

What's Working Well



...In the Employment of People with Lived Experience of Mental Health Challenges, Parents and Family Members to Transform California's Public Behavioral Health Workforce

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<http://workingwelltogether.org/>

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Working Well Together

Training and Technical Assistance Center

Working Well Together (WWT) is a collaborative project comprised of NAMI California, United Advocates for Children and Families, and the California Institute for Mental Health. Funded by the Mental Health Services Act (MHSA), the WWT Training and Technical Assistance Center supports the vision of the MHSA to transform systems to be client and family-driven. As such, WWT supports the sustained development of client, family member and parent/caregiver employment within every level of the public mental health workforce. The What's Working Well Quarterly News brief is produced and edited by Karin Lettau, MS, WWT Technical Assistance Coordinator for the Southern Region.



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San Bernardino County Process for Consumer & Family/Parent Designated Positions

To enable the transformation of the system and as mandated in the 2004 CA [Mental Health Services Act](#) (MHSA), to employ multicultural consumers and family members into the system, it may seem obvious that CA counties create designated positions for people with lived experience to responsibly use such experience to give hope and inspire recovery for people with mental health challenges. Even the US Department of Health & Human Services, in 2007, declared peer support services an evidence-based mental health model of care. Yet eight years after the passage of the MHSA, there are still only a handful of CA counties that have moved to hire consumers, youth, family members and parent/caregivers peer specialists into the ranks of the county civil service system. Creating newly coded positions that are designated specifically for people with lived experience is not an overnight process. Collaboration of stakeholder councils, Behavioral Health Human Resources—HR, County HR, County Legal Counsel, Behavioral Health Director and Behavioral Health Board is often necessary to write a Resolution recommending support for such positions to the Board of Supervisors.

This process took San Bernardino over six months to accomplish. In this and subsequent issues, we will examine the process CA counties have followed to institute County designated positions, in an effort to outline a model for other counties to follow.

In 2006, the County of San Bernardino began this critical process in their Workforce Development Council by forming the Consumer/Family Member Position Development Workgroup composed of two consumers, two family members, and one person from Behavioral Health HR, County HR, Dept. of Rehabilitation, and County Administration. Doris Turner and Laurretta Ross were part of this pioneering quest (see photo). By examining barriers, developing solutions for Consumer/Family Member/Parent peer specialist employment, and by identifying duties, skills, qualifications, criteria and training for the positions, the workgroup was able to develop three unclassified County positions titled Peer/Family Advocate—PFA I, II, and III for recommendation to the Workforce Development Council, the Behavioral Health Director, Behavioral Health Commission, and finally for a resolution recommendation for the County Board of Supervisors to pass. (See article page 2.)

Office of Consumer & Family Affairs

[The National Association of Counties—NACo](#) recognizes innovative county programs in 21 categories including human services and management at the [Annual NACo Achievement Awards](#). Over the past five years San Bernardino County has received at least ten NACo awards each year. Peer and family programs have been honored with several NACo Achievement Awards, including, in 2009, The Office of Consumer & Family Affairs Program, headed up by Doris Turner and Laurretta Ross (below), who systemically advocate for wellness, recovery and resiliency, train staff, and empower consumers and family members to meet their individual needs.



Peer/Family Advocate IIIs: Doris Turner (left) & Laurretta Ross accept NACo Award

Write Resolution for BOS

By Ron Shaw, WWT TAC, NAMI CA

Want to make mental health policy changes? One effective strategy is to speak to the issues with a proposed County Resolution. Follow basic steps to writing and presenting a proposed resolution to the Board of Supervisors.

"Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed people can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has."

- Margaret Mead

1. Identify a 'friend of mental health' that sits on the Board of County Supervisors. As a passionate individual or an advocacy representative group (2 or 3 individuals), call the office of the Supervisor of choice— schedule a meeting.
2. After the meeting with the Supervisor, create a sample draft of the key ideas discussed. Each county has resolutions for public view. Examine and use one of them as a template in creating your own resolution. Note the language and the flow of the resolution (e.g. statement addressing a need, key statistics that highlight area of concern, local resources or partnerships that will address the need within the community, ending statement and request support of the Board). Do three edits of the draft to ensure professional look and tone.
3. Call the office (at least three weeks in advance for placement on the projected meeting agenda) of the Chair Person for the Board of Supervisors. Provide both an electronic version and a hard copy of the proposed resolution. Please note: the Board of Supervisors may edit the resolution for legal appropriateness.
4. Place the date of the scheduled presentation on your calendar. Encourage your organization or other passionate individuals to attend this noteworthy day.

Central Region Upcoming Trainings

WWT Central Region TAC is coordinating two free full day regional trainings for the Central Region. On **December 6, 2012, 10:00 am – 4:00 pm**, **"The Power of Peer Support: Transforming the Mental Health System"** training will be in the southern portion of the Central Region, in Hanford, then later in February in the northern part of the region. This training will cover the integration of consumer, youth, family and parent peer specialists onto treatment teams. **To register online go to:** <http://wwtcentral4peersupportdec6.eventbrite.com> or contact WWT Central Region TA Coordinator: [Ron Shaw](#), (916) 288-5498.

Los Angeles Region

WWT is providing another Regional training for the Los Angeles Region soon. The same free training mentioned above in the Southern Region, **"Supporting Lived Experience in the Workplace: A New Needs Paradigm"** will be facilitated in Los Angeles on **February 6, 10 am-5 pm**, for clinical, supervisory and support staff with five free CEUs for psychologists, RN, PT, MFT, LPCC, LCSW and CAADACs. If you are a Los Angeles County or County-contracted clinician in public mental health, **register online at:** <http://wwtlosangeles4livedexperiencefeb6.eventbrite.com/>

Southern Region

Many Counties have expressed a need to establish better partnerships between clinicians, supervisors, support staff and consumer, family, and parent peer specialists. WWT Southern Region is responding with a free one day regional training: **"Supporting Lived Experience in the Workplace: A New Needs Paradigm"** with free CEUs to licensed staff. The training is already at capacity for the November 15, 2012 training in Bakersfield. Using interactive, experiential activities and art to anchor learning, this is sure to be a fun training. WWT TAC, Southern Region [Karin Lettau](#) (619) 246-7797.

Welcome Back Greater Bay Area Regional TAC

Greetings! I am pleased to announce as of 8/15/2012, I was asked by United Advocates for Children and Families (UACF) to resume the position as the WWT TAC for the Greater Bay Area Region!

The new [WWT Website](#) is now live—launched in August of 2012. Stay tuned to our [WWT Calendar](#) too for WWT events.

During the past six weeks I have visited a wellness center where I am assisting them in developing PT/FT job descriptions, working with another facility on developing resources and referrals for Youth/Young Adults to access on the WWT website. I organized a great Regional Training that was held last month in Los Angeles on **"Compassion Fatigue Awareness"**. [Deborah Van Dunk](#)
916-643-1530 ext 105

[Donna Matthews](#) is the WWT Project Manager and TA Coordinator for the Superior Region. (916) 379-5353

WWT Peer Certification

For State Certification of Consumer, Youth, Family, and Parent (CYFP) Peer Specialists, WWT is preparing for the Statewide Stakeholder Certification Summit in the spring of next year. The Summit Plan calls for key stakeholders and topic experts to review the findings of the two-year WWT stakeholder process in order to develop next steps for finalizing recommendations to the State.

Building on [past stakeholders recommendations](#), Workgroups are processing information for presentation at the Summit. Please join our call to learn the latest and to give your input. The last teleconference call of the year will be on **Wednesday, November 28, from 12 to 1 PM**. Call 1-866-633-8010, Code: 1015102631. Note there will be no December teleconference.

If you are interested in joining in, or for more information, contact [Karin Lettau](#) (619) 246-7797.