

**BEHAVIORAL HEALTH ADVISORY BOARD
TRANSITIONAL AGE YOUTH (TAY) COMMITTEE
MINUTES ■ Thursday, February 27, 2020**

<p>Members Present Margaret Cortese, Committee Chair Joe S. Ramirez, BHAB Anna Guerin, Casa Pacifica Stuart Fiedler, Client Network Georgia Perry, NAMI Anthony Marron, TAY Tunnel Cathi Nye, VCOE Lorena Güereca, Vista Real Charter High School</p> <p>Others Present Mark Stadler, Crisis Intervention Team Noemi Solis, Interface</p>	<p>Ventura County Behavioral Health (VCBH) Staff Present Dr. John Schipper, Adult Division Chief Sara Sanchez, Transitions Manager Eileen Corona, Oxnard Alcohol & Drug Programs Clinic Administrator Susan White Wood, Housing Manager</p> <p>NEXT MEETING: Thursday, April 23, 2020, 10:30 – 12:00 p.m.</p> <p>Ventura County Behavioral Health (VCBH) 1911 Williams Drive, Lake Tahoe Room (second floor), Oxnard</p>
<p>Note: The committee has not yet approved these minutes. There may be additions/deletions or corrections before the minutes are accepted in final form.</p>	

	DISCUSSION/CONCLUSIONS	RECOMMENDATIONS/ ACTIONS	RESPONSIBLE
I.	Call to Order Chair Margaret Cortese called the meeting to order at 10:30 a.m.		
II.	Approval of the Agenda Ms. Cortese asked the Committee to review and approve today’s agenda. Cathi Nye moved to approve, Anna Guerin seconded. The motion carried unanimously.	The agenda was approved as written. M/S/C	
III.	Approval of the Minutes Ms. Cortese asked the committee to review and approve the minutes of the January 23 meeting. Ms. Nye moved to approve, Anthony Marron seconded. Stuart Fiedler requested to add that he had suggested that a copy of the VCAAA book, which he would forward to the BHAB assistant, be forwarded to the members of the committee. Ms. Nye and Mr. Marron agreed to the amendment. The motion carried as amended, with Mark Stadler abstaining as he did not attend.	The minutes were approved as amended. M/S/C	
IV.	Welcome and Introductions Ms. Cortese welcomed everyone and asked for introductions.		
V.	Chair Announcements Ms. Cortese attended a meeting of the homeless citizen advisory group of the City of Oxnard; Emilio Ramirez, the housing guru, gave a presentation on Oxnard’s plan to build a building in downtown to serve the homeless. Ms. Cortese made a public comment at that meeting and requested that a portion be reserved for the TAY-age population. Ms. Cortese encouraged all to attend and speak at that advisory group’s meetings on the first Monday of the month at 4:00 p.m. at the city council office. Ms. Nye noted that the City of Ventura shelter is open. Mercy House operates it.		
VI.	Public Comments None.		
VII.	Presentation: Housing for TAY – Noemi Solis, Interface Children and Family Services Interface has several departments, including domestic violence, human trafficking, mental health services for youth, and a street outreach program. It is looking at possible funding to open a TAY House. In January it opened a coed youth shelter, which has six beds in three bedrooms and houses youth ages 12 to 17. It is staffed 24 hours a day. Services include transportation to doctors and mental health appointments. Transportation to/from school is coordinated with the school districts. Youth can stay for up to 21 days. The goal is to identify and work on their reasons for running away. The facility is often full. The shelter cannot accept youth who are on probation, are wards of the court, a danger to themselves or others at intake, or are under the influence. The street outreach program includes a crisis line, open 24/7. Anyone can refer. The program provides case management to youth who are at risk of being or are homeless or runaway. ○ Ms. Nye noted that the shelter is in a beautiful home. Interface and VCOE/schools work well together to coordinate transportation.		

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Lorena Güereca agreed that the shelter is a beautiful and calm home. o Anthony Marron noted that the outreach line has been very helpful, including with finding housing for TAY Tunnel clients on very short notice. o Stuart Fiedler suggested that meeting attendees google Taxation code 19280, which holds criminals financially liable. 		
VIII.	<p>New Business: Housing Survey Ms. Cortese relayed that Greg Bergan, VCBH Mental Health Services Act, feels that the draft housing survey is similar to information that came from the Mental Health Needs Assessment of early 2019. Sara Sanchez concurred. A discussion took place. The committee agreed that it wants to gather information from youth, whether they are or are not connected to VCBH. Ms. Nye noted that the County’s Continuum of Care is interested in the data to apply for federal funds to address youth homelessness. Ms. Cortese reminded all that the goal of this housing survey is to find out what the needs are, what housing options are available, and what the gaps are. Dr. Schipper suggested analyzing data that are collected during documented contacts with VCBH clinicians. Mr. Cortese agreed and asked him to pull data for January-March 2020 for VCBH and providers clients, to be presented in April.</p>	Compile data	Dr. Schipper
IX.	<p>Old Business: Housing Resources for TAY Ms. Cortese noted that youth ages 18-25 can use the ARCH shelter in Ventura or the shelter in Oxnard, currently located at the Armory. Youth under 18 may use the Interface shelter.</p>		
X.	<p>Ventura County Behavioral Health (VCBH) Updates</p> <p>A. Transitions – Sara Sanchez, Transitions Manager The current census is 361 clients. A few staff have moved to other programs. Groups continue to be offered. The partnership with Department of Rehabilitation and PathPoint has been expanded to TAY ages 16 and 17 who are served at the Youth & Family clinics.</p> <p>B. Alcohol & Drug Programs (ADP) – Eileen Corona, Oxnard ADP Clinic Administrator TAY clients are enrolled in various ADP program in Oxnard, A New Start for Moms, Ventura, Simi Valley, Fillmore, and Thousand Oaks. Ms. Corona will bring data to the next meeting.</p> <p>C. Mental Health Services ACT (MHSA) – Greg Bergan, Program Administrator Mr. Bergan was not present.</p>	Share census data at next meeting	E. Corona
XI.	<p>Committee Members’ and Participants’ Comments, Activities Anthony Marron noted that the average number of TAY Tunnel active members is about 65; staff try to contact members who have not had contacts in three months. The TAY Tunnel received a large donation of clothing from a private citizen. An Oxnard Police detective gave a presentation on identity theft; many TAY carry their Social Security card and birth certificate in their wallet as they have nowhere else to store them, but they are prone to losing their wallets. The TAY Tunnel is trying to outreach more to Spanish-speaking organizations. There is a need for landlords willing to rent out to youth who are going to school or hold a job. Ms. Cortese suggested that Mr. Marron speak to Mr. Fiedler after the meeting regarding 19280.</p> <p>Lorena Güereca noted that in April Vista Real will seek charter renewal from Ventura County Office of Education (VCOE). Every five years all charter schools have to be reauthorized to continue to exist. Ms. Güereca distributed support cards that anyone can sign in support of the renewal. Ms. Güereca also noted that Vista Real started a new program, HOPE (Helping Our Parenting students Excel); parenting students will be able to bring their little ones with them to the Oxnard campus on specific dates.</p> <p>Georgia Perry reminded all that the NAMI Walk will be on Saturday, May 2nd. Also, the Ventura Breeze has a front-page article on the Growing Works nursery.</p> <p>Ms. Nye reminded all that the documentary “Lost in America” will screen on March 4th at VCOE.</p>		
XII.	<p>Items for Next Meeting Agenda Housing needs and resources. Anthony Marron suggested having the TAY Tunnel housing specialist, Cece, attend, and Ms. Cortese agreed.</p>		
XIII.	<p>Adjourn The meeting adjourned at 11:50 a.m.</p>		

**CONSEJO ASESOR DE SALUD DEL COMPORTAMIENTO
COMITÉ DE JÓVENES EN EDAD DE TRANSICIÓN (TAY)
MINUTOS ■ Jueves , 27 de febrero de , 2020**

<p><u>Miembros presentes</u> Margaret Cortese , Presidenta del Comité Joe S. Ramírez , BHAB Anna Guerin , Casa Pacifica Stuart Fiedler, red de clientes Georgia Perry, NAMI Anthony Marron , Túnel TAY Cathi Nye, VCOE Lorena Güereca, Preparatoria Vista Real Charter</p> <p><u>Otros presentes</u> Mark Stadler, equipo de intervención en crisis Noemi Solis, Interfaz</p>	<p><u>Presente del personal de Ventura County Behavioral Health (VCBH)</u> Dr. John Schipper, Jefe de División de Adultos Sara Sánchez, Gerente de Transiciones Eileen Corona, Administradora de la Clínica de Programas de Alcohol y Drogas de Oxnard Susan White Wood, Gerente de Vivienda</p> <p>SIGUIENTE JUNTA: Jueves , 23 de abril de 2020 , 1 0:30 - 12 : 00 pm</p> <p>Salud conductual del condado de Ventura (VCBH) 1911 Williams Drive , Lake Tahoe Room (segundo piso) , Oxnard</p>
<p>Nota: El comité aún no ha aprobado estas actas. Puede haber adiciones / eliminaciones o correcciones antes de que las actas se acepten en forma final.</p>	

	DISCUSIÓN / CONCLUSIONES	RECOMENDACIONES / COMPORTAMIENTO	RESPONSABLE
YO.	Llama para ordenar La presidenta Margaret Cortese dio por terminada la reunión a las 10:30 a.m.		
II	Aprobación de la agenda La Sra. Cortese solicitó al Comité que revise y apruebe la agenda de hoy. Cathi Nye hizo la moción para aprobar, Anna Guerin la secundó. La moción fue aprobada por unanimidad.	La agenda fue aprobada como está escrita. M / S / C	
III.	Aprobación del acta La Sra. Cortese le pidió al comité que revisara y aprobara el acta de la reunión del 23 de enero . La Sra. Nye se movió para aprobar, Anthony Marron lo secundó. Stuart Fiedler solicitó agregar que él había sugerido que una copia del libro VCAAA, que él enviaría al asistente de BHAB, se remitiera a los miembros del comité. La Sra. Nye y el Sr. Marron aceptaron la enmienda . La moción fue aprobada en su forma enmendada , con Mark Stadler absteniéndose ya que no asistió .	Las actas fueron aprobadas en su forma enmendada . M / S / C	
IV.	Bienvenida y Presentaciones La Sra. Cortese dio la bienvenida a todos y pidió presentaciones.		
V.	Anuncios de la presidencia La Sra. Cortese asistió a una reunión del grupo asesor de ciudadanos sin hogar de la Ciudad de Oxnard ; Emilio Ramírez, el gurú de la vivienda, hizo una presentación sobre el plan de Oxnard para construir un edificio en el centro para atender a las personas sin hogar. La Sra. Cortese hizo un comentario público en esa reunión y solicitó que se reservara una porción para la población de edad TAY. La Sra. Cortese alentó a todos a asistir y hablar en las reuniones de ese grupo asesor el primer lunes de cada mes a las 4:00 pm en la oficina del consejo de la ciudad. La Sra. Nye señaló que el refugio de la Ciudad de Ventura está abierto. Mercy House lo opera.		
VI.	Comentarios públicos Ninguna.		
VII.	Presentación: Vivienda para TAY - Noemi Solis, Interfaz Servicios para niños y familias Interfaz tiene varias d eapartments, incluyendo la violencia doméstica, la trata de personas, servicios de salud mental para los jóvenes, y una calle de difusión del programa . Está buscando posibles fondos para abrir una casa TAY. Me n enero se abrió una alumna y refugio l sur , que tiene seis camas en tres dormitorios y casas de jóvenes entre las edades de 12 a 17 . Cuenta con personal las 24 horas del día. Los servicios incluyen transporte a médicos y citas de salud mental . El transporte hacia / desde la escuela se coordina con los distritos escolares. Los jóvenes pueden quedarse hasta 21 días. El objetivo es identificar y trabajar en sus razones para escapar. La instalación a menudo está llena. El refugio no puede aceptar a jóvenes que se encuentran en libertad condicional, que son pupilos de la corte, que		

	<p>representan un peligro para ellos mismos o para otros al ingresar, o que están bajo la influencia.</p> <p>El programa de divulgación en la calle incluye una línea de crisis, abierta 24/7. Cualquiera puede referirse. El programa proporciona manejo de casos a jóvenes que están en riesgo de quedarse sin hogar o fugitivos.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o La Sra. Nye notó que el refugio está en un hermoso hogar. Interface y VCOE / escuelas trabajan bien juntas para coordinar el transporte. o Lorena Güereca estuvo de acuerdo en que el refugio es un hogar hermoso y tranquilo. o Anthony Marron señaló que la línea de divulgación ha sido de gran ayuda , incluyendo la búsqueda de vivienda para clientes del túnel TAY en muy poco tiempo. o Stuart Fiedler sugirió que los asistentes a la reunión busquen en Google el código de impuestos 19280, que responsabiliza financieramente a los delincuentes. 		
VIII	<p>Nuevos negocios : Encuesta de vivienda</p> <p>La Sra. Cortese relató que Greg Bergan, de la Ley de Servicios de Salud Mental de VCBH, considera que el borrador de la encuesta de vivienda es similar a la información proveniente de la Evaluación de Necesidades de Salud Mental de principios de 2019 . Sara Sánchez estuvo de acuerdo. Una discusión tuvo lugar. El comité acordó que quiere recopilar información de los jóvenes, estén o no conectados a VCBH. La Sra. Nye señaló que el Continuum of Care del Condado está interesado en los datos para solicitar fondos federales para atender a los jóvenes sin hogar . La Sra. Cortese recordó a todos que el objetivo de esta encuesta de vivienda es descubrir cuáles son las necesidades, qué opciones de vivienda están disponibles y cuáles son las brechas. El Dr. Schipper sugirió analizar los datos que se recopilan durante los contactos documentados con los médicos de VCBH. M r. Cortese estuvo de acuerdo y le pidió que extrajera datos para enero-M arch 2020 para VCBH y los proveedores de clientes , que se presentarán en abril.</p>	<p>Compilar datos</p>	<p>Dr. Schipper</p>
IX.	<p>Negocios antiguos : recursos de vivienda para TAY</p> <p>La Sra. Cortese señaló que todos los jóvenes de entre 18 y 25 años pueden usar el refugio ARCH en Ventura o el refugio en Oxnard, actualmente ubicado en la Armería. Los jóvenes menores de 18 años pueden usar el refugio Interface.</p>		
X .	<p>Actualizaciones de Ventura County Behavioral Health (VCBH)</p> <p>A. Transiciones - Sara Sánchez, Gerente de Transiciones El censo actual es de 361 clientes. Algunos miembros del personal se han mudado a otros programas. Se siguen ofreciendo grupos . La asociación con el Departamento de Rehabilitación y PathP oint h como se ha ampliado a tay 16 y 17 años que son atendidos en las clínicas Juventud y la Familia.</p> <p>B. Programa de Alcohol y Drogas (ADP) - Eileen Corona, Administradora de la Clínica ADP de Oxnard TAY clientes participan en diversos ADP programa en O xnard, un nuevo comienzo para M OMS, V Entura, Simi Valley , F illmore, y Thousand Oaks. La Sra. Corona traerá datos a la próxima reunión.</p> <p>C. Ley de Servicios de Salud Mental (MHSA) - Greg Bergan, Administrador del Programa El Sr. Bergan no estuvo presente.</p>	<p>Compartir datos del censo en la próxima reunión</p>	<p>E. Corona</p>
X yo .	<p>Comentarios y actividades de los miembros y participantes del comité</p> <p>Anthony Marron señaló que el número promedio de miembros activos del Túnel TAY es de aproximadamente 65; s personal trate de contactar a miembros que no han tenido contactos en tres meses. El túnel TAY recibió una gran donación de ropa de un ciudadano privado . Un detective de la policía de Oxnard hizo una presentación sobre robo de identidad ; muchos TAY llevan su tarjeta de Seguro Social y certificado de nacimiento en su billetera ya que no tienen otro lugar para guardarlos, pero son propensos a perder sus billeteras. El túnel TAY está tratando de llegar más a las organizaciones de habla hispana . Es necesario que los propietarios estén dispuestos a alquilar a jóvenes que van a la escuela o tienen un trabajo. La Sra. Cortese sugirió que el Sr. Marron hable con el Sr. Fiedler después de la reunión sobre 19280.</p>		

	<p>Lorena Güereca señaló que en abril Vista Real buscará la renovación del estatuto de la Oficina de Educación del Condado de Ventura (VCOE). Cada cinco años, todos los ch escuelas Arter tienen que ser autorizados nuevamente para continuar existiendo. La Sra. Güereca distribuyó tarjetas de soporte que cualquiera puede firmar para respaldar la renovación. La Sra. Güereca también señaló que Vista Real comenzó un nuevo programa, HOPE (Ayudando a nuestros estudiantes de Parenting a sobresalir) ; los padres de familia podrán traer a sus pequeños al campus de Oxnard en fechas específicas.</p> <p>Georgia Perry recordó a todos que la NAMI Walk será el sábado de mayo de 2nd. Además, Ventura Breeze tiene un artículo de primera plana sobre el vivero Growing Works.</p> <p>La Sra. Nye recordó a todos que el documental "Lost in America" se proyectará el 4 de ^{marzo} en VCOE.</p>		
<p>X II</p>	<p>Elementos para la agenda de la próxima reunión</p> <p>Necesidades de vivienda y recursos . Anthony Marron sugirió que asistiera el especialista en vivienda del Túnel TAY, Cece , y la Sra. Cortese estuvo de acuerdo.</p>		
<p>X I II .</p>	<p>Aplazar</p> <p>Se levanta la sesión a las 11:50 a.m.</p>		



Interface's Runaway & Homeless Youth Shelter Now Open Serving Ventura County Youth

The Runaway and Homeless Youth Shelter is a short-term shelter that provides emergency care to runaway and homeless youth not already receiving services from the child welfare or juvenile justice systems. The shelter supports minors who need help navigating their way back to a safe and secure home. We seek to reunite young people with their families, whenever possible, or to locate appropriate alternative placements.

Expectations of Youth:

- Participate in Case Management, Family Mediation, and Counseling Sessions
- Must attend school or have an alternative education plan
- Participate in individualized activities

Program Services:

- Basic Needs Support (food, hygiene items, clothing, and transportation)
- Temporary Shelter for Maximum of 21 Days
- Crisis Intervention
- Counseling / Family Mediation
- Case Management and Aftercare Services

Eligibility Guidelines:

- Youth must be a runaway, homeless, or at risk of homelessness
- Youth must be between the ages of 12-17
- Youth must agree to shelter and program services and guidelines
- Youth is not a danger to self or others
- Youth cannot be on formal probation or a ward of the State

For More Details Contact:

General Information and Referrals

Call Our Youth Crisis Line: **(805) 469-5882**

TRANSITIONAL AGE YOUTH SURVEY

Year Born: _____ Initials: _____
Completed at : _____

State Born:

- were born in CA
- born in another state outside of CA
- born outside the United States

Ethnicity:

Hispanic or Latino ___ Yes ___ No

Race: (may check more than one)

- Black/African American
- Native American or Alaskan Native
- Asian
- Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
- White
- No Response

Gender Identity:

- Female
- Transgender, and identify as a girl or woman
- Not sure
- Male
- Transgender, and identify as a boy or man;
- Other
- No Response

Sexual Orientation:

- Gay or Lesbian
- Straight
- Bisexual
- Queer
- Questioning
- Other
- I don't know
- No Response

Has a doctor or health professional ever told you that you have a physical, mental, emotional, or developmental disability?

- Yes, explain__
- No
- No Response

Military Service

- Yes
- No
- No Response

Are you currently pregnant, or have you recently gotten someone else pregnant?

- Yes
- No
- Not Sure\Don't Know
- No Response

How many biological children do you have?

- 0 children
- 1 child
- 2 children
- More than 2
- No Response

How many of your children are currently living with you?

- 0 children living with them
- 1 child living with them
- 2 children living with them
- More than 2
- No Response

Housing Status and Stability:

Where did you stay last night?

- Stayed at the home of parent, guardian or foster parent;
- Stayed at the home of a friend or other relative's home - indoors, on a couch or in place meant for regular sleeping;
- Stayed at the home of a friend or other relative's home - outdoors or indoors in a place not meant for regular sleeping;
- Stayed in a group home;
- Stayed at the home of their partner, boyfriend, or girlfriend;
- Stayed with someone they did not know because they needed a place to stay;
- Stayed at a youth or adult shelter;
- Stayed at a transitional living program
- Stayed at a hotel/motel paid for by a government program or nonprofit organization;
- Stayed at a hotel/motel paid for by some other way;
- Stayed outdoors or in a public place, like a park, the street, a campground, a train or bus station, etc.;
- Stayed in an abandoned building or squatted;
- Stayed in a car, bus, or RV;
- Stayed somewhere else.

TRANSITIONAL AGE YOUTH SURVEY

How long have you been staying there?

- Staying there for days
- Staying there for weeks
- Staying there for months
- Staying there for years
- No Response

Do you think you can stay there for the next 14 days without being asked to leave?

- Yes
- No
- I don't know
- No Response

How long have you been without a home, or a regular place to stay?

- without a home or place to stay for days;
- without a home or place to stay for weeks;
- without a home or place to stay for months;
- without a home or place to stay for years
- No Response

Thinking about the past 3 years, how many different times have you been without a home, or a regular place to stay?

- 0 times
- 1-3 times
- 4-10 times
- 11-50 times
- No Response

Check if any of these have happened to you:

- Ran away/kicked out from my family home.
- Ran away/kicked out from a group home or foster home.
- Violence at home between family members.
- Difference with parents about religious beliefs.
- Left home because of some other reason

Education: select highest grade completed

- 8th grade or less
- 9th to 11th grade
- 12th grade (diploma)
- GED certificate
- Some college
- Associate's degree;
- Bachelor's degree;
- Post-secondary training _____
- No Response

Are you currently attending or enrolled in school?

- Yes No Response
- No

Employment (have a job, paid internship, or other type of employment)

- Yes No Response
- No

Have you ever been in foster care?

- Yes
- No
- Not Sure
- No Response

Justice System Involvement

- Yes
- No
- Not Sure
- No Response

Are you currently accessing any services in the community?

- VCBH
- Pacific Clinics Tay Tunnel
- Transitions
- Interface
- Adult Wellness
- Other _____

If not please check the reasons that apply

- Lack of transportation.
- Did not have I.D./personal documents.
- Did not know where to go for help.
- Did not qualify for services.
- Placed on a wait list and never heard back.
- Did not follow through or return for services
- Language barrier.
- Felt uncomfortable.
- Some other reason.
- Have not experienced any issues

What is your most current need?

Optional:

Name: _____

Cell phone # _____

Email: _____



Jen Rodriguez, Nursery Manager and employee Laurie Cash were hard at work at the nursery.

Growing Works...Growing partnerships as well as plants

by Jill Forman

Growing Works is a non-profit wholesale nursery in Camarillo, and much more. It is a training ground for Behavioral Health clients, a partnership with Turning Point Foundation, an opportunity for local businesses and

organizations to be involved, and a state-of-the-art facility with native and drought-tolerant plants.

And it is a dream come true for many. "There is a place for everybody," says

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Growing Works

Continued from page 1

Nursery Manager Jen Rodriguez as she works swiftly, filling "...our biggest orders ever." Employees and volunteers water, select and trim plants. These workers have experienced mental health challenges, and have been through classes on life and work skills as well as hours of volunteering at the nursery.

Jason Meek, Executive Director of Turning Point, emphasizes the benefits, "One can easily see that Growing Works provides individuals experiencing mental illness with an opportunity to attain employment in an environment rich in support, care, and free from stigmatization." It is part of their journey, he says "... to wellness and self-empowerment."

Supervisor Linda Parks was the driving force behind this project, from the concept to finding the site, pitching the project to organizations and government, obtaining funding, even getting down and dirty cleaning out the on-site structure. As she says, "It was a multi-year labor of love."

Dennis Perry, the Nursery Director recruited by Parks, laughs as he tells how he got involved. "Come to a meeting, they said..." Perry is a volunteer active with NAMI (National Alliance for the Mentally Ill) and "...grew up in the nursery business." So, he was a natural fit for this task.

Perry says there were a number of challenges on the site, from sick trees to a warehouse full of furniture. He set up workdays with local students, the Carpenters' Union, employees from companies such as Home Depot, and citizens who wanted to help. Everybody donated their time.

Parks gave the County a list of essential repairs to make the location functional and safe, and they set up a budget. She also organized donations of materials such as gravel, fencing, concrete blocks, Growing Works opened in 2019. In the first three months, 30-40 Behavioral Health clients came through for training and work. Tom Hayduk, Production Manager, chats while rooting plant cuttings; he says half of his job is to work with employees and members (trainees from Behavioral Health who may become employees.)

"Sales are good," Hayduk says. "We need to cover our own expenses." He wants to grow 75% of the plants from their own cuttings. Growing Works' goal is to be self-sustaining both financially and environmentally.

Production is currently limited by water quality, but there is a brand-new water treatment apparatus on site, proudly shown off by Perry, that will soon be installed and functional so the nursery can expand. It was obtained through a grant from the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy.

Georgia, a NAMI activist who had a son with mental illness, talks about how important it was to him to have a job. "I am proud of Growing Works; it is a positive force. Employees are proud of themselves, are a part of society, have dignity, and find strengths. They get support on a hard day." It is a success because of "...strong skills with

strong partners."

Growing Works is not open to the public. For information, to donate or volunteer go to www.GrowingWorks.org.