

A BRIDGE & BEYOND

December 2024-January 2025



New Year, A New Hope

As we begin 2025, we do so with both resilience and reflection. This year has already presented significant challenges, reminding us that uncertainty and hardship do not pause with the turn of a calendar page. The devastating fires in Southern California, particularly in Los Angeles County, have left families and communities reeling from unimaginable losses. Our hearts go out to those affected, and we recognize the grief and pain that remain.

Beyond our local communities, the broader social and political landscape continues to shift rapidly. Many are experiencing heightened anxiety, fear, and uncertainty about what lies ahead. It is understandable to feel overwhelmed, but we also know that difficult times are not faced alone. Now, more than ever, we must come together supporting each other, lifting each other up, and reminding ourselves that even in hardship, there is strength in unity.



At our agency, we recognize the profound impact these challenges have on mental health. If you or someone you know is struggling with feelings of stress, sadness, or hopelessness, please know that help is available. Seeking support is not a sign of weakness—it's a step toward healing.

Resources for Mental Health Support:

- **988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline:** Call or text **988** for 24/7 support
- **Crisis Text Line:** Text **HOME** to **741741**
- **Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health (DMH):** **1-800-854-7771**

While caring for our mental health is crucial, so is staying engaged in ways that empower us. If you are feeling uncertain or discouraged, small actions can make a difference:

- **Stay informed** by seeking credible sources on issues that matter to you.
- **Connect with your community**—whether through local volunteer work, advocacy, or simply checking in on a neighbor.
- **Engage in civic participation** by reaching out to elected officials, attending community discussions, or using your voice to promote positive change.
- **Prioritize moments of joy**—whether through art, nature, or time with loved ones, allowing space for hope and renewal.

We may not have control over every challenge ahead, but we do have control over how we show up for ourselves and each other. As we move forward, let's hold onto the belief that, even in uncertain times, we have the power to create change, foster hope, and build a stronger, more compassionate world—together.

Wishing you all a year of strength, peace, and renewal.

Lori Pendroff, M.S.
Executive Director

"And now we welcome the new year, full of things that have never been."

-Rainer Maria Rilke

Honoring Lunar New Year 2025 – A Time for Renewal and Well-Being 🐍

On **January 29, 2025**, communities around the world welcomed the **Year of the Snake**, a symbol of wisdom, transformation, and resilience. Lunar New Year is a time of reflection, renewal, and



connection with loved ones—a perfect opportunity to focus on well-being, both individually and collectively.

At BRIDGES we recognize the importance of cultural traditions in fostering a sense of belonging and mental wellness. As we embrace the new year, we encourage everyone to take a moment for self-care, reconnect with their support systems, and set intentions for the year ahead.

We also acknowledge that while this holiday is a time of joy for many, it can bring challenges such as stress, loneliness, or feelings of loss. If you or someone you know could use support, we invite you to call the LACDMH Helpline **24/7 Help Line** at: [\(800\) 854-7771](tel:8008547771).

Wishing you a Lunar New Year filled with **peace, health, and new beginnings!**

Gōng xǐ fā cái! (恭喜发财) | Greeting: Wishing you happiness and prosperity

Chúc Mừng Năm Mới! | Vietnamese phras meaning Happy New Year!

Saehae bok mani badeuseyo! (새해 복 많이 받으세요) | Greeting during the Lunar New Year in Korea

News from El Monte 📢



Celebrating Holiday Traditions in December 🏠

December is a time of warmth, joy, and togetherness, and this year, our residential home in El Monte embraced the holiday spirit in a truly special way. Staff and clients came together to decorate stockings, share cherished traditions, and create an inclusive, festive atmosphere for everyone.

Each stocking hung with care represents the unique personality and holiday traditions of its owner. Some are adorned with glitter and bright colors, while others feature heartfelt messages or symbols of cultural celebrations. From Christmas and Hanukkah to Kwanzaa and other meaningful traditions, our program is filled with the rich diversity of our community.

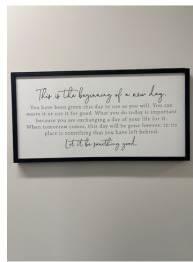
Beyond decorations, the holiday season is also about sharing stories, music, and special treats. Clients and staff exchanged memories of past celebrations, teaching one another about different

customs, and discovering new ways to spread holiday cheer. Whether it's a favorite holiday song, a beloved family recipe, or a special tradition passed down through generations, every contribution added to the spirit of the season.

As we gathered to celebrate, we were reminded that the holidays are about more than decorations and gifts—they are about connection, kindness, and embracing the traditions that make each of us unique. Thank you to everyone who contributed to making this season bright.

May the new year ahead be filled with hope, happiness, and new memories to cherish!

News from West Covina 📢



Project Independence Moves to a New Office in West Covina

We are excited to announce that **Project Independence** has officially moved to a new office in **West Covina**, marking an exciting new chapter for our outpatient mental health therapy services. This move allows us to better serve our clients in a space that is welcoming, accessible, and designed with their needs in mind.

Our new office features thoughtfully designed therapy rooms that provide a comfortable and private setting for individual and group sessions. Additionally, we now have expanded areas for case management and support services, ensuring that clients receive comprehensive care in a warm and professional environment.

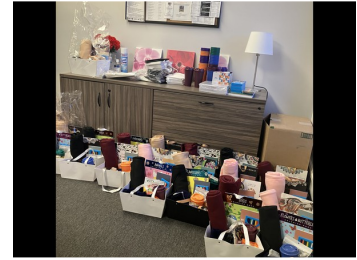
The transition to West Covina reflects our ongoing commitment to making quality mental health care more available to the community. By creating a space that fosters healing and growth, we hope to continue empowering individuals on their journey to independence and well-being.

Whether you are a client, a community partner, or a supporter of mental health services, we welcome you to this new chapter with us.

Stay tuned for more updates as we continue to expand our services and make a lasting impact in the lives of those we serve!

Project Independence Team

News from Woodland Hills 📣



Celebrating the Spirit of Giving: Spreading Joy with Holiday Baskets

At Full Service Partnership (FSP), we embrace our mission to provide intensive support to individuals facing complex challenges. Many of our clients come to us after enduring prolonged periods in psychiatric hospitals, the justice system, or experiencing homelessness. For them, FSP becomes a crucial lifeline, often one of their primary sources of support in the absence of involved family or friends.

As we approached the holiday season—a time of joy and togetherness for many—it was important to recognize that not everyone experiences this season in the same way. For some of our clients, it can exacerbate feelings of loneliness, isolation, and hopelessness.

This realization prompted us to ask ourselves: when was the last time our clients received a gift? How can we make this season brighter for them?

Thanks to the support of our CSS funds and the dedication of our team, including Grizelda and Denise from TruStart/FSP, we transformed our Director's office into a hub of holiday cheer. Together, we assembled special holiday baskets filled with items tailored to meet our clients' practical needs and uplift their spirits. Each basket included essentials like a fleece blanket, warm accessories, comforting tea, healthy snacks, and items to stimulate mental well-being such as a coloring book and planner.

The act of creating these baskets brought immense joy to our team, knowing that each item would bring comfort and support to those who received them. It's moments like these that truly embody the spirit of giving.

As we reflect on the impact of our efforts, we are reminded of the importance of community and compassion. Through small gestures, we can make a significant difference in someone's life, especially during the holiday season.

From all of us at FSP, we hope you had a holiday season filled with warmth, kindness and the joy of giving.

Warm regards,
Natalia Mathis, LMFT
FSP Program Director



A New Year, A New You: Our 8-Week Group Therapy Series

As 2025 began, BRIDGES Community Treatment Services launched an **8-week group therapy series** designed to help participants start the year with clarity, resilience, and purpose. This transformative program provided a **supportive and empowering space** for individuals to **release the past, set meaningful goals, and craft a personalized wellness plan** to thrive in the new year.

A Journey of Growth and Resilience

Throughout the 8-week program, participants engaged in a variety of **creative exercises, reflective discussions, and practical strategies** aimed at personal development. The sessions focused on:

- ✓ **Defining a Clear Vision** – Gaining clarity on personal and professional aspirations.
- ✓ **Releasing the Past** – Letting go of negative patterns and emotional burdens.
- ✓ **Igniting Inner Strength** – Building confidence and resilience.
- ✓ **Crafting a Wellness Plan** – Developing personalized strategies for balance and well-being.
- ✓ **Bringing Goals to Life** – Turning vision into actionable steps.

Flexible and Accessible Support

To accommodate different needs, the group therapy sessions were offered in two formats:

- **In-Person Sessions:** Tuesdays at **6 PM** at our Woodland Hills office
- **Virtual Sessions:** Thursdays at **6 PM** via Zoom

A Meaningful Experience

Participants found **connection, support, and motivation** as they worked together to build healthier habits and a more fulfilling future. The group therapy format allowed individuals to **share experiences, gain new perspectives, and develop lifelong coping strategies** in a collaborative environment.

As we move forward into the year, we celebrate the progress made by each participant and look forward to offering more opportunities for **growth, healing, and resilience** in the future.

For information on upcoming programs and therapy sessions, please contact our TruStart office at (818) 657-0411. We look forward to continuing to support our community in their mental wellness journey!



December

BIRTHDAYS

Rosa Adame
Alejandro De Santiago
Eric Onesto
Heitzel Orantes
Lupe Perez



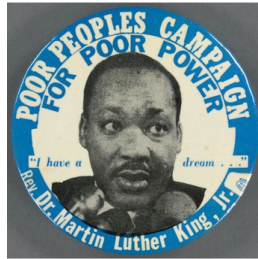
JANUARY

Birthdays

ZITLALLY ALVAREZ
LIZBETH GONZALEZ
KARISSA GUZMAN
FELIPE PEREZ
MARK RODRIGUEZ
PAULINA ROJAS



This Month 🎉



Celebrating Martin Luther King Day

How perfect that we celebrate the life of MLK just at the start of the new year -- it offers the opportunity to make resolutions about the steps we each can take to foster a more just world.

What would it be like
if you turned your
notifications **off**
on your phone today?



Courtesy of Headspace



2024 2025

[Donate Here](#) 

Support BRIDGES, Inc. by making a donation that directly impacts the lives of our clients. Your contribution ensures essential services reach those in need, fostering positive change & providing support to those facing challenges.

Contributors to this newsletter include Tish (Project Independence), Shannon (Esperanza), Larisa (TruStart), Megan (TruStart), Natalia (FSP), Lori (Executive Director), and Nicole (Executive Assistant).

BRIDGES, Inc.

Email: info@bridgesrehab.org

Website: www.bridgesrehab.org

Phone: (909) 623-6651 Corporate

(626) 350-5304 El Monte

(626) 219-2400 West Covina

(818) 657-0411 Woodland Hills



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