



Oct. 2020 E-Newsletter

From ACW's Executive Director Lorette Herman

We hope that you and your loved ones are staying safe and well during these trying times. The last eight months have been a challenge for ACW and the entire world due to the coronavirus pandemic, Riots, Fires, and Earthquakes. ACW's Residential Facility called the McMillen Family Foundation Miracle House is truly a place where miracles happen. It is a miracle that we are still operating and thriving during these times protecting women from the coronavirus while simultaneously treating their addiction and building their sobriety skills for a life of health and wellness –the ultimate goal of recovery.

When the coronavirus pandemic started, we did not know if we would need to shut down, or if all of our clients would get infected and we would need to become a convalescent center of sorts. The State Department of Health and Los Angeles County Department of Public Health immediately proclaimed that Substance Abuse Treatment Facilities are essential and must remain open and continue to serve and take in new clients during this pandemic. We immediately transformed our Outpatient Services into impactful HIPAA-compliant confidential telehealth programs providing the same high level of care through telehealth. Our outstanding Outpatient Staff quickly learned how to conduct confidential safe meaningful groups through our new telehealth program. Thank you Espanola Johnson, Outpatient Supervisor; Jessica Diaz, Bilingual OP Counselor; Keisanna Sparrow, OP Counselor; Sharon Burton, OP Counselor; Linda Malerba, Family Therapist/OP Clinical Supervisor; Liz Bonilla, Bilingual DV/Trauma Therapist; and Moran Hermesh, Nutritionist and OP Counselor. We are grateful to the McMillen Family Foundation for their generous grant, which enabled our transition to telehealth.

We had a five-hour Facetime call with four Los Angeles County Public health care professionals to show them every room of the Miracle House to increase prevention and safety for all the clients and staff. Beds were moved. We created a quarantine room for all new residents and an isolation room for sick clients. Pop tents were placed on top of beds to keep each individual resident's air circulating only around her and high-grade air filter systems were





added to all the rooms to clean and filter the air. Sneeze guards were added to the staff office to separate staff, and we purchased sanitizer to be used after every meal and on the frequently touched surfaces. Thank you to State Fund Insurance for their grant to ACW enabling us to purchase all of these items plus masks, gloves, and sanitizers. Only 10 residents eat at the same time in the dining room. We now have three seatings for each meal. Groups can only have nine participants and one facilitator. New residents are taken to have the COVID-19 test and all staff and residents have their temperature taken every day. We are grateful that as of today only one staff and only one client out of the hundreds of clients we have seen the past eight months have tested positive for COVID-19. Both are doing well now and neither gave the disease to the other or anyone else.

We revamped our residential schedule to accommodate these changes and applaud the bravery of our residential staff who came in day after day when the entire world was scared and had no clue how contagious the coronavirus would be. Thank you to: Sherlyn Johnson, Residential Manager; Charlene Jackson, Senior Counselor/Outreach Coordinator; Gina Johnson, Counselor; Cathy Behrendt, Bilingual Counselor; Lydia Banks, Overnight Counselor; Avie Johnstone, Overnight Counselor; Marlise Herron, Counselor; Yazmin Sosa Bilingual Counselor; Charlotte Abson, Per Diem Counselor; Ebony Maxi, Per Diem Driver; Maria Carr, Per Diem Counselor; Barbara Washington, Case Aide; Dottie Pleasant, Cook; Lizette Bonilla, Bilingual DV/Trauma Therapist; Debra Davis Kinkelaar, Residential Clinical Supervisor; and Moran Hermesh, Nutritionist. Each and every one of them is a “shero”. We could not have gone through, and continue to go through, this crisis without them.

We thank our Administration/Finance team for staying calm and supporting all the incredible work and client transformations: Andrea Munteanu, Finance Director; Patrick Hausfeld, Admin. Support/HR Specialist; and Suzanna Bandzyhardzhyan, Finance Assistant. In addition, we want to thank Los Angeles County Substance Abuse Prevention and Control (SAPC) for providing biweekly information sessions to keep us knowledgeable on the best ways to protect our clients, checking in with us to see where we needed help, and finding free resources for us to get masks, gloves, face guards and gowns. It was always surprising and refreshing to get a call from LA County SAPC asking how we are doing. They cared and continue to care –that says a lot.

We received calls from Alumni and past board members asking how the agency was handling the pandemic. We appreciated, and appreciate their concern and support.

The incredibly good news is that in the midst of this pandemic, 61 residents graduated from the Miracle House and 17 clients graduated from our Outpatient Programs. Terrific!

We hope to see you either on Zoom or in-person over the next months. The Board is trying to figure out how we can continue our yearly Bring Hope Home event in December and our 2nd Commemorative Brick Fundraiser in the spring. More information about these events soon.

Towards your health, wellness, and ongoing recovery. --Lorette

From ACW's Resident R.C.

This sudden and unexpected infectious disease outbreak, COVID-19, is also a behavioral health emergency. As we do our best to navigate uncharted waters with the virus, the COVID-19 pandemic has likely brought many changes to how we live our lives with its uncertainty, financial pressures, social isolation and altered daily routines. Compared to a year ago, The National Center for Health Statistics shows the rate of people reporting the symptoms of depression as well as anxiety has tripled. COVID-19 has resulted in an increase in known risk factors for mental health problems. Many are working from home full time for the first time, others are unemployed and plenty have been isolated from co-workers, friends and family. We know this situation is stressful for everyone and people living with mental illnesses and addictions may be finding it especially difficult to cope.

Now, more than ever, we must all take care of our mental health and well-being. When we approach this challenge with confidence or hope, we are likely to do better and be able to transform difficult experiences into important life lessons. Thankfully, during these times, ACW does just that. With our evidence-based curriculum for women dealing with trauma, the criminal justice system and other crucial factors pertaining to women in recovery, ACW provides a safe haven for women to feel secure as they rehabilitate their mind, body and soul. All aspects of health are incorporated in ACW's regimen including our diet. Our culinary nutritionist creates a menu based on clients' health needs which our Cook freshly prepares in different meal groupings for breakfast, lunch, dinner and snacks. Extra air filtration systems are in every room of our large Tudor mansion housed by clients' to keep them comfortably be cool with the freshest cleanest air. We have a highly trained staff along with certified licensed therapists to personally meet with each client regarding their personal coping tools. The protocol for keeping COVID-19 at bay has been taken very seriously; many of us are alive because of it. We appreciate the Zoom NA and AA meetings and are grateful that we are in ACW's residential program.

A few of the current residents at ACW want to share what it's like to be in treatment during the Coronavirus Pandemic.

"I think that being at ACW during COVID-19 has been great. What better time to work on yourself than when the whole world is at a halt. I am getting to know myself with very little distraction. My only complaint would be not being able to make store-runs as stated in The Patient Handbook. Other than that, I appreciate the safety measures taken to protect us. Thank you." -SH

"Being at ACW while the COVID-19 pandemic is currently going on has made me feel safe. The protocol makes me feel comfortable. We are required to wear masks and have our temperatures taken daily. Not being able to have visits is the only big downer for me but it is understandable. Better safe than sorry." -MR

"Being in Rehab during COVID is a great time to sit and reflect. This is self-time/me time. It's time to be honest with ourselves about our lives. Time to make realistic goals and plan-ahead. Each day my thoughts are clearer. Sobriety is beautiful." -LM

A few Outpatient clients also want to share what it is like to be in ACW's Outpatient Programs now.

"Tener classes, a traves de zoom es algo muy diferente si ayuda pero no es igual que el estar en group con las comaneras y la consejera, al poder ascochar de viva voz a cada una de ellas, y poder expresar nuestros problemas, se siente diferente, porque no podemas convivir juntas". -LC

Translation: *"Having classes through Zoom is something very different. It does help but it is not the same as being in-group with the peers and the counselor. Not being able to listen to their live voices and expressing our problems feels different because we cannot be there for one another". -LC*

"During the pandemic, it is hard not to be around others that are just like you and you must communicate with others through the internet. I have found it hard in the beginning but just like anything else if you are serious about what you are doing it makes it easier to transition into what you know is best. I know that this is only for a moment and even though times is hard out there, we do not have to make it harder times for us. Being in the pandemic makes it an easy excuse. What makes us stronger is sticking together knowing there is someone out there that still cares". -KD

"Being in an outpatient facility during the pandemic has been both easy and hard. Not being there in person is what makes it hard. There are so many things that are at home to distract you from your screen. Knowing the rules makes it easy. I must stay focused

because I really need these groups. They have helped me out in so many ways. At first, I liked the zoom groups because I do not like to go out and be around many people. So, I was like oh yay this is just right. Really, it is not a good thing because I cannot keep just being isolated. It is good that we can still meet and talk about everyday life”. -S.B.

ACW's mission is to empower women to make new choices for positive futures. As we commit to change for the better, we also shift to positive thinking. Positive thinking does not mean you are in denial about the reality of a situation. It is a tool that helps you to face challenges focusing on solutions instead of becoming overwhelmed by fear or hopelessness. I am moving into the future with confidence and a whole lot of tools to keep me healthy, well and sober. Thank you ACW. Call ACW if you need help now. Don't wait. Call: 213-381-8500. -R.C.

Want to Support ACW?

Upcoming Fundraisers and Events

More information will be coming out shortly regarding Bring Hope Home, our wonderful December Holiday event, and our 2nd Commemorative Brick Installation. Please see our first brick installation at <http://alcoholismcenterforwomen.org/buy-brick-donation/> and order your commemorative brick today. It is a great holiday, birthday, sobriety present that will beautify ACW's grounds and memorialize your special date or person while supporting the life changing, life supporting work ACW does every day to transform lives every day.

ACW Needs:

NA/AA books	\$ 1,000
Bath and Face Towels for the Miracle House	\$ 500
Slightly used Cookbooks	\$ 0
Games and puzzles –new or slightly used with all the pieces	\$ 0
Slightly used workout tapes or workout equipment like a treadmill	\$ 0
Gardening equipment, shoves, gloves, clippers (large and small), Dirt, seeds, planters, etc.	\$ 400

Get some ACW SWAG!

<http://alcoholismcenterforwomen.org/acw-swag/>



Black T-shirts: Left side: Dottie, Cook; Sherlyn, Res. Mgr; Andrea, Fin Dir; Top: Gina, Res Coun; Right side: Lorette E.D.; Charlene, Sr Res Coun/Outreach; Barbara, Case Aide
2nd photo: Dottie, Cook; Charlene, Sr Res. Coun/Outreach; Andrea, Fin Dir; Barbara, Case Aide



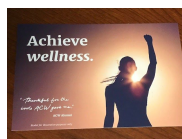
Outside on steps: 1st row: Andrea, Fin Dir; Charlene, Sr Res Coun/Outreach; Lorette, E.D.; Ebony, Driver
2nd row: Jessica, Bilingual OP Coun 3rd row: Gina, Res Coun; Sheryln, Res Mgr; Barbara, Case Aide; Cathy, Bilingual Res Coun; Dottie, Cook

White T-shirts: Ebony, Driver; Cathy, Bilingual Res Coun; Jessica, Bilingual OP Coun

Purchase ACW's Post Cards.

Our beautiful postcards are a great way to communicate with friends and support ACW.

1 for \$1.50
5 for \$5.00
15 for \$10.00
30 for \$20.00.



Do you Shop at Ralphs?

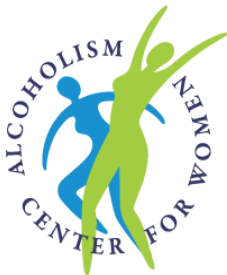
If you do please sign up to have a percentage of your purchases go to ACW. Just go online at www.ralphs.com, click on “Sign In”, enter your email address and password, click on Your Name, click on Edit Community Contributions then complete the information with your new organization number.

Financial Contributions

Please consider becoming an ongoing ACW donor. Donating is simple: Go to our website: www.alcoholismcenterforwomen.org/donate to make an online donation or mail your donation to: ACW Donations, 1147 South Alvarado Street, Los Angeles, CA 90006.

About ACW

Aimed at moving patients from addiction to wellness, ACW’s program structure, tools and pathway provide a holistic approach to mental and physical wellbeing. Please see our website for more information (www.alcoholismcenterforwomen.org) and like us on Facebook (www.facebook.com/alcoholismcenterforwomen).



Questions? Need Help?

For questions and enrollment please contact: info@acwla.org or call:
(213) 381-8500
1147 South Alvarado St, Los Angeles CA 90006
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www.alcoholismcenterforwomen.org

We are here to help.