bed by Griffith Park, consumed by crystal meth. I lost everything—family, stability, hope. My life became a cycle of arrests, jail time, and survival on the streets. But in one of those moments behind bars, I made a choice that changed everything.

On August 30, 2019, I took my first step toward a new life. That was the day my journey in recovery began, and I have been sober ever since.

Determined to break free, I enrolled in the **START** program while in jail and committed to entering treatment at L.A. CADA. I completed 60 days at **L.A. CADA Allen House**, where I learned how to live without drugs, then transitioned into **Recovery Bridge Housing (RBH) L.A. CADA ART House**, where I continued outpatient treatment and laid the foundation for long-term recovery. It was at ART House that I really started to do the work to be sober, and over the next two years, I worked through all 12 steps while staying committed to my growth. I continue to work with my sponsor to this day.

After six months at ART House, I moved into sober living, which provided me with the structure and accountability I needed to stay on track. After a year in sober living, I took on a leadership role and became the House Manager, helping others on their own paths to recovery.

With one year of sobriety, I felt ready to take another

leap—I applied for a job at L.A. CADA. I started as a graveyard Monitor at **Nuestra Casa**, later transitioning into a full-time position at **Casa Del Corazon**. Being on the other side of treatment and supporting others in their recovery gave me purpose.

After two years of sobriety, I transitioned into **Homeless Outreach**, working directly with individuals still struggling on the streets—people who, not long ago, were just like me. At the same time, I set a new personal challenge for myself and ran the **L.A. Marathon**, a testament to how far I had come, both mentally and physically.

Just six months into homeless outreach, I was promoted to **Program Coordinator of**

Arcadia Homeless Outreach, allowing me to make an even greater impact.

While rebuilding my career, I also took control of my education. I enrolled in community college, earning two associate degrees, then set my sights on something I once thought was impossible—I earned my **B.A. in Psychology**. This has allowed me to realize that anything is possible as long as I am sober. My next goal is to get my master's in social work.

Today, with over five years of sobriety, I have built a life beyond my wildest dreams.

None of this would have been possible without treatment and the unwavering support of L.A. CADA. They gave me the tools, the community, and the belief that I could change. Recovery didn't just save my life—it gave me a new one.



*Matthew Brennan,
Homeless Services Program Coordinator*

If you're struggling, know this: There is hope, there is help, and you are not alone.



A message from
JUAN NAVARRO
Chief Executive Officer, L.A. CADA

The Value of Partnership in Uncertain Times

For many people working in community services, 2025 feels somewhat uncertain. To be honest, major political changes feel a little like the earth shaking beneath our feet, prompting the urge . . . to run? Never. This is the time to stay put and work together. I love a saying of the Hopi people, 'One finger cannot lift a pebble.' And I have a feeling we might be facing some heavy lifting.

To do that, L.A. CADA's work relies on a strong community of partnerships built over five decades. Where our agency lacks a critical piece, our partners have it. When a partner needs expertise in behavioral health treatment for vulnerable populations, L.A. CADA has it. Together, we are able to fill gaps in the fabric of community services, creating a comprehensive safety net of care for those who need it most. Government, businesses, the faith community, along with community nonprofits, parents and teachers, and the resilience of our program participants form a powerful firewall built to withstand uncertain times.

That said, it's not exactly easy.

In addition to exterior forces, each of L.A. CADA's community partners faces constant internal challenges, and new barriers that crop up to threaten stability and business as usual. For L.A. CADA, the recent wildfires displaced 64 of our Recovery Bridge Housing participants, creating overnight need to relocate emergency beds, find large donations of clothing and personal supplies, and to come alongside people in early recovery who were already struggling with pre-existing trauma. Rather than being an isolating challenge, the fire called for reaching out. And our partners came through -- with volunteers, donations, and fellowship.

L.A. CADA is charged with the prevention and treatment of substance use and mental health disorders, while protecting the community we serve. In 2025, that's a tall order as Los Angeles County continues to experience the worst drug overdose crisis in local history. Our community is losing seven people a day to fentanyl and methamphetamine overdose deaths. Again, we turn to our partners for support.

"One of the most powerful ways for us to improve systems and services is by strengthening partnership and collaborations, both within and between agencies. In doing so, we increase opportunities to expand the reach and depth of our services for people with behavioral health conditions so we can better meet the individual needs of our clients."

Gary Tsai, M.D. Bureau Director of Los Angeles County Substance Abuse Prevention and Control

L.A. CADA welcomes new community partners at every turn. If you'd like to join forces with us, our agency is proud to have you. As we face the challenges of 2025 and beyond, we're stronger together.

Juan Navarro

ANNOUNCEMENT

L.A. CADA Launches Official Online Store

By Nolan Ross Samé-Weil, Director of Development

Shop with
PURPOSE!

We're excited to share that the **Los Angeles Centers for Alcohol and Drug Abuse (L.A. CADA)** has officially launched its new online store, offering branded merchandise that supports a powerful cause. The **L.A. CADA Online Store** is more than just a place to shop, it's a way for you to proudly show your support for recovery and community healing, while directly contributing to the organization's mission.

From cozy apparel to useful everyday items, the store carries thoughtfully selected products designed to represent the spirit of L.A. CADA. Each piece is branded with pride and purpose, allowing supporters to wear their values while spreading awareness. Whether you're a longtime advocate, part of the recovery community, or simply want to support a good cause, the new store offers a meaningful way to get involved.

But the impact doesn't stop with what you wear: **EVERY PURCHASE DIRECTLY SUPPORTS L.A. CADA'S COMPREHENSIVE PROGRAMS**, including addiction treatment, mental health services, harm reduction, youth and family support, housing navigation, and reentry services. By shopping with us, you're helping provide access to trauma-informed, culturally responsive care for those who need it most across Los Angeles County.

This launch also creates a new opportunity for alumni, family members, staff, and community partners to feel connected and united. Wearing L.A. CADA gear is a statement, one of hope, resilience, and community care. It's a simple, stylish, and powerful way to stand behind the values we believe in. We invite you to explore the full collection and join us in this exciting new chapter.



SHOP NOW AND SUPPORT RECOVERY WITH EVERY PURCHASE:

<https://store.lacada.com/>

Or Scan to Shop Now!

(l-r) Deanna Vargas, Administrative Assistant; Monica Soto, Director of CENS; Alejandro Godinez, Communication Marketing Specialist; Elisa Sandoval, Medical Biller Specialist.



See more
great products
on our website!

"Artists in Recovery" Host Benefit for L.A. CADA

By Damonté Watson, Director of Integrated Care

The **Artists in Recovery Benefit** was the result of two months of planning, beginning in mid-January when Facebook posts reported the devastation caused by the Altadena fire and the personal stories of those affected. We immediately jumped into action. A core group of artists signed on right away, and thanks to **Nate Buck**, who works in the entertainment industry, the momentum grew rapidly. Nate was instrumental in recruiting talent and even connected with comedian **Margaret Cho**, who enthusiastically agreed to join the cause.

Once Margaret was on board, we knew we needed a larger, more suitable venue. That's when we reached out to the **L.A. LGBT Center**, who became an incredible partner in hosting the event. Throughout the process, I stayed in close communication with **Bill Tarkanian**, **L.A. CADA Chief Strategy Officer**, who supported our effort to raise funds and awareness. While our original plan was to host the benefit independently and donate the proceeds to L.A. CADA, partnering with the organization made the process smoother and more impactful.

Tickets began selling quickly, and artists began donating their work. We were on our way! With the support of **Beth Lapides**, **Christina Simos**, **Jose Mun**, and **Scott Silverman**, we had a strong representation of sober artists who brought in our recovery community. Meanwhile, **Margaret Cho**, **Lisa Liu**, and **Brett Kohler** helped extend our reach to wider audiences, generating meaningful interest in the event.

A dedicated team of volunteers, including **Nate Buck**, **Durand Williams**, **Tim Greer**, **Steven Masters**, and **Scott Thomas**, helped organize every aspect of the evening. L.A. CADA's staff and volunteers made everything seamless, from preparing food to organizing event logistics. From ushers to servers, L.A. CADA's clients and team members stepped up, making sure every guest felt welcomed and the event ran smoothly.

It was deeply fulfilling to witness the joy on the faces of the clients who volunteered, and to hear their heartfelt reactions to the performances. Letting them know that the community cares about them and their wellbeing was everything.

This benefit was organized by **Artists in Recovery** for the benefit of L.A. CADA. Dale and Nate reached out to me, and I then brought in **Mikey Cativo**, who served as co-MC and played a key role in production planning. **Damonté Watson** helped organize twenty L.A. CADA volunteers and led efforts to market the event on our platforms. **Leo Vasquez** was instrumental in securing an additional \$25,000 pledge from **AHF** to support **L.A. CADA's LGBTQ+ Services**. All proceeds went directly to benefit our **ART House**, **START House**, and **LGBTQ+ programs**.



L.A. CADA LGBTQ+ staff and volunteers.



(l-r) Mike Cativo (drag name Mimi E) with Lotta Slots.



Executive management: (l-r) Damonté Watson, Director of Integrated Care; Bill Tarkanian, COO; Ann Tarkanian; Juan Navarro, CEO.



L.A. CADA LGBTQ+ staff: (l-r) Brian Atchley, Clinician; Noelle Diaz, Unitization Manager; Damonté Watson, Director of Integrated Care; Ashley W., Harm Reduction Manager.

Collaborative Outreach to City of Industry Encampment

By William Gray, Interim Director of Homeless Services

Since October 2023, **Cohort 4** has actively engaged with clients living in the trailer home encampment at Gale and Azusa Avenues in the **City of Industry**. On March 26, 2025, **Supervisor Hilda L. Solis, Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors – First District**, contacted **William Gray, L.A. CADA Interim Director of Homeless Services**, to collaborate with key stakeholders, including the **Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority (LAHSA)** and city management to provide shelter services for residents of the encampment.

Through our outreach efforts, L.A. CADA secured ten transitional housing beds and connected four clients with specialized treatment centers. We also submitted interim housing referrals for everyone we encountered, ensuring access to potential housing placements and substance use disorder (SUD) treatment options. And despite challenges, such as a limited number of shelter beds, our team has remained resilient. However, some individuals are reluctant to accept offered beds due to fear, mistrust, or personal circumstances. We will continue to collaborate with those willing to find solutions.

We are committed to partnering with City of Industry to tackle the challenges of homelessness. Together, we strive for positive outcomes that uplift those in need. Through continual engagement with clients, we will build trust and adapt our approach, ensuring we meet their needs and keep hope alive.



Trailer encampment in City of Industry that was featured on local news and responsible for small fires and other crimes.



Supplemental Outreach Cohort 4 partnering with LASD Mariah Ramirez (l), and Rosa Torralba and Daniel Garcia (r).

GLENDORA HOMELESS OUTREACH:

Supporting Our Community with Compassion and Care

By Aaron Sambrone, Homeless Outreach Navigator

The **Glendora Homeless Outreach** program provides vital services to individuals experiencing homelessness in the **City of Glendora**. As the program's operator and coordinator, I work closely with our outreach team to connect individuals with the support they need. Our services include assistance with interim and permanent housing, substance use disorder (SUD) treatment, access to medical professionals, and help obtaining benefits such as General Relief, CalFresh, and Medi-Cal. We also help with acquiring identification, Social Security, food, clothing, job development, and educational support.

During the recent **Homeless PIT (Point-In-Time) Count**, our team encountered SB and her boyfriend JP, who were living in an encampment. We quickly learned that SB was seven months pregnant and had not yet seen a doctor. The team immediately alerted the City of Glendora about the situation, and thanks to quick collaboration, we were able to provide immediate assistance.

SB and JP are now temporarily housed at the Glendora Motel and have been added to multiple family shelter wait lists. We scheduled and transported SB to her first OB-GYN appointment, and we're happy to share that her unborn child is doing very well.

Beyond housing and medical care, we connected the couple to **Women, Infants and Children (WIC)** for parenting resources, **America's Job Center for California (AJCC)** for employment opportunities, and **God's Pantry** and **Shepherd's Pantry** for additional support. Our team continues to walk alongside them, offering consistent assistance as they work toward a more stable future.

A Day of Empowerment and Self-Care at Alice's House

By Citlalilt Pastrana, Program Manager

The **Pregnant and Postpartum Women (PPW)** program is a federally-funded program focusing on family reunification and a family-centered approach. The program provides critical services not only to mothers in recovery, but also to their children and family members affected by substance use disorders. While the women are actively engaged in treatment and raising their children, opportunities for self-care are rare, making the recent event at **Alice's House** all the more meaningful.

In a heartwarming collaboration with **Third Step Ministry**, 11 professional stylists from Whittier salons hosted a day of beauty and empowerment, donating their time and skills to provide haircuts and styling.

More than just a makeover, the event was about helping these women feel seen, beautiful, and worthy as they continue on their path to recovery. The stylists expressed their belief in each one, offering words of encouragement and support that went far beyond hair.

Events like this are a powerful reminder that healing doesn't happen in isolation, it *thrives* in community. Through the partnership between Alice's House, Third Step Ministry, and generous community members, the women of the PPW program were given a moment to feel confident, cared for, and celebrated.



"...helping these women feel seen, beautiful, and worthy as they continue on their path to recovery."

L.A. CADA Honors Bob Tyler

By Priscilla Rodriguez, Community Engagement Manager

After 10 years of dedicated service, **Bob Tyler** has officially retired from his role as Compliance Officer at L.A. CADA. Throughout his tenure, Bob played a pivotal role in strengthening the agency's operations, most notably through his work with **CARF (Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities)**—helping to ensure L.A. CADA consistently met the highest standards of care and compliance.

Bob brought with him more than three decades of experience in the recovery field, having worked across inpatient, residential, and intensive outpatient levels of care since 1990. His passion for quality and compassion in treatment has left a lasting impact not only on our agency, but across the larger behavioral health community.

Beyond L.A. CADA, Bob is the owner of **Bob Tyler Recovery Services**, where he continues to offer consulting, private counseling, public speaking, and continuing education. He's a past president of CAADAC, a faculty member at Loyola Marymount University Extension in the Alcohol and Drug Studies Program, and the author of the EVVY award-winning book, *"Enough Already! A Guide to Recovery from Alcohol and Drug Addiction."* His educational video series, including *"Craving and Relapse,"* has been viewed in over 1,000 treatment centers nationwide.

Bob's legacy at L.A. CADA is one of professionalism, leadership, and unwavering commitment to excellence in care. We are incredibly grateful for the decade he spent helping us grow and remain accountable to the people we serve.

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"Love WHITTIER"

Planting Hope, Painting Joy!

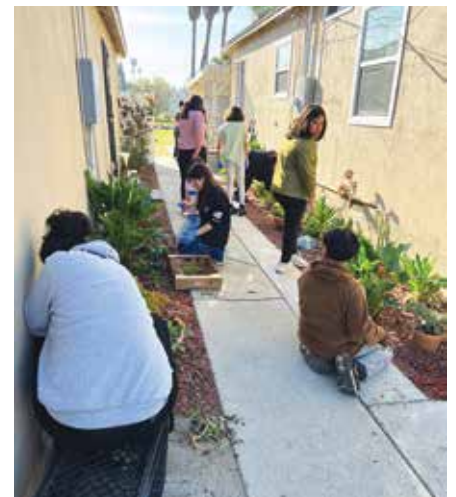
By Citlalilt Pastrana, Program Manager

On March 22, 2025, the L.A. CADA's Alice's House location was filled with love and warmth as we celebrated "Love Whittier." Members of the Whittier Area Community Church (WACC) came together to volunteer their time and energy, and it was truly heartwarming to witness their dedication.

Together, we tackled various projects, including painting the interiors of our homes and creating four beautiful garden beds brimming with plants and vegetables. The transformation of our backyard into a serene oasis was simply amazing, and the refreshed, clean interiors of our homes shine with new life.

Our Children's Donation Shed has now been organized for easy access, ensuring that those in need can find help without hesitation. We are deeply thankful to the members of Whittier Area Community Church for their friendship and hard work. Their generosity and kindness have made a profound difference in the lives of the women and children who call Alice's House their home.

This year's Love Whittier was such a tremendous success, and we are overflowing with gratitude for everyone who participated. Thank you for making a difference in our community and for showing us all that when we come together, we can create a lasting impact. This marks Alice's House's seventh year serving as a residential home for women and children, and we are beyond grateful for the love and support that continues to blossom around us.



Many thanks to the members of Whittier Area Community Church for their hard work and generosity. IT ALL LOOKS BEAUTIFUL!

Bob Tyler, continued from page 6

From all of us at L.A. CADA — thank you, Bob, for your years of service, and we wish you all the best in this next chapter of life!

For more about Bob's continued work in recovery, please visit: www.bobtyler.net



L.A. CADA staff and friends celebrated Bob Tyler at his retirement lunch.

A PATIENT'S SUCCESS STORY

By William Shelton
Community Services/TAY
Manager

Savanna V. with her therapist, **Crystal (l)**, and counselor, **Diana (r)**. As a community referral, she came to the program with a DCFS case, maintaining custody of her two children, and went through L.A. CADA's Continuum of Care.



"L.A. CADA has given me the tools to live a healthy sober life. I would like to thank my counselor, Diana, and therapist, Crystal. I would like to express appreciation to my group facilitator, Kelly. These amazing people at L.A. CADA have helped me change my life for the better. I now feel confident that I will succeed in anything I choose to do in my life." —**Savanna V.**

BRIDGING THE GAP: The Heartfelt Work of the Local Hearts Foundation

By Kaitlyn Cudmore, Administrative Assistant

The story of **Tito and Trina Rodriguez** began in childhood, when they became friends in elementary school and remained close throughout their school years. Both were raised in low-income families in Long Beach, CA. Tito lost his father at an early age and was raised by his mother, while Trina was cared for by her grandmother until around the age of five or six, when her mother married her stepfather. After graduating high school, Tito and Trina went their separate ways, but eventually reconnected and married, building a life and family together.

Before co-founding the **Local Hearts Foundation**, Tito enjoyed a successful 25-year career as a music producer, cultivating an extensive network of industry connections and developing a strong social media presence. Trina, on the other hand, worked a steady 9-to-5 job at a pharmacy while raising their children. Tito's connections and influence in the music industry laid the groundwork for starting their organization, while Trina brought her dedication and nurturing spirit to their shared mission.

The Local Hearts Foundation was born out of Tito and Trina's shared desire to bring resources and joy to underserved families, particularly during the holiday season. Motivated by the belief that gifts like Christmas toys can spark joy and play a vital role in childhood development, the couple began their journey of giving back. *"Toys are important. It's a pure luxury that many kids don't get during the holidays,"* Trina shared.

Over the past decade, Tito and Trina have worked tirelessly to bridge the gap for children and families in need, ensuring that they experience the magic and warmth of the holidays. Their efforts have grown into four main programs:

1. **Easter Basket Giveaway:** Launched three years ago, the program started with 500 baskets and now distributes over 1,000.
2. **Education Is Power Backpack Drive:** Held in August, this initiative provided over 800 backpacks filled with school supplies in 2024.
3. **Thanksgiving Turkey and Food Drive:** Helping families celebrate the



*Trina Rodriguez, co-founder
of Local Hearts Foundation*

holiday with a proper meal.

4. **Christmas Event:** Their largest program, featuring music performances, gift distributions, and a festive celebration for the community.

In addition to these core programs, Local Hearts runs smaller initiatives, such as supporting street vendors, rewarding students with good grades, and providing experiences or resources to those in need. The organization serves individuals from pre-K through young adult (up to age 28) and strives to assist parents and guardians as well, ensuring holistic support for families. Their reach extends across Los Angeles County, Long Beach, and the surrounding areas.

The growth of the Local Hearts Foundation has created a strong sense of community. Participants often return as volunteers, becoming part of the foundation's extended family. *"They*

have welcomed us into their lives and allowed us to be a blessing to them. It is a privilege to do that, and I do it with joy," Trina says. Helping others has become a family affair, with their relatives also pitching in to support the cause. For Tito, a motto he lives by and has even printed on a hat is, **"IT TAKES US TO SAVE US."**

The couple's passion for their work is what drives them each day. Trina recalls a moment that deeply impacted her: helping a child with cancer, which opened the door for her to help more people in need. Her advice to others is simple yet profound: *"Don't be afraid to ask for help when you need it, even in your personal life."*

Looking ahead, Tito and Trina hope to expand their efforts to support at-risk teenagers. Trina emphasizes the power of mentorship, explaining that just one or two mentors can make a profound difference in guiding a young person onto the right path. Through their unwavering dedication, Tito and Trina Rodriguez continue to inspire and uplift their community, proving that with compassion and effort, lasting change is possible.

If you would like to reach out to Local Hearts Foundation for help or to volunteer, you can visit their website <https://www.localheartsfoundation.org/>

Main Street Community Health & Resource Fair

By Kaitlyn Cudmore, Administrative Assistant and Andrea Mesa, Site Manager

L.A. CADA's inaugural **Main Street Community Health & Resource Fair**, held on February 22, 2025, was a true celebration of unity and resilience in South Central LA. Hosted at our L.A. CADA site on Main Street, this event was more than just a gathering—it was a testament to the power of collaboration and community support. Our goal was to highlight the incredible work of local **Community-based Organizations (CBOs)** dedicated to building a better Los Angeles for all. Among them, the **Technical Training Assistance (TTA) Program** CBOs played a pivotal role, contributing to the collective effort to uplift and empower our neighborhood.

Beyond providing essential resources like health screenings, we envisioned this event as a day of connection, joy, and family fun. Our Team wanted attendees to not only gain access to vital services from CBOs across Los Angeles County, but to experience a welcoming and festive atmosphere. **Inner City Child Development and Youth Foundation**, a TTA CBO, added to the excitement by offering snow cones and face painting, bringing endless smiles to children. Meanwhile, the **Local Hearts Foundation** helped spread even more joy by distributing toys to kids throughout the event. Volunteers from L.A. CADA's **Compton Recovery Bridge Housing (RBH)** also played a key role, assisting with event logistics and ensuring everything ran smoothly, demonstrating the power of service and second chances. Seeing families come together, children laughing, and the community engaging with these vital resources reaffirmed the importance of creating spaces where support and celebration go hand in hand.

Guests participated in a variety of engaging activities, from art and painting with **Meztli Projects**—a TTA CBO—to lively



(l-r) Laura Garcia, Field Deputy, Council District 8; Senior Lead Officer Gutierrez, Southeast Division; Officer Hill, Volunteer Coordinator; Brandon Rosales, Project Coordinator; Edith Rojas, Community Health Worker; Kaitlyn Cudmore, Administrative Assistant; Andrea Mesa, Site Manager; Keith Baker, Health Program Analyst II Co-Lead, Trauma Prevention Initiative; Nolan Ross Same-Weil, Director of Development; Art Monreal, L.A. CADA Board President; Priscilla Rodriguez, Community Engagement Manager.

dance performances and more! Local law enforcement officers also joined in, walking through the event, engaging with families, and connecting with community members in a positive and welcoming environment. Their presence emphasized the importance of strengthening relationships between law enforcement and the people they serve, reinforcing a spirit of trust, safety, and unity.

But beyond the resources and entertainment, this event was about building bridges—between people, organizations, and opportunities. It was about fostering connections that extend beyond a single day, ensuring that South Central continues to thrive through collaboration and shared purpose. The Main Street Community Health & Resource Fair stands as a powerful reminder that when each of us contributes to something bigger, we all grow and thrive together.

OUR Mission

is to save lives, unite families, and protect the community through addiction counseling and healthy living education.



Please make it YOUR Mission by donating today.

Building Bridges through Empowerment

By Priscilla Rodriguez, Community Engagement Manager

On Friday, March 7, 2025, L.A. CADA had the privilege of participating in the **Downey Chamber of Commerce Women's Empowerment Conference** held at the **Rio Hondo Event Center**, bringing together an inspiring group of women (and allies) to connect, uplift, and learn from one another under the powerful theme: **"Strong Women. Strong World."**

L.A. CADA proudly sponsored an Empowered Conference Table, allowing several of our staff members to attend and be part of a meaningful afternoon of networking, growth, and shared stories. The event featured dynamic speakers, engaging activities, and space for community members to celebrate both personal and collective achievements.

What made this conference truly impactful was the connection it fostered — not just among attendees, but between organizations, cities, and commu-



(l-r) Assembly member Blanca Pacheco, CA State Assembly, 64th District; Priscilla Rodriguez, Community Engagement Manager; Downey Police Department Sgt. Ruth Valenzuela with Howdy; Jazmin Davalos, Prevention Program Director; Eva Hernandez, Project Director of MAT Services.

nities. As a proud member of the Downey Chamber of Commerce, L.A. CADA values opportunities like these that help build bridges between our agency and the City of Downey. Our presence reflected more than just participation; it demonstrated our commitment to deepening local relationships and supporting the empowerment of women throughout the region.

Being in a room filled with changemakers and visionaries was energizing. It reminded us that empowerment doesn't happen in isolation — it's rooted in community, partnership, and the willingness to show up for one another. As we continue building bridges throughout 2025, events like these reaffirm that we are on the right path — **TOGETHER.**



(l-r) Andrea Mesa, RICMS and TTA; Joe Amaya, Development and Logistics Manager; Nolan Ross Same-Weil, Director of Development; Priscilla Rodriguez, Community Engagement Manager; Citlalilil Pastrana, Program Manager; Liana Sanchez, Director of Program Services; Sara Vides, Program Manager; Eva Hernandez, Project Director of MAT Services; Jazmin Davalos, Prevention Program Director.



A PATIENT'S SUCCESS STORY

By William Shelton, Community Services/TAY Manager

Sergio M. came to treatment in order to be reunited with his children. He was able to successfully complete the program and reunite with his wife and children.

"Thanks to L.A. CADA for guiding me and helping me to achieve recovery. I was able to finalize my Department of Children Family Services (DCFS) case and be reunited with my family. I learned how to be a better person with sobriety, values, and coping skills. All thanks to the program, I can move forward with my family. —**Sergio M.**

Narcan Dorm 913

By John-Carlos Fabian,
Director of In-Custody and Re-Entry Services

On February 3, 2025, the L.A. CADA START team had the opportunity to tour the **Narcan Dorm 913** at the **North County Correctional Facility (NCCF)**, located at **Pitchess Detention Center** in Castaic. The visit offered valuable insights into the facility and its operation, and the team was grateful for the chance to explore the space first-hand. This initial visit sparked enthusiasm about a promising new collaboration with the **Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department (LASD)** and the **Los Angeles County Department of Health Services/Correctional Health Services (DHS/CHS)**.

As part of LASD and DHS/CHS's ongoing efforts to expand access to substance use treatment within correctional settings, the L.A. CADA START program was selected to provide specialized treatment services to the Narcan population at NCCF. L.A. CADA's extensive experience in delivering compassionate, evidence-based care made the organization a natural choice for this important role. Through the START program, L.A. CADA brings a dedicated team of professionals committed to supporting individuals on their recovery journey. That excitement turned into action on March 10, 2025, when the START program officially launched treatment services at NCCF's Narcan Dorm 913. On day one, staff successfully screened and enrolled two patients into the program, marking a strong start to the initiative.

Thirty days into service delivery, the START program is already seeing encouraging results. The number of referrals and enrollments has steadily increased, indicating that the program is effectively reaching more individuals in need of care. This early growth highlights the program's potential to create lasting, positive change within the facility during this opiate crisis. The START team remains committed to delivering quality, compassionate services and looks forward to expanding its services to support more individuals on their path to recovery.



(l-r) Jerriett Schlesner, SUD Counselor; Hattie Sallie, Data Specialist, Christopher Hiortdahl, Care Coordinator; and Myner Hernandez, Assistant Program Manager meeting in front of Narcan Dorm 913.

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES AT L.A. CADA

READY TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE? HERE'S HOW . .

- Assemble care packages or backpacks with essential items
- Greet guests with a warm welcome at community events
 - Create art or decorate for events and programs
 - Distribute resources and flyers in the community
 - Assist with sign-in tables or manage clipboards
 - Help with donation drives and sorting supplies
 - Support event setup and coordination
 - Write encouragement notes or thank you cards.
 - Take photos or document community events

INTERESTED?

Email Joe Amaya, Logistics and Outreach Manager
at jamaya@lacada.com to get started!

No cape required—just good vibes and a willingness to help!



(upper left) Diana Marquez and Gloria Duran.
(upper right) L.A. CADA Board Member and his sons.
(center) Eunice and her daughter.

Ask Dr. Holmes...

Dr. Randy Holmes is Board Certified in Addiction Medicine and Family Medicine, and is on the staff at PIH Health. He also serves as Chair of the California Society of Addiction Medicine (CSAM), and is a Public Policy Committee member of the American Society of Addiction Medicine (ASAM).



Questions may be emailed to administration@lacada.com.

Q: How can building strong support networks improve mental health and recovery outcomes for individuals in recovery?
— *New in Recovery*

A: Dear New,

Building strong support networks is crucial for both individuals as well as families to improve recovery outcomes. We do not exist in a vacuum, and we need others in our lives to improve mental health and support gain made in early recovery. Support networks include more traditional 12 Step meetings like AA, NA, and Al-Anon, but also faith-based programs like churches, temples, and other houses of worship. Families can provide support networks and well as groups of friends. Even work-related programs like Employee Assistant Programs can be useful support networks. There are many ways these support networks help.

EMOTIONAL SUPPORT

Friends, family, and peers help reduce feelings of isolation and loneliness, and encourage a sense of belonging. Addiction is a disease of isolation and support networks help connect people to one another.

ACCOUNTABILITY

Support networks help individuals stay committed to their treatment goals and reinforce positive behaviors. This improves people's ability to stick to therapy, medications, and lifestyle changes. 12 Step programs encourage members to "keep coming back".

REDUCE STRESS

Social connections can reduce anxiety and promote healthy coping mechanisms. This helps reduce the risk of relapse.

ACCESS TO RESOURCES

Strong networks provide practical help like transportation, financial support, and social services.

PEER SUPPORT

Engaging with others who have gone through similar experiences fosters a sense of understanding and camaraderie. Lifelong friendships are forged among those going through similar challenges.

ENCOURAGE HEALTHY BEHAVIOR

Supportive environments promote healthier choices like physical activity and a good diet.

CRISIS PREVENTION AND INTERVENTION

A strong network can recognize signs of relapse or crisis and intervene early.

We, at L.A. CADA, encourage all our patients and their families to develop strong support networks. These can involve traditional 12 Step programs, faith-based groups like churches or temples, therapy groups, or secular recovery programs. Our residential and outpatient treatment programs offer opportunities for patients to engage in recovery support networks from the onset of treatment and to continue these programs when they finish treatment. Our alumni from L.A. CADA come back and share their stories with current residents, "paying in forward" to those still in early recovery.

A PATIENT'S SUCCESS STORY

By William Shelton
Community Services/TAY
Manager

Jeremiah R. with his therapist, Christian (l), and counselor, Diana (r). He came to the program with a DCFS case and to treatment as a self-referral. He and his child's mother both joined the program while having an open DCFS case. He was able to successfully complete all levels of care in L.A. CADA's continuum care and then transferred home.



"I want to thank my counselor, Diana, and therapist, Christian, for helping me through my journey in the program. I am more than thankful for everything they have done for me. The program has been there for me for the past 10 months and honestly everything I have accomplished so far is just a small part of what the program can do for anyone." —**Jeremiah R.**

SPAGHETTI, CAKE, AND SOBRIETY: Supporting LGBTQ+ Recovery at AALA

By William Tarkanian, Chief Strategy Officer

The **AALA Roundup** is a yearly weekend get-together of LGBTQ+ members of **Alcoholics Anonymous** held every Spring in Los Angeles. The gathering draws sober folks from all over the country to Los Angeles for a weekend of workshops, open meetings, and fellowship.

L.A. CADA has historically supported and benefited from this annual event, sending as many as 50 patients to some or all of the three-day events in past years.

Fundraising and awareness-raising for the event begins in earnest every February with the **Spaghetti Dinner and Cake Auction**. L.A. CADA's **Serenity House** was in attendance, including all 18 guests and seven staff.

Having attended his first Round-up 17 years ago, **William Tarkanian, L.A. CADA Chief Strategy Officer**, gave a dollar-for-dollar match for all cakes sold during the cake auction. Five elaborately decorated cakes raised \$1270 in support of scholarships to all persons in treatment who cannot afford to attend the AALA Roundup. "I am grateful to support this yearly event, which supported me in early recovery, and hundreds of our LGBTQ+ patients over the years," Tarkanian stated. "The first time I laughed at a meeting of Alcoholics Anonymous was at AALA, which features speakers from around the country who share their experience, strength, and hope to those who attend the open meetings. I love this annual event, and I love that our LGBTQ+ patients get to attend for free because of the fundraising we all do months in advance . . . besides, who doesn't love Spaghetti and Cake!"



THE POWER OF FELLOWSHIP AND FUN: Patients Finding Joy in Karaoke During Recovery

By Daniel Martin, Activities Coordinator

The road to healing is often long and challenging, but moments of joy can make all the difference. One of the most heartwarming activities to witness is when patients at the **Allen House** come together to sing. It's a beautiful reminder of how important fellowship and unity can be in the process of healing.



When a group of patients gathers around the karaoke machine, the atmosphere shifts. Laughter fills the air as people eagerly jump at the chance to sing, even if it's just a silly, fun tune. It's not about being a perfect singer; it's about embracing the moment and letting go of fear. It's incredible to see patients step out of their comfort zones, attempting songs they would never have thought to try before. Whether it's belting out classic rock hits, pop anthems, or playful childhood songs, each

performance is a step toward building confidence and connection with others. They spin a wheel to pick a song!

What makes this karaoke activity so special is the sense of unity they create. Singing together creates a shared experience that fosters deep bonds between individuals who may otherwise feel dis-

connected. The importance of these moments cannot be overstated. In the context of recovery, fellowship plays a crucial role in healing.

The patients at the Allen House jump at the chance to enjoy a silly song or attempt something out of their comfort zone. Our culture here at the Allen House is truly incredible. We learn in these moments that it's okay to have fun, be silly, and celebrate life in recovery . . . ONE SONG AT A TIME.

EXPANDING HOPE: L.A. CADA Long Beach Outpatient Services Awarded New Grant

By Eva Hernandez, Project Director of MAT Services

We are proud to announce that **Long Beach Outpatient Services** has been awarded a new grant under the **California Department of Health Care Services' Hub and Spoke System (H&SS) SOR IV initiative!** This latest funding opportunity, supported through the federal **State Opioid Response (SOR)** program, marks a significant milestone in our ongoing commitment to expanding access to life-saving treatment options for individuals with substance use disorders, especially those struggling with **opioid and stimulant use disorders**.

Through this award, Long Beach Outpatient will strengthen its role as a **Spoke** within the regional **Hub and Spoke System**. With this support, we will be able to extend vital **MAT and Harm Reduction Services** to more individuals in marginalized, underserved, and high-risk communities throughout the Long Beach area.



WHAT THIS MEANS FOR THE LONG BEACH COMMUNITY AND THOSE WE SERVE:

Expanded Access: More people will now have access to evidence-based addiction treatment, including same-day intake appointments, extended service hours, and telehealth options



L.A. CADA Long Beach Outpatient Services facility.

to reduce any barrier to care and access treatment.

Stronger Recovery Support: Patients will benefit from case management, peer recovery support, and direct linkages to mental health services, harm reduction tools, and community resources.

Ensuring Health Equity: Special emphasis will be placed on reaching individuals reentering society from incarceration, individuals experiencing homelessness, BIPOC communities, and those most impacted by the opioid crisis. L.A. CADA is committed to addressing social determinants of health and bridging gaps for treatment.

Every barrier we remove, door we open, and individual we serve can not only save lives, but impact entire communities. We are honored to have the opportunity to serve the Long Beach Community.



FREE HIV Testing

If you are between the ages of 13–18, live in the community, and want to take advantage of our **FREE HIV Testing**, visit us at our outpatient facility at **11015 BLOOMFIELD AVE, SANTA FE SPRINGS, ANY FRIDAY 3pm – 5pm**

NEED MORE INFORMATION?

Speak to a Health Educator at **(562) 348.0083**. Or call the Testing Location directly at **(562) 906.2676** and ask about how you can get **FREE HIV Testing!**



Los Angeles Centers for Alcohol and Drug Abuse serves the multicultural community of Santa Fe Springs, including cities throughout Los Angeles County.

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OUR MISSION

is to save lives, unite families, and protect the community through addiction counseling and healthy living education.

OUR VISION

is to enhance the educational and economic well-being of the people we serve by means of direct human services, advocacy, and referrals.

OUR VALUES

are to embrace the empowerment of people through compassion, perseverance and respect. We are able to provide a wide range of services thanks to a collaborative approach compatible with healthy communities, dedicated partners, and unique foundations.

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LOCATIONS

www.lacada.com

CORPORATE OFFICE

12070 Telegraph Rd, Suite 207, Santa Fe Springs, CA 90670
562.777.7500

Community Outreach Program

3675 Huntington Dr., Suite 101, Pasadena, CA 91107
626.314.2818

Downtown Outpatient and HIV Services Center

426 S. San Pedro St., Los Angeles, CA 90013
213.626.6411

Downtown Outpatient

307 Central Ave., Los Angeles, CA 90013
213.372.5233

Hollywood HIV Services Center

6838 Sunset Blvd., Los Angeles, CA 90028
323.461.3161 ext. 3818

L.A. CADA on Main Street

10924 S. Main St., Los Angeles, CA 90061
323.880.8159

Long Beach Outpatient and Community Services Center

5861 Cherry Ave., Long Beach, CA 90805
562.676.4259

Santa Fe Springs Outpatient and Community Services

11015 Bloomfield Ave., Santa Fe Springs, CA 90670
562.906.2676
WELLNESS CENTER: 1.844.804.WELL (9355)

QA and CENS

9300 Santa Fe Springs Rd., Santa Fe Springs, CA 90670
562.273.0462
CENS Toll Free: 1.844.804.SPA7 (7727)

Valley Homeless Community Outreach

2826 Valley Blvd., Alhambra, CA 91280

Youth and Family Services

10210 Orr and Day Rd, Suite B, Santa Fe Springs, CA 90670
562.348.0083

4th Street Field-Based Outpatient

1401 E. Fourth St., Unit A, Long Beach, CA 90802
562.606.2664

The Whittier LGBTQ Center

7639 Painter Ave., Whittier, CA 90602
562.261.5611



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Coming up ...



May 17-18

Mountain Mike's
Pizza - Norwalk
**YOUTH
Fundraiser**
May 22

**Lynwood
Inpatient Treatment
Center
Groundbreaking**
June 19

**Youth
Scholarship
Awards
Ceremony**
May 29

International Overdose Awareness Day Town Hall
August 28



August 9

**RECOVERY
MONTH**
September

**Main Street
Ribbon Cutting**
October

FOR MORE INFORMATION ON ANY OF THE EVENTS ABOVE, email Events@lacada.com