

Child & Family Mental Health

PROVIDING HELP AND HOPE SINCE 1946

SPRING 2017 NEWSLETTER

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LOCATIONS

HEADQUARTERS
Administration/Long Beach Clinic
1301 Pine Avenue
Long Beach, CA 90813
(562) 595-1159 tel

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taclb.ora









THE BRIDGE: PATHWAYS TO A TRAUMA-INFORMED COMMUNITY

This past year, The Guidance Center, along with several community partners, embarked on an exciting project – film and produce a short documentary on how trauma-informed communities can help fight poverty.

Through interviews with local Long Beach experts and The Guidance Center clients caught in the intergenerational cycle of poverty, "The Bridge: Pathways to a Trauma-Informed Community" shows the overwhelming and devastating impact poverty can have. The documentary also showcases the powerful force a trauma-informed community can be in positively changing the course of people's lives as part of the wider solution to ending intergenerational poverty.



Poverty is devastating for so many children and their families in our communities, impacting generation after generation as the cycle persists. Facts and figures abound on this topic. The goal of this documentary is to humanize those facts, turn numbers into the faces they represent, and empower community members with a trauma-informed lens in which to see and help those affected. The documentary will be screened to the public on Wednesday, April 26, at The Art Theatre in Long Beach. See page 12 for more information on the upcoming screening.

DOCUMENTARY STAFF

Executive Producer: Patricia Costales, LCSW Producer/Director: Matthew Murray Cinematographer: Evan Barthelman

FEATURED SPOKESPEOPLE

Honorable Robert Garcia, EdD, Mayor of the City of Long Beach Robert Luna, Police Chief for City of Long Beach Kelly Colopy, MA, Director, Long Beach Health and Human Services Tiffany Brown, EdD, Assistant Superintendent of Long Beach Unified School District

Elisa Nicholas, MD, MSPH, CEO of The Children's Clinic Giovanna Ferraro, City of Long Beach Human Relations Commission Patricia Costales, LCSW, CEO of The Guidance Center Nathan Swaringen, LCSW, Clinician at The Guidance Center Wayne Herbst, Retired Dean of Students of Avalon School Santa Dominguez, RN, MPH, Nurse at Catalina Island Medical Center Enrique Dominguez, Pastor of Singing Waters Christian Center, Catalina

A NOTE FROM THE CEO: THE NEED TO BE A NEIGHBOR



My sons have been friends with a boy since they were in kindergarten. This boy and his family are the sort of people you want in your lives and your community. The father is a doctor with a life-saving specialty. The mother has been a visible volunteer raising her children in the public school system. The friend has a sweetness that is palpable. I am proud that my sons had the good judgement to pick such a

nice boy as a friend. This family is also Muslim and the boy asked me recently why people hate them.

My niece come out to her family a few years ago and knew that she would be supported and loved unconditionally. We are all proud of her as a student, woman and advocate. Her sexuality is only a one part of who she is as a person and of course we love her. Her experience coming out was very different from the experience of my cousin a generation earlier. I'd like to confidently say to her this is because times have changed, but I'm not always sure.

I have a loved one who is an immigrant from Mexico. He moved here to create a better life with new opportunity, as did generations of immigrants from around the world before him. He fell in love here and raised a family. He works hard and pays taxes. His skin is brown and he is no longer sure he is welcome.

Despite our walks in life, we all know people from groups that feel disenfranchised. It hurts to see people you love feel that they don't belong, that they are different and that this difference is somehow wrong.

At The Guidance Center, it is more important now than ever that we be a safe place in our community. The children and families we see very often come from groups that are marginalized and disenfranchised. The stigma around mental health alone is isolating. If it is shameful to be poor, it may not be acceptable to ask for help for the anxiety this creates. A child questioning her sexuality may feel unwilling to ask for help, if she feels society will condemn her. A family may fear seeking help for a child who needs it, if they think we will report them to ICE. A society that condemns will further drive our marginalized communities into the shadows, where they won't ask for help. This weakens us all, as a community is only as strong as its members.

At The Guidance Center, we are grappling with ways that we may show our communities that it is safe to come to our doors. We are giving letters and fliers communicating safety to our clients, and designing signs to hang on our walls demonstrating that we are a safe place. Word of mouth from our clients to their neighbors, from our community partners to their populations, is essential.

We can only help the families who come to us, and they will only come to us if we are perceived as safe. Now more than ever, we need to be a neighbor.



IT'S ABOUT T.I.M.E. MID-YEAR UPDATE

There's a movement underway at Beach High School, and it has resulted in increased attendance and decreased suspensions during the first semester of the 2016-2017 academic year.

What's driving the movement is Beach's team of compassionate, committed staff and the collaboration of student support programs on campus: Restorative Justice, Safe and Civil, and our recently launched It's About T.I.M.E. (Trauma-Informed Movement in Education) pilot program, among others.

Nathan has a positive energy.

He makes me happy. I know that
he cares and that he'll be there
if I need him.

- Beach High School Student



At the beginning of the 2016-2017 academic school year, we launched It's About T.I.M.E. in partnership with Long Beach Unified School District (LBUSD) and Beach High School, with future plans to expand the trauma-informed program to additional schools within the district to help children throughout the community who have experienced trauma.

It's About T.I.M.E. goes hand-in-hand with Restorative Justice practices, brought to Beach by California Conference for Equality and Justice (CCEJ) five years ago, and Safe and

continued on page 3



Civil initiatives established at Beach over the past several years. Both programs' focus on supporting students' personal and academic success through positive behavioral support has the laid the foundation for It's About T.I.M.E.'s training for staff.

Building on that groundwork at the beginning of the school year, Nathan Swaringen, LCSW, clinical therapist in The Guidance Center's School Based program, trained Beach staff in It's About T.I.M.E.'s trauma-informed approach. He has continued on as an onsite collaborator, consultant, model and instructor for staff.

Suspensions By School Month



It's About T.I.M.E., which is based on ChildTrauma Academy's Neurosequential Model in Education (NME), supports and encourages staff in the understanding that many children have endured ongoing, significant life stressors and traumatic experiences, and that trauma can inhibit students' ability to succeed in the traditional classroom environment. The goal of the program is to support staff in seeing students and their challenging behaviors through a different or "trauma-informed" lens that promotes healthy bonds, which are scientifically proven

to help students' brains heal and develop academically. Not only is attendance increasing and suspensions decreasing, but students are also expressing how supportive they feel the school is this year.

At the end of the first semester, Beach students were given a survey. The majority of students surveyed expressed that they feel "the school is a supportive and inviting place" for them. And, 91 percent of all students surveyed report having at least one staff member with whom they have a positive connection.

Monthly Attendance School Goal: 78.31%



Both are critical components of an environment that helps children who have experienced trauma succeed in the classroom and in their personal lives.

To help us supply future classrooms with traumainformed toolkits, make sure to get your ticket to our upcoming Social Hour at Timeless Pints on May 17th! See details on page 12.

Nathan caused an awakening of a whole new paradigm on this entire campus, but particularly in me. I now see my students through a completely new lens. Not only has Nathan helped improve emotional regulation throughout the campus, he has taken the time to personally help regulate me.

- Beach High School Teacher

RAISING AWARENESS AND FIGHTING TO END HUMAN TRAFFICKING

In honor of National Slavery and Human Trafficking Prevention Month, The Guidance Center worked to raise awareness of human trafficking and different ways community members can help end this horrendous violation of human rights throughout the month of January.

It's difficult to imagine this happening in our communities, let alone to our children, but it is. In 2016 alone, Long Beach Police Department (LBPD) along with the Long Beach Human Trafficking Taskforce and Project IMPACT helped 109 human trafficking victims. And in 2015, LBPD had 24 cases and 26 arrests, and rescued 29 minor victims. They expect similar numbers to be reported for 2016.

These are only the cases we know about. Unfortunately, human trafficking – particularly sex trafficking – continues to go largely unreported due to its concealed nature and common misconception that it's consensual. It's important to understand that many human trafficking victims are kidnapped into slavery while they are still children, manipulated by traffickers with empty promises of things

these children are starved of like love, affection and hope of a positive future.

Year-round, as a mental health agency, The Guidance Center provides a safe place for victims of trafficking to heal from trauma, and offers preventative interventions for children who may be vulnerable to trafficking through education and encouragement of healthy relationships and safe daily living.

Since 2014, we've partnered with the Long Beach Human Trafficking Taskforce as a mental health resource to create change and eliminate trafficking in Long Beach and beyond. We're also fortunate to have compassionate local law enforcement who are dedicated to helping victims and fighting to eliminate human trafficking here locally.

We encourage you to join with us in the fight to end human trafficking all year long by getting involved, and using your voice to raise awareness and help victims by reporting suspicious behavior.

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WELCOMING FIVE NEW BOARD MEMBERS TO TGC

As part of our progress and growth in the past year, The Guidance Center is pleased to announce the addition of five new members to our Board of Directors! Each brings a wealth of knowledge and experience from their perspective fields and passion for mental health, and is committed to dedicating their time and talent to better serve our children and families in need. We are honored to be welcoming them into our Guidance Center family.

KRIS ALLEN



Kris Allen is currently the Vice President and Senior Bank Manager of the First Bank Bixby Knolls Branch in Long Beach, and is a former board member of The Jackie Robinson YMCA in San Diego. Kris has made his mark in the community with a strong background and passion of giving back, by actively volunteering with Junior Achievement for nine years and Habitat for Humanity for nearly 17 years. The Guidance Center looks forward to Kris' contribution and insight on the board.

STEVEN NEAL

A Compton native, Steven Neal is a minister, activist, and policy-maker. He currently serves as the Civic Engagement Advocate for Molina Healthcare, establishing and building strong relationships between Molina Healthcare and the community by engaging residents and raising awareness of healthcare issues and resources available to address those issues. From 2010-2014, Steven represented North Long Beach as 9th District City Councilmember, focusing efforts on economic and social issues affecting families and neighborhoods. It is an honor to welcome Steven and his breadth of experience and leadership to our agency.



BETSY SNARE



Betsy Snare is recently retired after serving 25 years as a Healthcare Account Executive with Siemens Medical Solutions, working with different healthcare organizations to improve patient care and business operations. She is passionate about supporting the Long Beach community and raising awareness of the importance of children's mental health. As an equestrian, she has volunteered with children's horse therapy. We are thrilled to welcome Betsy and her creative intuition to our Guidance Center family.

JAMES WALSH

James Walsh served as a federal prosecutor in Washington D.C., Chicago, and Los Angeles for 43 years, and is recently retired. Before law school, James graduated from Rutgers University and served in the Navy for seven years. Although originally from New Jersey, James and his wife, Bonny have lived in Long Beach for 46 years. The Guidance Center is delighted to welcome James to our board.

JERRY WILSON



Jerry Wilson is currently a Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist in private practice, specializing in grief and loss. He is also the Clinical Director of New Hope Grief Support Community in Long Beach, and on the Board of Directors for The Gestalt Therapy Institute in Los Angeles. As a Long Beach resident for more than 30 years, a former educator, and current mental health professional, Jerry brings a wealth of knowledge and expertise that we look forward to tapping into in order to best serve our families.

CLIENT SUCCESS STORY: MONKEY BUSINESS

Helping a school become trauma-informed requires more than training school staff about the neuroscience of trauma or providing a prescription of techniques. The heart of trauma-informed care, and our It's About T.I.M.E. (Trauma-Informed Movement in Education) program at Beach High School, is relationships.

Changing hearts, minds, values, and beliefs goes beyond any intellectual understanding. It's something that must be experienced, both by the child and by the caring adult. The following is an example of what a traumainformed relationship can look like, capturing what a theory, lecture, or intervention never could: the art of the relationship.

Sixteen year-old Mikey*, adorned head-to-toe (no, seriously, scalp and face too) with shoddy tattoos proudly representing his gang affiliation, is quite an intimidating sight. I would be an enormous hypocrite to judge one's character based on their having tattoos, since I happen to have many myself. But the judgment comes from his willingness to proudly advertise his gang affiliation on his face and bald head. The tattoos might as well read; "I don't care about anyone or anything, including myself and my prospective future. Enemy gangs, the police, and society..." Well, you know.

It can be scary interacting with someone carrying that mindset, especially with one so young. Fear-based judgments tend to divert our willingness to embark down the healing path, blinding us to our ability to love unconditionally, to understand the "why" and to seek the wounded inner child. Where could I start with Mikey? Was he lovable? Did he still have an inner child? The answer to those questions had to start with my understanding of "why". Why is Mikey the way he is? Here's what I think. "I don't care," Mikey's proudly displayed mantra, should really be interpreted as "I don't feel cared for."

A fundamental principal of developmental neuroscience is that we grow to become a reflection of what we have experienced. Had Mikey ever experienced love, compassion, nurturing, and respect? I was willing to give him these things. But how would he receive them?

According to Play Therapy icon, Garry Landreth, "Play is the child's language and toys are his words." Connecting with Mikey's inner child required my ability to invite him to come out and play. "This ought to be interesting," I thought to myself skeptically. I brought with me a heavy beach-bag full of hundreds of toy miniatures; animals, people, trees, and vehicles. I dumped the many toys

out on a table in the middle of the classroom. Several of the more childlike students meandered over to check out what I had brought.

"What's this?" they asked in a manner hoping for an invitation. "They're for you to use. Check 'em out and select a few that you'd like to play with," I invited. As I had secretly predicted to myself, most chose either aggressive or protector-themes toys. I made reflective and thematic statements about their play, making the toys come alive; "That one looks powerful", "The bigger lion is keeping the baby lions safe", or "OUCH! Help, you're hurting me!" I could see Mikey still sitting at his computer, occasionally looking over his shoulder towards us, contemplating what on Earth we could possibly be doing. Eventually, he walked over.

"Why did you bring us toys? We're not little kids," Mikey asked dismissively, seeming maybe a little offended. "You're not sure these toys are something you'd like," I responded, rather than offering him an explanation.



He sat down next to me and began to explore the toys. He picked up a silly-looking chimp holding a banana, turning it over in his hands. Glancing over at me deliberately to get my attention, he put it in his pocket once he knew I was watching.

I engaged; "You need that toy, but the toys aren't for taking. I'll keep that toy safe for you and bring it back for you to use next time," I said in as nurturing a tone as possible. "Nah" he responded, "I'm keeping it." Let the power-struggle dance begin...or not. "You must really need that toy, and I trust you'd keep him safe for me, but all the toys have to go back with me. They're not for taking," I repeated empathically. He shook his head, dismissing my limit-setting.

I continued playing with the other children, and Mikey continued to explore the other toys. I took some opportunities to make some reflective and thematic statements about Mikey's toy selections, which were or course themes of violence, pain, and fear. The time had come for me to leave for the day. I counted down every minute, starting

at "Five more minutes and it'll be time for me to go, but I'll be back to play next time." As a hail-Mary, I also made the statement; "Sometimes these toys like to jump into pockets or backpacks. If you find one please let him know that all the other toys miss him very much and need him to come back right away."

Had I reinforced that stealing from me was okay? No, in my experience, I had not. I resigned myself to the fact that Mikey's inner child needed to overpower me to feel safe. He needed to test for protection, unsure of what type of adult I was. Was I like all the others, quick to reject him, overpower him, or hurt him? So he took a toy, big deal! He learned that I was going to be understanding, kind, patient, and validating of his emotional needs even when he was acting rather naughty. That's a price I'll always pay.

To my amazement, at the very last moment, Mikey innocently retrieved the chimp from his pocket, as his inner child spoke; "Look, you have two of these toys, so I should be able to have one." In a weird way, I think he was asking for permission. "There are two of them," I agreed. "I didn't know that. I appreciate you making sure it was okay. Yes, you may keep that one because I know how much you need it."

The next day, Mikey's teacher stopped to inform me of Mikey's relationship with his toy chimp. She inquired; "Mikey had one of your toy chimps and he insisted you gave it to him, so I just wanted to make sure that was the case." I confirmed his story as truthful. "Oh, good," she continued. "He's been like a little boy with that thing, proudly displaying it on his desk, showing it off as his 'little-homie' to all that will listen. 'The magic guy (I had built rapport by doing some cheesy magic tricks) said I could have it' Mikey told us."

The teacher and I agreed that the toy chimp was more than just an object of play. Rather, it served as an extension of 'the magic guy' for Mikey's inner child to connect with when I was not there. The following meetings with Mikey have been different. They've consisted of more smiles, laughter, handshakes, silliness, innocence, and sharing of our respective tattoo stories.

My relationship with Mikey epitomizes another of my favorite quotes, this one by Pat O'Brian; "May you love me the most when I deserve it the least because that is when I need it the most."

I hope I have, Mikey.

*Name changed to maintain confidentiality.

TGC IN THE COMMUNITY!

Our teams have been busy the past couple of months, spending time with the community and making new connections!

- OCT 27: Maresa Martinez, MFTI, a therapist from our San Pedro clinic, gave a presentation on our mental health referall process to officers at the Port of LA Police Department.
- NOV 5: Therapists Ani Nat, MSW, and Karla Sanchez, LCSW hosted the resource table for Lena Gonzalez' 1st District Dia De Los Muertos Event held in downtown Long Beach. Many families attended the event filled with music, food, dancing, beautiful alters, and other community organizations.
- JAN 14: Staff, friends, and Board Member Luis Maimoni marched in Long Beach's 29th Annual Martin Luther King Jr's "Peace and Unity" Parade alongside more than 80 other community organizations.
- JAN 30 TGC therapists Kayla Caceres, MFTI, Bernice Contreres, MFTI, and Enrique Martinez, ACSW, presented a + 31: two-day training for a group of educators at the YMCA of Greater Long Beach, titled, "Tips for Educators on How to Spot, Approach, and Refer Students with Mental Illness."
- FEB 4: On a bright and early saturday morning, Guidance Center staff and friends joined *Brooms Across Long Beach* in a neighborhood cleanup along MLK Avenue. Following the cleanup, there was a free resource fair for local residents, in which The Guidance Center participated as well.
- FEB 11: Nathan Swaringen, LCSW, a therapist from our school-based program, gave a two-hour presentation to CASA (Court Appointed Special Advocates) of Orange County on trauma, attachment, and play therapy.
- MAR 3: MSW Intern Evin Capel and school-based therapist Starr Lee, LMFT, hosted a resource table at Khmer Girls in Action's Annual Health & Wellness Fair, which takes place at Long Beach Poly High School. We loved seeing how engaged and interested students were in discussing the importance of mental health!
- MAR 15: Patricia Costales, LCSW, CEO of The Guidance Center, participated in a Community Police Academy Training held by the Long Beach Police Department to prepare for an exciting project in the works, collaborating with police departments to better equip officers with mental health training.



Feb 4: TGC staff & friends at the Brooms Across Long Beach neighborhhod cleanup



Mar 3: Therapist Starr Lee (left) and Intern Evin Capel (right) table resources for the Health & Wellness fair at LB Poly High School.



Mar 15: Chief Robert Luna awarding our CEO, Patricia Costales, LCSW, with her certificate of appreciation for completing the training.

UPCOMING CONTINUING EDUCATION WORKSHOPS

MAY 3, 2017 9AM-12PM

Advanced Play Therapy Techniques

Presented by Joseph De Luna, Psy.D Cost: \$45

Other trainings The Guidance Center offers include Youth and Adult Mental Health First Aid, Assessing and Treating Deliberate Self-Harm, and Reflective Supervision Training. To learn more about workshops that The Guidance Center offers or to register, please visit our website at **tgclb.org**.

For my entire family, thank you very much for being there for us. I hope you all had a wonderful holiday!

Sincerely, Erik



ADOPT-A-FAMILY HOLIDAY JOY!

The Guidance Center would like to thank the special donors who made the holidays brighter for the children and families we serve. Because of compassionate community members and local organizations, nearly 50 families were given joy and hope this past holiday season. We hope you enjoy reading some of their notes of thanks to the families who adopted them as much as we do.

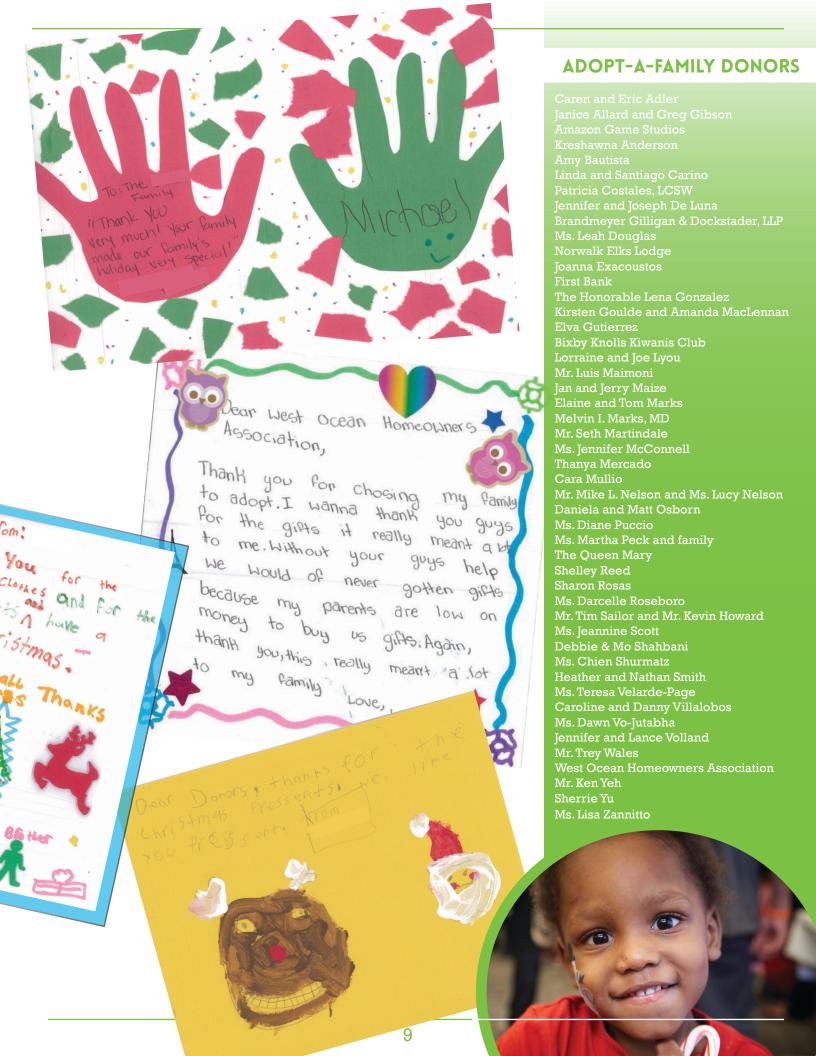


Dear Family,

I really don't believe in fairy tales but to me you are my fairy godmother who made this christmas the most magical and special Christmas ever.

Thank you to you all!

With Love, Angel 99



THANK YOU TO OUR DONORS!

The Guidance center extends its deepest appreciation to the following individuals, corporations, and foundations for their generous support from October 1, 2016 to February 28, 2017.

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DONOR SPOTLIGHT: THE CHERESE MARI LAULHERE FOUNDATION

Chris and Larry Laulhere of The Cherese Mari Laulhere Foundation, are longtime Guidance Center supporters who have made a tremendous impact for our children. The proof is on the door of one of our Play Therapy Rooms named for their late daughter. The importance and power of Play Therapy in giving children a voice is an integral part of the healing process for many of our children.

Cherese Mari Laulhere is beloved by many. She was born on september 17, 1974 in Long Beach, California and at the age of 21 her life was tragically and unexpectedly taken on march 27, 1996 on a study abroad trip in Agra, India. That same year, Chris and Larry created this foundation in memory of their late daughter. The mission of the foundation is to support charitable organizations and causes that reflect Cherese's passions in life, with an emphasis on caring for children and families.

It is with our deepest appreciation that we thank The Cherese Mari Laulhere Foundation for all they have done for The Guidance Center, and all that they have done and continue to do for the children and families of the Long Beach community and beyond, in the name of Cherese Mari Laulhere.

We sat down and chatted with Chris and Larry Laulhere about Cherese's story, and how her spirit continues to make a difference through the foundation today.



From a very young age, she was just beyond her years in many ways. Childish, fun, silly - all the normal kind of things - but she also had a very serious side in her

tremendous compassion and caring for people, children and family. She touched a lot of lives her whole life she was here. Learning about different cultures and how they lived was very important to her. She just wanted all people to get along. All people, all races, all religions. While she was attending UCLA, she decided to participate in the Semester at Sea study abroad program to visit a handful of different countries, to experience different cultures and ultimately make a difference in others' lives. She was really the most touched by the orphanages and schools she visited where she got to interact with the children. She visited orphanges in Venezuala, Brazil, South Africa, and Kenya.

What caused you to start the foundation in her name?

When we lost Cherese, we just knew that this was what we had to do. We had to keep Cherese's memory alive, and carry out her hopes and dreams. She wanted to make a difference and help children, women, and familes, so that's why we started it. Even though you didn't get to meet her, we want you to feel like you know her in your heart. That helps us get through it. Larry and I always say that this is the most important – if you never remember Larry and I, that's okay – just don't ever forget Cherese. It's her we want you to know. We just want her to continue to touch lives for as long as possible. We always try and think that this is something

that Cherese would have chosen. This is what she would have done. She was an amazing daughter, sister, friend, to everybody.

What are some of the other causes and organizations the foundations supports?

Ronald McDonald House, Women's Shelter of Long Beach, Long Beach Memorial, Children's Hospital of Orange County (CHOC), Tichenor Orthopedic Clinic for Children, Children Today, Locks of Love, Miller Children's and Women's Hospital Long Beach, Boys and Girls Club Long Beach, and numerous medical research programs to benefit children. Cherese also loved and cared for animals. We've donated to PAWS/LA, the Human Farming Assocation, and Coastal German Shepard Rescue Orange County. After seeing the effects of pet therapy recently at CHOC, we've even played around with the idea of getting a dog ourselves and exploring a pet therapy program. We're always going to support the causes and programs that Cherese gives to now because they just feel right, but we know we do need to explore more.

If you could leave a message with our readers, what would it be?

Just know Cherese's heart and compassion and gratitude. Cherese had so much gratitude for life and her family. The greatest thing we appreciate is you getting to know her heart and who she was and will always be to us.

To learn more about the Cherese Mari Laulhere Foundation, visit Cherese.org.

Keep an eye out for the full interview on our blog!

WANT TO STAY INFORMED?

Sign up for our monthly eNewsletter to stay up to date with latest agency happenings, community events, and resources. Subscribe on our website or email your name to **nbucaro@tgclb.org**.



SPRING 2017NEWSLETTER -

Thank you to our staff guest contributors!

Patricia Costales, LCSW, CEO

Kristen Martin, EdD, LMFT

Nathan Swaringen, LCSW



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