

A BRIDGE AND BEYOND

June-July 2025

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Hello Summer! ☀️

This season has been filled with creativity, connection, and celebration across our sites. From colorful Pride Month displays and motivational rock painting in West Covina, to a joyful staff-client dodgeball game and party at Esperanza, and a collaborative mental health mural project in El Monte, our teams have continued to build community through shared moments of expression, wellness, and fun. These events reflect the heart of our work—coming together to support one another and create spaces that uplift, inspire, and include.



NEWS FROM EL MONTE 🎤

New Mural at El Monte Celebrates Mental Health Through Art 🎨

Staff and residential clients at our El Monte site recently came together to create something truly special—a beautiful new mural celebrating mental health, healing, and hope.



The mural was a collaborative effort from start to finish. Together, staff and clients brainstormed ideas, sketched designs, and spent several days painting the final piece. The result is a vibrant, uplifting work of art that now brightens our space and serves as a daily reminder of growth, resilience, and the power of community.

This project not only allowed for creative expression but also fostered connection and teamwork in a meaningful way. Thank you to everyone who contributed their time, talent, and heart to bring the mural to life!



Celebrating Community at Esperanza

Dodgeball Fun and Pride Party Recap

We've had an exciting month here at Casitas Esperanza and Tranquilas, filled with fun activities that have brought us closer together as a community.



Dodgeball Fun with Staff and Clients

Last week, laughter and friendly competition filled the air as staff and clients came together for an exhilarating dodgeball game. It was a fantastic way to promote teamwork and physical activity while having a blast!

Pride Party in June

In celebration of Pride Month, we hosted a vibrant Pride party that brought joy and unity to our community. With colorful decorations, music, and shared stories, we celebrated diversity and inclusion at BRIDGES. It was a heartwarming event that showcased our commitment to creating a supportive and accepting environment for all.

As we continue to grow and support each other at BRIDGES, events like these remind us of the strength and spirit of our community. Thank you to everyone who participated and made these events memorable.

NEWS FROM WEST COVINA

West Covina Celebrates Pride Month with Color and Connection

In June, the Project Independence team came together to celebrate Pride Month with color, creativity, and community. Staff decorated the office with vibrant, inclusive displays that reflected the spirit of Pride—honoring diversity, self-expression, and belonging.

As part of a meaningful team-building activity, staff also painted rocks with encouraging messages. It was a fun group activity—especially since we don't often get the chance to all work together at the same time. Each rock carried a message of hope, strength,



or affirmation, serving as a small but powerful reminder of the supportive environment we strive to create.

Another rock painting event for clients took place shortly after, continuing the spirit of connection and creativity.

Thank you to the West Covina team for celebrating with such heart and intention.



NEWS FROM WOODLAND HILLS

New Partnership with Our Big Kitchen Los Angeles

TruStart is excited to announce our new partnership with *Our Big Kitchen Los Angeles*, a community-run, non-denominational kitchen that prepares and distributes fresh, pre-made meals to individuals and families facing food insecurity throughout the city.

Through this partnership, meals will be available for pickup from our office to our clients in need. In special circumstances—such as when a client is unable to leave home due to immigration concerns—our case manager will arrange a direct delivery.

A big thank you to Lupe for helping make this meaningful connection happen!



MONTHLY SHOUT-OUTS



JUNE

Birthdays

**Ashley Jara
Vivian La Febre
Tish Marquez
Ashley McDowell
Marisela Soto**





JUNE

Anniversaries

Jennifer Perez - 1 year





July Birthdays

Lynnae Hernandez
Shianne Torales



July Anniversaries

Diana Camarena
Larisa Cazacioc
Daisy Garcia
Eric Onesto
Heitzel Orantes
Nicole Paredes
Jakelin Trujillo

A Special Safety Shoutout ❤️

From our Safety Coordinator Diana Camarena:

I'd like to give a big shoutout to Ashley McDowell, our amazing residential therapist, for her help creating June's Safety Topic poster! At our last Safety Committee meeting, I asked if anyone had poster design skills—and Ashley immediately stepped up, offering her Canva talents.

She delivered a clean, professional poster, and this isn't the first time—she's created several eye-catching, high-quality posters for the site. Thank you, Ashley, for your creativity and teamwork!



MINDFUL MOMENT

PEACE OF MIND IS RARELY FOUND
IN A REMEMBERED PAST OR
IMAGINED FUTURE. BE PRESENT.



Contributors to this newsletter include Tish (Project Independence), Diana (El Monte), Ashley (Esperanza), Lizbeth (El Monte), Lupe (TruStart) Lori (Executive Director), and Nicole (Executive Assistant).



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